

## Our Backyard

I am someone that has a deep love of nature and a keen respect for the world that surrounds me. My father instilled that in me at a very early age. One of his favorite songs was "What a Wonderful World". So it saddens me to see how our world around is crumbling right before us....even in our tiny pristine town of Burrillville, small town America at its best.

This great country of ours was established with the words written on a preamble we studied way back in grade school. "WE THE PEOPLE", yes, three simple words and I am one with We the people....as are all of YOU. Yet it is not we that take priority. It has become big business, greed, politicians and corporate America. The big business in our case is a power plant. Which would seem to have taken priority over our needs and way of life. A proposal by our governor has helped to set this plan in motion. A proposal for a power plant in Providence was denied....yet now here we are with a major proposal for our neighborhood. Yes, our backyard....the one with sparkling lakes and streams, thick green forests with abounding wild life. There are habitats here for such rare species which may soon become extinct. I have even witnessed a bald eagle soaring gracefully over the lake where I am blessed to live.

Now enter the big power company we have come to know as Inverergy. This is an impending danger to our "small town America"...to our air....according to the fact sheet, they will be burning 33 billion cubic feet of fracked gas and 18 million gallons of diesel fuel per year. Also per Invenergy's application, the Clear River Center could release up to 750 tons of EPA criterion pollutants each year. Our water is also at risk from chemicals and evaporation spray.

It would seem that this major power conglomerate is not held to the same standards as you and I. According to their proposal, 67 acres of forest will be destroyed, including nearly 3 acres of wetlands. Now those of us who are property owners with wetlands... we know how restricted WE are....If we cut down one tree we are reprimanded by DEM....they do not want us to disturb the environment....What is wrong with this picture?

Dealing with excessive noise will also become part of our daily life...All the reasons we had for moving here could be forever diminished. The joy of our country life style may become a thing of the past. Doesn't it just seem like big business has taken priority over our eco-system. Those in charge of this proposal were put here by "WE the people". thus our interest should be of top concern. Could it be that our backyard is no longer our backyard at all...or does it belong to the government and the greed of corporate America? Exactly what good does "so called" clean energy serve if the air and water we need to exist are filled with pollutants. Who will be our advocate, who will be our watchdog against these perils? Our voices NEED to be heard or this concept of We the people has been lost.

And so it is, I may be one very small voice....like that tiny speck in the Dr. Seuss children's book, "Horton Hears a Who"....but I am compelled by the impact of what is happening around me to speak out. Energy is truly of extreme importance, but the very state of our environment should be of deep concern. Our eco-system is priceless....No money in the world can buy back a destroyed environment and the wonders of "Our Backyard"

Suzanne Desautell Dumas  
(a concerned Burrillville resident)

(email address: tbear1548@aol.com))