



Vermont Public Attitudes Toward Wind Energy

National public opinion polls show that the vast majority of people in the U.S. favor wind energy, and support for wind plants often increases after they are actually installed and operating. The following summaries reflect the results of recent public opinion surveys designed to gauge Vermonters' attitudes toward wind energy and renewable energy development within the state.

1. Town of East Haven – October 2003

The East Haven Selectboard mailed a survey to all town property owners asking their opinions about the proposed 4-turbine East Mountain Demonstration Project. About half of the property owners responded.

- 91 respondents said they favor the project vs. only 15 against, with 88% of residents and 84% of nonresidents in favor of the project.

2. Central Vermont Public Service – August 2003

Survey of 525 people conducted by Macro International, Inc. for Central Vermont Public Service.

- 91% of respondents believed that it was important for Vermont to add more renewable energy generation, including 63% who said it was very important. Just 4% said it was unimportant.
- Only 18 respondents out of 525 said it was unimportant for Vermont to add new renewable generation. Of these, only 4 respondents cited detracting from natural surroundings.

3. Caledonian-Record Online Edition – August 2003

Informal and non-scientific survey conducted by the *Caledonian-Record* Online Edition. A total of 707 readers answered the question, "How do you feel about wind turbines in Vermont?"

- 66% of the respondents agreed with either the statement "I think they look cool and it's a great source of clean energy" or "The environmentally friendly energy produced from them is well worth any intrusion on the landscape."

4. NRG Systems, Inc./Marketing Partners, Inc. – October 2002

Telephone survey of 400 randomly selected Vermonters conducted by Macro International, Inc. for NRG Systems, Inc. and Marketing Partners, Inc.

- 79% of respondents consider wind turbines on Vermont mountain ridges to be beautiful or acceptable.
- 70% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I would like to see more wind turbines located in Vermont."

5. Green Mountain Power Corporation/Searsburg Wind Power Project – 1996 and 1997

Written survey designed to measure public acceptance of the Searsburg Wind Power Project before and after the project's construction. There were 345 respondents.

- When asked, "From what you know about this wind power project, how supportive of it are you?" support grew from 73.1% (pre-construction) to 89.1% (post-construction).
- When asked, "If the project is technically successful, how supportive would you be of doubling its output from 11 to 22 turbines?" support grew from 64.2% (pre-construction) to 79.9% (post-construction).