

# HNWD's project: Where do things stand?

RICHMOND — While national coverage focuses on the recent report on wind energy in the Mid-Atlantic Highlands, the project proposed in Highland County is still in limbo.

Next month, the Virginia Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the lawsuit brought by Highland County residents and landowners who allege the county board of supervisors illegally approved a conditional use permit for Highland New Wind Development LLC. The company hopes to construct 18-20 turbines on Allegheny Mountain with a generating capacity of 39 megawatts.

A decision from the Supreme Court is not expected until September.

Meanwhile, HNWD's permit application with the State Corporation Commission awaits further evidentiary hearings before a decision is rendered.

April 6, the commission remanded the case back to the hearing examiner for further information.

A pre-hearing conference was held April 24 during which parties in the SCC case discussed the scope of further proceedings. In order for the new procedural schedule to be met, which calls for evidentiary hearings to be held July 17, the examiner has directed legal responses from the respondents to be due by May 15.

Each of the respondents will then file copies of testimony by June 19, and rebuttal testimony will be filed by July 6.

HNWD had objected to holding another round of hearings, but the examiner denied its request. After those hearings, the examiner will submit another report to the commissioners.

— *Anne Adams*