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## **National Wind Watch warns of eminent domain threat**

***The Town of Prattsburgh, N.Y., has authorized condemnation proceedings to seize land for the benefit of a private wind developer. The need for new high-capacity transmission lines to get wind energy from remote locations to the larger grid poses a growing threat to landowners everywhere.***

ROWE, MASS., MAY 19, 2008 — On April 22, 2008, the Town Board of Prattsburgh in Steuben County, N.Y., resolved to authorize the commencement of condemnation proceedings against eight specific landowners and against “any other property” along several named roads to secure easements for transmission lines needed by a commercial wind power project being developed by “First Wind” (formerly “UPC”).

The April hearing came after a five-year struggle to stop the wind project. Hundreds have spoken out and appealed to the local Town Board, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the State Energy Research and Development Authority, the Public Service Commission, the Governor, the Comptroller, and the Attorney General regarding this project and how it will affect the lives of the residents, as well as the landscape and wildlife. First Wind/UPC has not been able to secure enough easements because of the fierce opposition, and it is believed that many of those who have signed were bullied into doing so.

It is also believed that past members of the Town Board and the present Supervisor and Deputy Supervisor have conflicts of interest and that they have “paved the way” for wind companies over the last several years. They willingly cooperated with the lead agent, Steuben County Industrial Development Agency, when they accepted as complete an environmental impact statement that is inadequate and unacceptable.

Now, in addition to ignoring the safety of its citizens, the Town has set a dangerous precedent by voting to condemn land to give to private developers. A lawsuit will be pursued, but meanwhile it is believed that the wind company is using the town’s resolution to further bully the eight remaining “holdouts” and other people along their desired route.

The so-called “Windfarm Prattsburgh” has never proved its public benefit. The wind data have never been revealed, despite countless requests. Forcing landowners to sign easements against their will for a project that will then allow dozens of 400-foot gargantuan machines to dominate their environment is criminal. The Town of Prattsburgh could set a precedent that may have a grave impact on all towns in New York State that are resisting not just wind development but any other kind of exploitation.

National Wind Watch (NWW) urges all stakeholders and concerned individuals to make their voices heard in this critical matter. A public hearing will be held May 22, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Prattsburgh Fire Hall, 15 Allis Street. Comments can also be sent to: Attention -- Clerk Pam Kula, Prattsburgh Town Hall, 19 North Main Street, Prattsburgh, N.Y., 14873. Comments must be received by 5:00 p.m., May 27, 2008).

Questions? -- Contact: emanancyw@empacc.net (Advocates for Prattsburgh)

NWW contact: Sue Sliwinski, sliwinski@wind-watch.org, 716-592-1403

National Wind Watch is a nonprofit corporation established by campaigners from around the U.S. in 2005 to promote knowledge and raise awareness of the negative environmental and social impacts of industrial wind energy development. Contacts, information, analysis, and other materials are available on its web site: [www.wind-watch.org](http://www.wind-watch.org).