

And much more needs to be said and written about the testing of tidal stream turbines in Minas Passage!

Dr. Graham Daborn, Emeritus Professor, Acadia University wrote an article for Opinions on Oct. 15 concerning the title above but without the 'more'. Unfortunately 'much' of what has been said and written comes from the proponents of tidal power and they have obscured the facts about what the physical properties of their machines can do to living organisms.

People living around Minas Basin still talk about what happened when the first OPEN turbine was installed at the FORCE experimental site in 2009. Two Humpback whales suddenly showed up on Minas Basin beaches with large gashes in their bodies. That turbine suddenly stopped working and when it was lifted in 2010 blades were broken. What broke them? Large whales can move quickly. Nothing prevents them from leaving the southern Bay of Fundy in the morning to forage in Minas Passage that afternoon. There was a Clean Current tidal turbine in BC but it was suddenly removed. Rumor among turbine engineers is that it murdered a Killer whale. Recently the deployment of OPEN turbines in Puget Sound was stopped because of concern for Killer whales. Nova Scotians, Google: Orca Conservancy!

Lobsters are very abundant in Minas Passage as they migrate into and out of Minas Basin where summer temperatures are 6-8 C° higher than they are in the Bay of Fundy. Their behavior has evolved from the fact that lobster larvae grow faster in warm water. Faster growth means higher survival. Lobster fishers in Minas Passage benefit from this and where lobster catches in other areas drop off after the first few weeks of the season, Minas Passage catches remain consistently high. Do we want to upset this benefit to Nova Scotia? They have already lost 2 km² of lobster bottom to the FORCE site.

Fact: There was a statement that the Cape Sharp tidal turbine is 'nothing like the Annapolis turbine'. Nothing could be further from the truth! Both are axial-flow, hydraulic lift turbines. Yes, the Annapolis turbine rotates 50 RPM, but it only has 4 blades. The Cape Sharp turbine will rotate at 10 RPM but because it has 10 blades the distance between the rotating blades (water length) is almost the same (3.4 m vs 4 m) making it as lethal as Annapolis. Also, Annapolis only operates about 11 h a day on ebb tide, when the Cape Sharp turbine will operate on both ebb and flood tide (23 h a day) making it doubly dangerous!

Daborn states the Cape Sharp permits are for testing purposes only. Annapolis was installed as a TEST turbine and 31 years later it is still spinning, still killing fish (5 sturgeon and counting this year) and never was there an environmental assessment. Cape Sharp can keep putting in 2 MW turbines for years without triggering an assessment!

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