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A Futility Triptych

Port Angeles is a quaint town on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, in Washington State. It now sports three state-of-the-art wind turbines. Which were purchased with more than just generating electricity in mind.

“They were also meant to educate folks about wind power,” City Councilwoman Sissi Bruch said recently.

And the activists, politicians and bureaucrats responsible for the \$107,516 purchase achieved that, surely. Just not the way they intended.



You see, based on current Bonneville Power Administration rates, the turbines — described by Paul Gottlieb of the local *Peninsula Daily News* as “windmill-like” — are expected to “produce \$1.50 a month in savings.”

The city council members express regret about that, and admit these monuments to enviro-consciousness are a boondoggle. But they insist: they never expected the generated electricity to pay back the investment. From what I can tell, the generated electricity won’t even pay back their maintenance cost, though Mr. Gottfried did not clarify that in his *Daily News* report, mainly because the maintenance costs are as of yet unknown.

Further, as a result of Port Angeles’s wet, salty-air environment — they are located in a park by the Strait — they are not expected to last past 25 years.

But it gets worse! *They are not even running yet.* They await Underwriter Laboratories inspection and approval. They stand motionless.

Monuments to the futility of wind power.

OK, the futility of wind power in *most locations.*

The turbines do look cool. I like their vertical design. I merely suggest one alteration (*for efficiency of message*): the blades should be shaped as dollar signs.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

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