

Peace Energy is her chance to get involved

GARY RUSAK

DAILY NEWS

The Peace Energy Cooperative's new executive director was introduced to the Peace River Regional District board at its regular meeting on Thursday morning.

Jenny Rooseboom started the position in mid-August after moving to the area in March from Vancouver. She said it was her interest in alternative energy and her background in administration and finances that made the job a perfect fit.

"Until I sat down with them for the interview process I wasn't up to speed with what was going on on Bear Mountain," she said referring to the Cooperative's wind exploration lease on the local site. "I like the philosophy of the Co-op and I'm for renewable energy. It is easy to be for it and not do anything about it, so I thought that this is my chance to get involved."

The local group is exploring the possibility of erecting a wind farm on Bear Mountain and selling the energy created by the 50 to 75 turbines to B.C. Hydro. In its two years of existence, the Co-op has secured a lease for the property and signed a memorandum of understanding with Aeolis, a Vancouver Island-based company to assist in the technical aspects of the



Gary Rusak photo

New Peace Energy executive director Jenny Rooseboom pointed out the group's prospective wind farm at the PRRD regular meeting Thursday.

project.

While being awarded an alternative energy tender from B.C. Hydro and raising the capital needed to start implementing the project could be years away, Rooseboom said that her work so far is mostly directed towards positioning the group for those possibilities.

"Right now I'm trying to organize

the records," she said. "To get my member information up to date, work on communications with the board and just setting up some policies.... We are also working on increasing our membership and seeing what can we do for our members, what else can we make available."

Currently, the group has 165 members. With the rising cost of energy

grabbing headlines almost everyday, Rooseboom is hopeful to boost that number up to 200 next year.

Members are charged a \$200 initial fee and then \$20 per month. The hope is that once the turbines are up and producing energy each member will receive dividends in excess of their original investment.

"As we progress with this project and if it becomes feasible, people will become interested in it as an investment and a return on the dollar," she said. "We find that we have different members; some people are joining because they are interested in green energy while others are joining because it's an investment possibility."

With her first meeting with regional authorities under her belt, Peace Energy's new executive director was impressed with how well the idea was received.

"I am really pleased that everyone wants to support it," she said. "It's great."

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