

Orme, Gareth

From: Tom Kuehl <tjk.kuehl@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 23, 2022 11:11 AM
To: Orme, Gareth
Cc: Laura & Mike Jackson
Subject: . The Anthracite Ridge Wind project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

■ EXTERNAL EMAIL ■

Hi,

My name is Tom Kuehl. I am a member and former President of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (PSO) and am sending this email for you to share my concerns regarding the subject project with Senator Muth.

I am in receipt of the following information from Laura Jackson, the Conservation Chair of PSO.

The American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Hawk Mountain, Save Our Allegheny Ridges, Pennsylvania Audubon Council, and other non-profits have sent letters of concern to Hegins Township, which denied the project earlier this month. PSO is part of this conservation coalition.

1. The Anthracite Ridge Wind project is proposed for an area of high biodiversity and has the potential to cause significant harm to migrating birds, wintering Golden Eagles, and resident Bald Eagles. The area is northwest of the Kittatinny Ridge, a global Important Bird Area known for its tens of thousands of migrating songbirds and raptors, including Golden and Bald Eagles. Research on Golden Eagles shows that they use this area in the winter. Eastern Golden Eagles only number about 5,000 and are more likely to be killed by turbines when they are hunting for food.
2. Roads and turbines in the project would fragment the Bear Mountain Natural Heritage Area, where State Threatened Allegheny Woodrats are known to occur. This species is considered vulnerable nationally due to population declines across its eastern range.
3. The project location includes numerous abandoned mine portals that now serve as hibernacula for a variety of bat species, including the Federally Threatened northern long-eared bat, which is endangered in Pennsylvania. The developer has surveyed a small fraction of the mine openings and the US Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed concerns that wildlife surveys are incomplete and more surveys need to be completed to determine if populations of the Federally Endangered Indiana bat are also using these mine portals.

I share the concerns noted above by the parties of this conservation coalition and agree with them that this project is not properly sited, and personally would be highly skeptical that any ridge top location in Pennsylvania could be considered to properly sited. I ask that the Senator reconsider supporting a project that would result in significant damage to wildlife and the environment.

Sincerely,

Tom Kuehl
Westmoreland County