

The Question, My Friend, Is Spinning In The Wind

By BARBARA RENTON

Yucca Valley, CA - Saturday night's Yucca Valley Community Center was full of interested locals for Nettie Pena's great but disturbing film, "They're Not Green."

With over twenty years of filmmaking experience, Nettie Pena surprised the hi-desert crowd with her research and interviews about wind turbines. <http://web.mec.com/throtgreen/throtgreen>

"The wind power industry," says Editor Eileen Austen in Pena's printed synopsis, "its lobbyists and a host of U.S.

politicians have promoted "wind power" as "clean and green"...but it's the color of money, not clean air."

Pena received her MFA (Master of Fine Arts) from UCLA before working as a film editor for Paramount Studios and NBC News. She started working on this documentary in 2007 soon after relocating to Palm Springs.

The wind turbine blades during a strong wind whirl like a helicopter. For anyone living close by (the Bureau of Land Management has applications all ready for the Morongo Basin) the strobe light effect can cause vision problems, vertigo, seizures and sleep difficulties among others. These 125 foot blades if broken or malfunctioning can be propelled hundreds of yards away. Each blade when transported needs three trucks; one before, the flatbed carrying it, and the truck following it warning of a wide load. All this extra gasoline helps the environment how?

Since the workers need to wear hazardous material suits while making these fiberglass blades of resins and other toxic materials, then what does one breathe in their windy air? While the metal poles are recyclable, the blades are not biodegradable.

Since oils in the turbines' rotors catch fire along with debris blown into these on a yearly basis, which means these burning blades further pollute the air. It spreads the

toxin from these burning windmills for several miles. The fire trucks called to any turbine fire basically watch it burn since they have no ladders long enough to douse the flames.



"They just monitor the land around it for potential brush fires," says Pena, "while residents must leave the area."

According to the Sierra Club, several thousand birds, including eagles and owls are killed every year from these turbines. Imagine a parents' worry if a child has no protection from putting their fingers into a rotating house fan. These are unprotected



fans in our skies. At night there are bright lights at its windmill crown to warn planes, but attracts bugs and therefore bats which are also killed besides owls. Bats kill millions of bugs every night while the turbines kill zero. Owls kill several snakes, and vermin each night while windmills kill none.

These natural killers of our pests do it for food and do it for us for free. If we continue to kill them off, I'm sure that pesticide companies will be happy.

After viewing this greatly informative film, it could very well be a part of the news story, "The Fleecing of America" for all the millions of state and federal monies which go towards the subsidies for this supposed 'clean-energy' industry. Spain's company Iberdrola invests heavily in California Edison for these windmills. If there were no subsidies, there'd be no turbines.

With the wind power producing just 2% of electrical power, it is a contributor to added CO2 emissions from 250,000 pounds. It's from the fifty foot concrete base according to physicist John Droz, Jr. There doesn't seem to be a fair trade-off here. And if any oxygen producing plants or trees are in the way, they are removed for the steel and fiberglass wind turbines, a turbine whose life span is only 15-20 years each.

Much thanks goes to Pena for alerting us to the threats from these benign-seeming structures. Also to President Jim Harvey from HVCC and Homestead Valley Community Council volunteers for arranging this revealing presentation and showing maps of BLM's targeted new sites. Both took questions from the audience at the end of the film.

Harvey gave carefully researched alternatives to turbines with stats about rooftop solar panels and Assembly Bill 811. AB811 is California law that allows cities and counties to provide low interest loans to cover the up front costs of energy efficiency improvements and solar rooftops. More often than not, the loan payments are lower than the electricity bills they replace, putting money back into the pockets of the participants and reducing energy consumption.

Just when Morongo Basin residents felt a sigh of relief after LADWP canceled its plans to pollute our views and health with 500 of their high tension electrical towers, here comes yet another threat.



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