

## NEWEEP Conference and Workshop Follow-up Survey Results June 7, 2011

As a follow-up to the June 7, 2011 NEWEEP Conference and Workshop, an online survey was distributed to all attendees. The purpose of this survey was to provide the NEWEEP team with feedback on the conference, to help guide, shape and build future NEWEEP discussions and conferences. The survey consisted of a mixture of both multiple choice questions and short answer questions. All answers were anonymous to encourage the greatest amount of honesty and thoughtfulness.

In addition to the online follow-up survey, a paper survey regarding the workshops was distributed at the end of the conference. Those responses can be viewed at the bottom of this report.

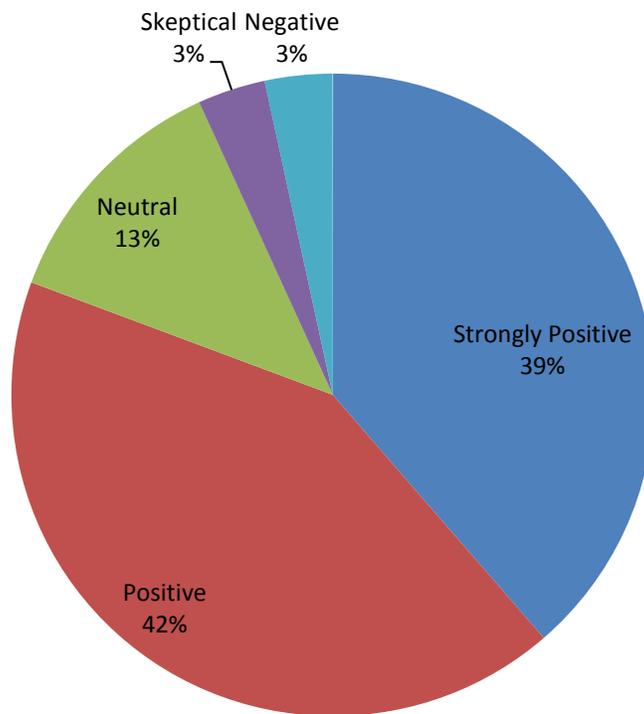
### Summary of Registrants

Gov't	69
ServiceFirms	53
Public, Total	28
NGO, Total	32
Law	16
Wind Dev, Manuf., Investor	16
Educators	12
Research Institutions	12
Utilities	4
Project Hosts (Gov or NGO)	3
ISO	1
Mediators	1
Students	1
Union	1
Total	<hr/> 249 <hr/>

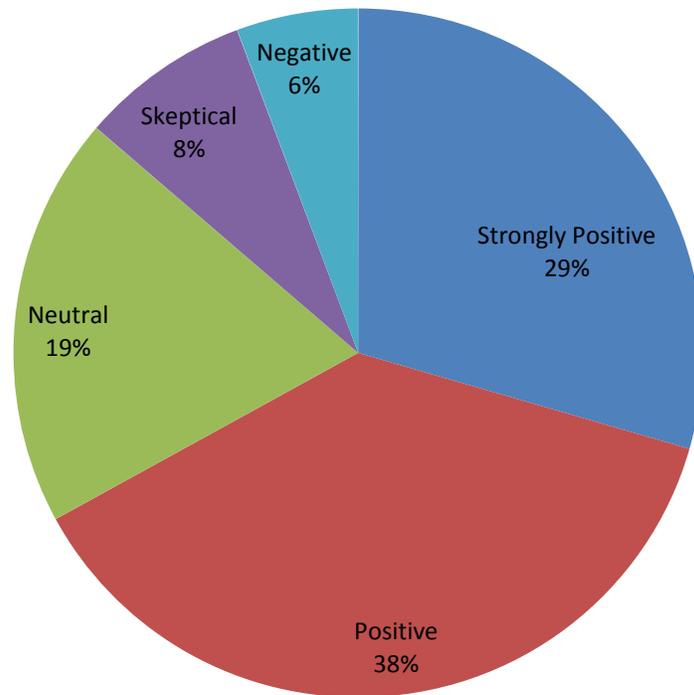
## Multiple Choice Results

Prior to attending the conference, how would you describe your views of wind power in general, on the following scale:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Positive	38.6%	34
Positive	42.0%	37
Neutral	12.5%	11
Skeptical	3.4%	3
Negative	3.4%	3
<i>answered question</i>		<b>88</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>1</b>
Percent Positive or Strongly Positive	80.6%	

