

Resistance to radio towers in Washington state turned violent

After nine years of peaceful protests against a powerful AM radio transmitter, someone took the matter into their own hands and pulled down the towers by force.

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When it was announced in 2000 that a 50,000 watt radio transmitter was to be built in the Snohomish Valley, in Washington state, local people organized to stop it.

The grass roots organization Citizens to Preserve the Upper Snohomish Valley was created to do fundraising and fight the protracted legal battle against the transmitter. Their concerns were the impact on the landscape by the tall antenna towers, disturbance of wildlife and the impact on human health from the radiation.

Several scientific studies show an increased risk of childhood leukemia in areas with AM radio transmitters, as well as other radio towers, but not all such studies show there is a danger.

The radio station developer hired their own scientist to testify that there is no credible evidence of health risks.

A slim majority of the Snohomish County Council sided with the radio station, and eventually approved a total of six transmission towers.

Four towers were erected on a 40-acre (16 hectare) lot and in February 2009 the 50,000 watt KRKO transmitter went on the air. The developer then started on plans for a second 50,000 watt transmitter and two additional towers.

People living nearby complained that the transmitter was so powerful it was picked up by telephone landlines, and drowned out the reception of other radio stations. Some electronic equipment also started to malfunction.

After seven months of operation, someone pulled down the 349 foot (113 meter) main tower and one of the smaller 199 foot (64 meter) towers. This was done late

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at night, using a large excavator which was parked on the property — presumably for construction of the two new towers.

The saboteur fled the scene and wasn't caught. A large sign was left behind, claiming the deed was done by the Earth Liberation Front, which have done similar acts in the Snohomish Valley area and elsewhere.

The radio station was able to continue operation at reduced transmission power, until the two toppled towers could be rebuilt.

Source

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