

*Back To The Future*, Episode Six: Whose Commonwealth is It?

March 24, 2010

A Series from Sea Change Radio

Welcome to the final episode in our Sea Change series, *Back to the Future*. Journalist and policy strategist David Bollier tells us about the idea of the commons; wind energy expert Patrick Quinlan talks about wind power in Massachusetts and how it has become a battleground over competing definitions of the commons; wind developer Dan Juhl talks about community wind power; and historian Kerry Buckley sums up the lessons of our series.

Each month, *Back To The Future* looks at what we can learn from the past, when we used far less fossil fuels than we do today. We explore practices we can adapt as we move toward a lower carbon future. [Last month](#), we looked at how water power in Holyoke, Massachusetts helped fuel the industrial revolution in the U.S. and is powering the birth of a green economy in Holyoke. This month we look at how the ancient idea of the commons can be adapted to ensuring the survival of the ecological commons. We also take the case of wind power in Massachusetts to examine how controversy has erupted over conflicting ways people define the common good.

[David Bollier](#) is a journalist and policy strategist whose work focuses on the politics, economics and culture of the commons. He's the editor of the web portal and blog [OntheCommons.org](#) and also co-founder of [Public Knowledge](#), a public interest group defending the rights of the intellectual commons in the digital sphere. Lately he's been thinking about how to establish a international legal framework for protecting the ecological commons.

Patrick Quinlan is Associate Director of the [Wind Energy Center](#) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He's been actively involved in wind power and clean technology development since 1982. He was an advisor to the U.S. Office of Science and Technology Policy and worked for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in the Washington office, serving the Federal wind energy, solar energy, geothermal, and hydrogen technology programs.

Minnesota-based Dan Juhl of [Juhl Wind](#) is one of America's pioneers in community wind power. Sea Change Radio [interviewed him](#) originally in 2008.

Kerry Buckley is executive director of [Historic Northampton](#). He's the author of several books and editor of [A PLACE CALLED PARADISE](#).

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