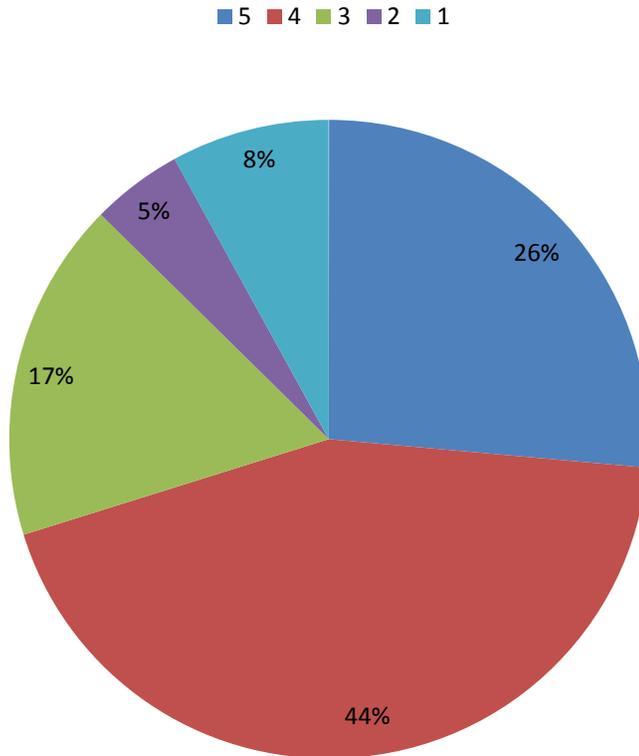


Prior to attending the conference, how would you describe your views of wind power in your own community?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Positive	29.5%	26
Positive	37.5%	33
Neutral	19.3%	17
Skeptical	8.0%	7
Negative	5.7%	5
<i>answered question</i>		<b>88</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>1</b>
Percent Postive or Strongly Positive	67.0%	



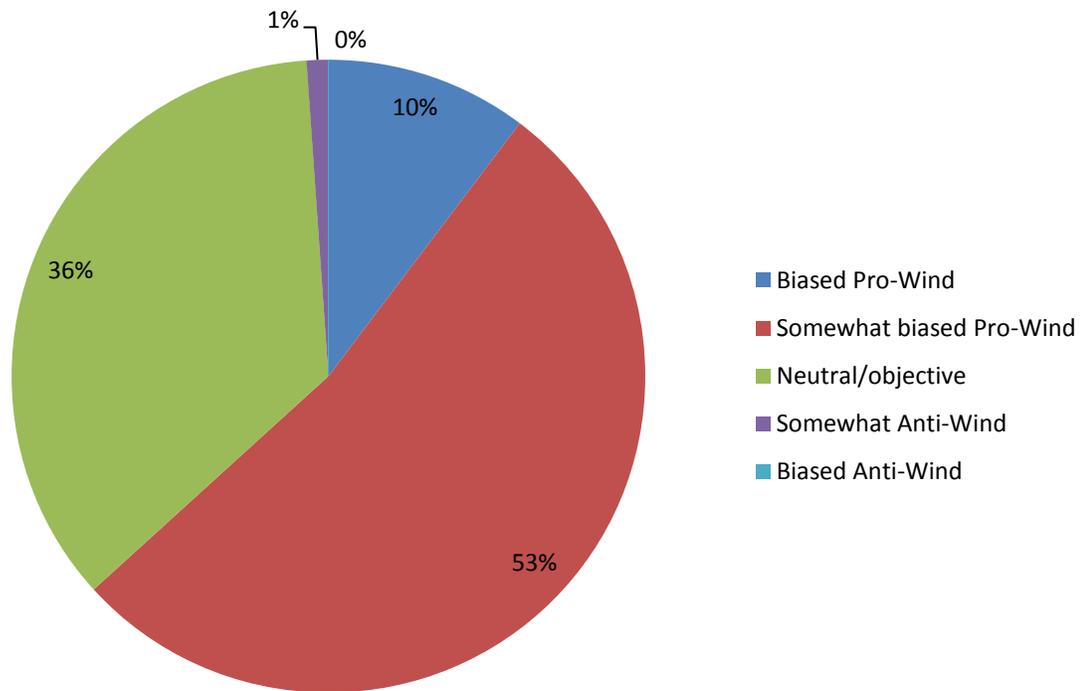
Did the conference give you a better understanding of the issues facing communities and expanded wind development? (5=very much, 1=not at all)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5	26.4%	23
4	43.7%	38
3	17.2%	15
2	4.6%	4
1	8.0%	7
<i>answered question</i>		<b>87</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>
Percent 4 or 5	70.1%	



