



JAMES WARREN/Cape Cod Times

Wind turbine could power MMR cleanup

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OTIS AIR BASE – Air Force officials want to build a 660-kilowatt wind turbine on the Massachusetts Military Reservation that could power the base's busy groundwater cleanup facilities.

The site for the proposed turbine, on the base boundary about a half-mile from Route 28 in Cataumet, is an ideal location because it is a windy area and the treatment plants use a lot of electricity, said officials from the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence Installation Restoration Program.

Contamination at MMR is a product of military activity on the base over the years.

The program, which pumps and cleans millions of gallons of tainted water each day at eight Upper Cape treatment plants, spends more than \$1 million annually on electricity.

Air Force officials estimate the turbine could reduce the program's elec-



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Massachusetts Military Reservation**

The wind turbine would reportedly be no more than 300 feet tall and be built at the southwest corner of the base.

Turbine: Power for cleanup

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tric bill by about \$170,000 a year.

Generating energy at the base with wind power as opposed to buying electricity from fossil-fuel power plants also makes environmental sense, according to Air Force officials.

"We are an environmental organization. We do anything we can to lessen our impact," said Jon Davis, manager for the Installation Restoration Program.

Air Force officials said they have enough money in their 2006 budget to design and install a turbine this year. But the project still must be approved by several groups, including the Federal Aviation Administration and officials overseeing the nearby PAVE PAWS military radar facility.

The proposed turbine would be no more than 300 feet tall, said Rose Forbes, who has worked on the project.

The turbine would be built on the site of the Landfill One treatment facility – an open area at the southwestern corner of the base. It would likely be visible from both sides of Route 28, since the treatment plant site is on a hill.

Forbes said the location gets average wind speeds of 20 mph.

Davis expects the project to pay for itself in electrical cost savings in five to eight years.

“From my perspective, it is really a good site because they seem to have the (wind) resources and, barring any environmental concerns such as birds, it looks like it has the power load,” said Diane Rielinger, a Falmouth member of the citizen team that advises the Air Force cleanup efforts at the base.

The Upper Cape military reservation was pegged as a possible site for a land-based wind farm during regulators’ evaluation of the proposed Nantucket Sound wind farm. Some balked at the idea because the reservation is an active training base and includes a runway used by helicopters and jets.

So far, all base flying units – including the Air Force, Army aviation and the Coast Guard – have signed off on the proposed turbine, which would be far from the base runway.

But Davis has yet to hear official word from Air Force officials about the PAVE PAWS radar facility, in the northeast corner of the base.

An Air Force official has said the proposed Nantucket Sound wind farm project would not pose a threat to PAVE PAWS. But this week, U.S. Rep. William Delahunt, D-Mass., called for a federal hearing to determine whether turbines could interfere with radar signals.

Davis said the base turbine project will likely undergo a National Environmental Policy Act filing to determine whether there are any adverse environment impacts.

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