
University of Pennsylvania
Institute for Environmental Studies

presents

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Wind Farms: Windfall or Wipeout?

Humans have relied on wind-generated power for hundreds of years. However, the bucolic visions of traditional windmills have been replaced by large commercial wind turbines. Although wind energy avoids much of the environmental damage caused by traditional fossil fuels, questions remain. Opponents allege that wind turbines pose a threat to wildlife, including bats and migratory birds. Neighbors fear that wind farms will reduce property values. Perhaps most importantly, nearby landowners dread the impact of wind farms on their viewsheds.

Highly contentious disputes have erupted across the world, from Highland County, Virginia to Oorton, England, over the location of windmills to generate electricity. Although divergent in cultures and geography, the themes remain the same.

In this seminar, Professor Geyer examines the benefits offered and problems posed by commercial wind farms. In addition to exploring the costs and benefits, the seminar examines whether wind farms can help farmers stay on the land by providing much needed profits. The problematic issue of subsidies to wind farms is also analyzed. The approach to wind farms in the United States is compared and contrasted with the treatment in other countries. In this seminar, Professor Geyer concludes that the complaints against wind farms are largely unfounded and that the real issue centers on aesthetics. However, the question of whether wind-generated energy can be produced efficiently and profitably without government subsidy remains a troublesome issue.

Date: February 21, 2007

Time: NOON - 1:30 pm

Place: Carolyn Hoff Lynch Auditorium

On the Penn campus: Chemistry Building
34 & Spruce Sts. (enter on 34 St)

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED

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NO FOOD OR DRINK PERMITTED IN THE AUDITORIUM