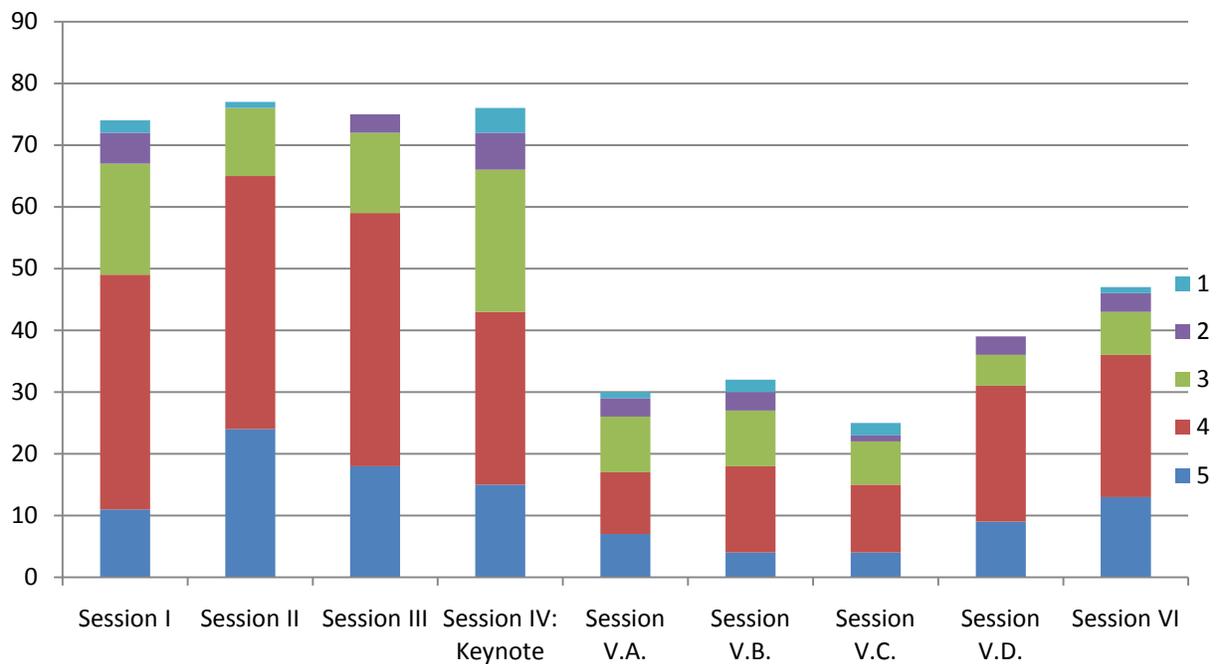
The goal of the conference was to encourage a balanced presentation and discussion of the factors that affect the acceptance of wind development in New England. Please indicate below your overall impression of whether the conference achieved this balance. Overall, presentations were:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Biased Pro-Wind	10.3%	9
Somewhat biased Pro-Wind	52.9%	46
Neutral/objective	35.6%	31
Somewhat Anti-Wind	1.1%	1
Biased Anti-Wind	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		<b>87</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>

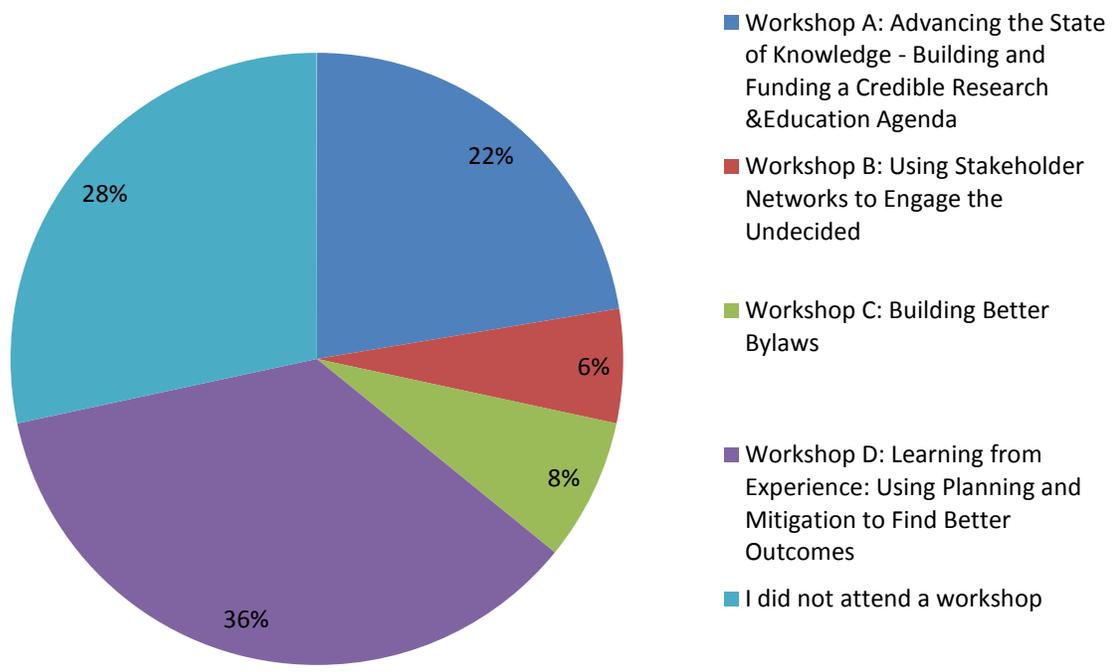


Please indicate below how useful and informative each panel session was for you. (5=Very Useful, 1=Not Useful At All)

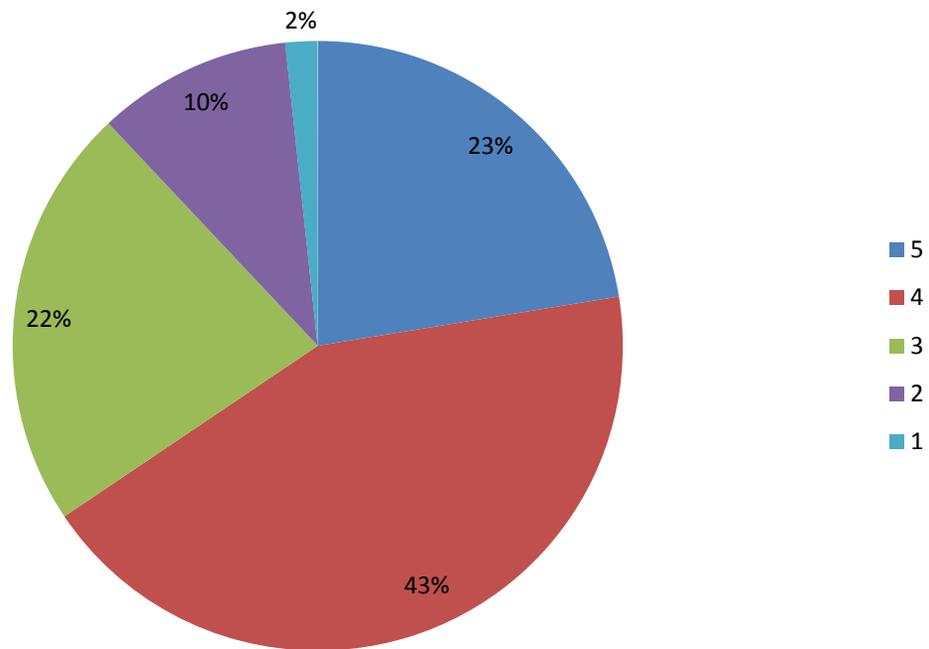
Answer Options	5	4	3	2	1	Response Count
Session I: Opening Plenary	11	38	18	5	2	74
Session II: Public Acceptance	24	41	11	0	1	77
Session III: Topics in Public Acceptance	18	41	13	3	0	75
Session IV: Keynote	15	28	23	6	4	76
Session V.A.: Wind Energy Economics	7	10	9	3	1	30
Session V.B.: Establishing a Network for Info	4	14	9	3	2	32
Session V.C.: Offshore Wind	4	11	7	1	2	25
Session V.D.: Current Mitigation Techniques	9	22	5	3	0	39
Session VI: Moving Toward More Wind Power	13	23	7	3	1	47
<i>answered question</i>						<b>79</b>
<i>skipped question</i>						<b>10</b>



Which workshop did you attend?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Workshop A: Advancing the State of Knowledge - Building and Funding a Credible Research & Education Agenda	22.4%	15
Workshop B: Using Stakeholder Networks to Engage the Undecided	6.0%	4
Workshop C: Building Better Bylaws	7.5%	5
Workshop D: Learning from Experience: Using Planning and Mitigation to Find Better Outcomes	35.8%	24
I did not attend a workshop	28.4%	19
<b>answered question</b>		<b>67</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>22</b>

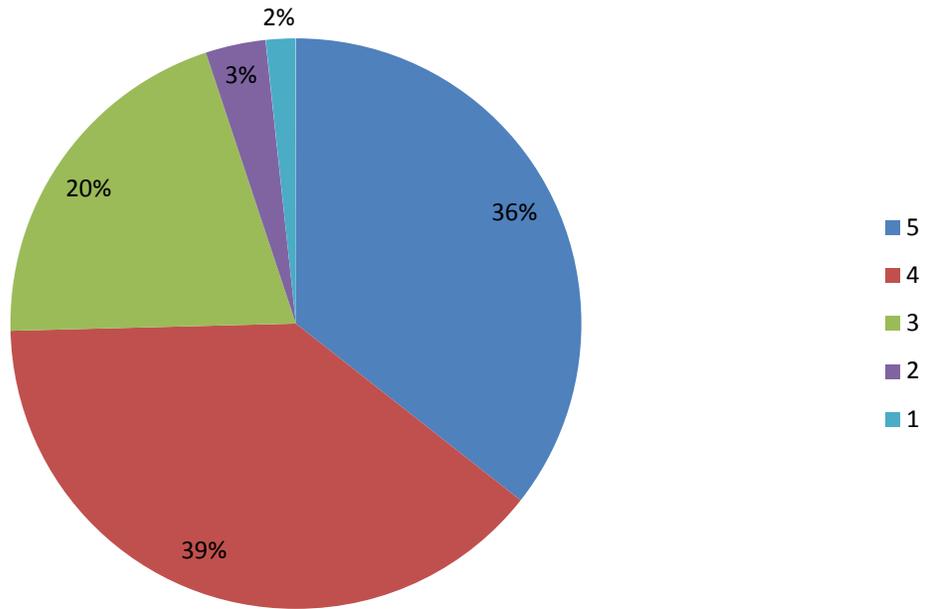


Was the workshop informative and productive? (5=Yes, Very, 1=No, Not at All)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5	22.4%	13
4	43.1%	25
3	22.4%	13
2	10.3%	6
1	1.7%	1
<i>answered question</i>		<b>58</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>31</b>
Percent 4 or 5		65.5%



Did the workshop provided an effective environment to share all views? (5=very much, 1=not at all)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5	35.6%	21
4	39.0%	23
3	20.3%	12
2	3.4%	2
1	1.7%	1
<i>answered question</i>		<b>59</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>30</b>
Percent 4 or 5	74.6%	



## Short Answer Questions

**Please provide any other specific comments you have in the space below. For example, comment on the high points or low points of the conference**

### **Overall Conference: Positive**

Overall: Moderators did an outstanding job of keeping sessions on time, giving air time for questions, asking questions of panel members. The timekeeping process worked well; wasn't distracting to audience."

High point was the turnout and sponsorship and the caliber of the speakers and the quality of the information.

I thought the conference was very well run and was very useful

I thought the panelists were extremely knowledgeable and interesting

The variety and quality of speakers were very good. Having people with real world experiences relate their stories provided a lot of credibility. It is interesting, at most conferences I attend, the same issues are addressed, but there doesn't seem to be a path to resolving those issues.

Mitigation info was very helpful ... also helpful was hearing how other communities were handling their wind projects.

Experiences and lessons learned from owners/managers of current wind projects invaluable

Curtailment - developers coming to the Berkshires repeatedly have said that this is not an option that they can consider to mitigate unforeseen impacts - we see now through existing projects that curtailment is an option that can be used! Obviously, curtailment will cut into profits, but it is a mitigation tool that private, for-profit wind developers need to face up to if they want to be more widely accepted. (... the point is that they learned something)

### **Positive Specific Session**

Particularly enjoyed hearing from the lawyer for the anti-wind folks in the north/south shore and cape - he was reasonable and knowledgeable, and I learned a lot.

Session VI: Excellent session. Informative, and Linowes' questions were tough and relevant. She could have used more time.

## **Areas for Improvement**

Session III was interesting, but bird/bat impact from wind needed to be put into the perspective of other generation technologies' impact on wildlife. Do wind turbines have a significant impact on bird/bat deaths?

Session 3 was overloaded with information, so that we really didn't get much detailed/in depth information.

The Wind Energy Economics Session seemed a little high level and I was hoping for a some more detail and specifics.

Session V-D: No real discussion of the costs of the various mitigation techniques. Would have liked a more comprehensive summary of all mitigation techniques available to developers.

I was very disappointed with the coverage of potential environmental impacts. The speakers for this topic seemed to be ill-informed and the coverage was not nearly as high-quality or informative as coverage for noise and some other community impacts.

Closing remarks: Too condensed to be really direction-giving, but well done given the breadth of topics covered.

## **Suggestions**

Maine has very specific public issues as a result of misinformation about "transmission congestion". I would like to see more factual information made available geared toward helping the layman understand this complicated issue. Possible options for public education should be a focus of future conferences.

**Based on the conference's discussion, what do you see as the largest challenge(s) to wind development in New England?**

(Numbers represent the number of times repeated)

- Lack of money
  - For feasibility siting
- Lack of clear permitting guidelines and consistency across jurisdiction
- Lack of adequate siting (6)
- siting issues (6)
  - Noise (5)
  - Environmental
  - Visual (2)
  - wildlife impacts (2)
  - Transmission issues (2)
- Public Opposition (9)
  - NIMBY (7)
  
- Raising public awareness (7)
  - Lack of education and experience
- Lack of science (3)
- Lack of adequate accurate information (3)
- Lack of advanced planning

“The fact that so much cost/effort is being put into managing a discussion for so very few people. In reality it is a vast minority that have issues with the technology and it's perplexing why this industry much work so hard for what seems like complete consensus.”

**Based on the conference's discussion, what do you see as the largest challenge(s) to communities where wind projects have been proposed?**

(Numbers represent the number of times repeated)

- Siting issues
  - Noise (7)
  - Environmental
  - Visual
  - Wildlife
- Public Opposition
  - NIMBY (4)
  - Health effects
- Getting accurate information (8)
  - Forecasts of impacts (3)
  - Value of wind projects (6)
  - To make informed decisions (3)
- Facilitating a balanced discussion (2)
- Developing dialogue between developers and property owners (3)
  - Early enough
  - In an open and honest manner
- Public acceptance (3)
  - Outreach and education (6)
- Funding/resources (2)
- Establishing proper regulations (2)
- Weighing the benefits and the inconvenience (2)
- Fighting developers from taking advantage of communities (2)
- Providing local leaders with framework, skills and competence to conduct an effective, balanced approval process and make reasonable decisions that are respected and accepted by most of their constituents (2)
- the federal or state legal framework that enables interveners to appeal the decisions of local and state regulatory authorities.

## **Were there additional topics the conference should have addressed?**

How does wind compare to other energy sources?

- Financial incentives

Details about the economics of a wind project

- Capital investment required
- Size of installations needed
- Public policy
- What is the value of a project?

Testimonies from people living near wind turbines

- Include them on the panel

How to establish the proper facts and then how do you effectively communicate these facts to the public?

More on Offshore Wind

More on Technology issues

- Noise issues
  - Design for noise reduction?
- Flicker
- Transmission
- Environmental impacts of wind development

How to develop fair local regulations

- Tools for decision makers

Preliminary steps for the community to be able to anticipate the construction and operation of a turbine

Post-contraction mitigation options for unforeseen impacts

Future webinar ideas

- PPAs
- Net Metering
- PILOT agreements
  - (things the public general don't understand)

**How can we build on, improve on, or expand this conference/workshop to better contribute to a constructive dialogue on wind power siting?**

Use case studies (mentioned 3 times)

- Invite people from Hull and ask them their experience

Technical advances in the industry

Follow up conference in a year or two to discuss what strategies have worked/not worked in the time frame

Role play

Include a more broad range of people

- Include more anti-wind people (mentioned 5 times)
  - Reputable wind critics needed
- Include more local public officials and technical experts
- Hear more from those who live near wind turbines (mentioned 2 times)
- Include those from transmission and distribution to present their perspective

Less topics to increase the Q&A and discussion

Less about habitats and animals

Go deeper into the health effects by bringing in medical experts

More from Academic science

Add a session on negotiate impasses around wind turbine proposals

Focus more on the regulatory process

Perhaps identify key people (by generic roles - IE: town selectmen, etc) and send them an easy to read bullet-point list of wind power advantages, other educational materials (preferably on line but via mail if necessary) so that local decision makers become more knowledgeable on the benefits of wind power, and then perhaps offer those people a discount to future conferences.

## **Comments on Organization of the Conference**

Organization of the workshop numbers was confusing (V.A, V.B, etc...) Would simplify it and use better signage to direct individuals to workshop rooms.

There were too many parallel paths during the workshops. Maybe limit it to two or so workshops given a session. (Mentioned 2)

Have more seating

## **General Positive feedback**

I thought the organizers did an amazing job creative a constructive, safe environment for the discussion, which I think defused the polarized participants

All things considered, a good effort at constructive dialogue was made by conference/workshop organizers.

You've done a terrific job. Somehow you've got to find out what the motivation is for the anti-wind people

## **Interesting Comments**

Go away. There is nothing you can do with talking, no number of workshops or panels, to overcome the very real problems associated with this technology in New England. It isn't compatible with our existing land uses. Get real, please.

## End of Workshop Questionnaire

**How can we build on, improve on, or expand this conference/workshop, moving the dialog on appropriate wind deployment forward in a constructive manner?**

1. Develop regional research connections
2. Workshops were limited in time
3. The subjects dealt with here should become subjects of the quarterly Mass Wind Working Group Meetings, Providing for more in-depth discussion
4. -More expert info on what makes for good info sources  
-More of a focus on how to get decision-makers to make good decisions  
-more focus on getting past misinformation
5. The member of new sound guidelines and the WESRA (MA) need to be released within a public framework and in a conference similar to today's so we have buy in by the anti's (and education of the pro people)
6. Keep collecting and disseminating information on impacts and mitigation strategies (technical and non technical)
7. Successful case studies for hard projects
8. More effort needed to solicit input from contrarians. Conference seemed slightly biased towards development, but OK
9. Should we do outreach to media so that the public gains understanding?
10. Would you make power point slides available? Do you plan any "round tables", might be helpful.
11. Workshop on disseminating information to the larger populace before projects get proposed in communities. I think that education after proposal, while valuable, may be too late for some people
12. Workshop D was least useful part of conference for me.
13. This was a very informative day
14. Should be some focus on specific reasons people oppose wind, and case studies where the opponents were correct
15. Bring in more experts and scientists who can answer some of what is unknown. Perhaps just expand on access to research in the conference to reference
16. Results from workshops provided many specific recommendations. This conference was very worthwhile to me
17. Hold workshops in each New England state.  
-Have more opportunities for networking- breaks were too short!
18. Allow participation in more than one workshop, and develop a space to determine what independent research should be done on a more technical level
19. This effort touched on many items, but due to time constraints, the details of each issue were not deeply examined. This may be valuable for future efforts. Perhaps allow for more questioning
20. Continue to provide information that people can use to make informative choices. Provide information on new studies as they become available
21. Local workshops/regional workshops to focus on a areas exact issues
22. Planned debated to address topics from a variety of angles
23. Look to define regional wind standards for contentious issues (noise, ice throw etc) that could be accepted region wide without preventing responsible development

24. Workshops “question to discuss” not clearly defined which resulted in a lot of wasted time in the beginning of the workshop.
25. There was zero public engagement opportunity despite quite a few public present  
Challenges to wind : policy unrealistic/out of sync with public. Community: money, overwhelmed by big business and government collaborating, no help for citizens and towns
26. Sharing as much information as possible, prior to the conference, allows participants to maximize their benefit of the event. I think a good job was done here.
27. Good web resources, clearly listed.
28. More of these to include the general public
29. Keep it up
30. Present resources and studies from existing projects (success stories)
31. More information on offshore wind. Have some actual current projects stand up and present issues
32. Provide follow-up sessions that cover the results of studies on various issues currently underway
33. You need more citizen groups. The conference was almost devoid of any citizen group representation on the panels. The leads of citizen groups, although labeled “anti-wind” have a great deal of knowledge on the topics and are not unreasonable people. This entire program felt like an industry cheerleading session. There should have been more Q+A time and more workshop time. The panel structure does not permit much open discourse.
34. More on community interest rather than the focus on industry cheerleading. Need a session or two on what should the environmental standards be.
35. Send an e-mail with this question!
36. Power point ahead of time so notes could be taken on a slide
37. Use social media to get more direct input preconference, during conference, post conference
38. Need more outreach to those on both extremes of the issues to get a more diverse group, more frequent similar events to allow for more audience interaction (shorter presentations)
39. Too dry. Need more lively back and forth
40. It was fantastic. Follow up with online survey
41. \*\*\*\*help!
42. Workshop small groups needed moderator staff to stay focused. This was the least productive aspect of an otherwise fine conference
43. More opportunity for effectively moderated discussion in smaller groups. More widely available education for the general public on public benefits of wind energy
44. Wasn’t enough time for question, need more exploration of why there is opposition to wind projects, discussion too one-sided. On the side of facts. Opponents don’t necessarily deal in facts. NEWEEP has done a great job educating people
45. Keep being inclusive. I thought the first morning panel was great because of the breadth of perspectives.
46. Keep it going
47. It might be nice to build in more networking time, and make it less presentations and more interactive. We didn’t get interactive until the very end, which was too late in my opinion
48. Discuss all sources of electricity and wind’s place in the mix. More discussion of transmission and impacts (future needs) more information on conservation and efficiency.
49. Have more mature opponents discuss their opposition and what they want procedurally and substantively from specific case studies in small groups

# **Wind Energy in New England: Understanding the Issues Affecting Public Acceptance**

## **New England Wind Energy Education Project Conference and Workshop**

### **Terms of Engagement (Ground Rules):**

1. The meeting is without prejudice. To encourage open, honest, and creative dialogue in the best spirit of debate, all participants agree that views and statements made in the meeting will not be used in any way to discredit, defame, or attack them in or after the meeting.
2. Participants will communicate with mutual respect, and agree to discuss civilly. Only one person will speak at a time as called upon by the facilitator. Participants will refrain from personal attacks. Each person will express his or her own views and seek understanding rather than speaking for others and not attribute motives to others.
3. Participants should do their best to distinguish facts and evidence from opinion when they speak.
4. Everyone comes with preconceived notions, but all should be prepared to observe and to listen more than speak. Each person is encouraged to generate opinions and ideas without committing to a position.
5. Each person will seek to identify areas of common ground where possible, without glossing over or minimizing legitimate disagreements.

### **Conference Principles/Mission Statement**

NEWEEP was formed based on the premise that wind energy has benefits and that responsibly-sited wind power has a role to play in New England, but, not every place is the right place for wind generation. Our society needs energy, and no energy source available, including wind power, is free of undesirable impacts. Wind power is not as free of consequence as its most ardent supporters would hope (and sometimes represent), and the consequences of wind power are rarely as dire as made out to be by wind power's most ardent skeptics. To succeed in "doing it right" -- minimizing or mitigating negative impacts to a reasonable degree - people need factual information to inform their siting decisions. NEWEEP's task is to be inclusive in the search for good, accurate, objective information. Objectivity is an ideal to strive for, but one acknowledged as difficult to reach. Everyone comes with preconceived notions, and therefore objectivity is in the eye of the beholder. Yet our society has developed standards and approaches of research and review that, when applied, must carry greater weight than opinion and rhetoric. It is NEWEEP's mission to seek and make available the best information possible to support good decisions.