

Great Lakes Wind Collaborative:
Best Practices to Accelerate Wind Power
in the Great Lakes Region and Beyond
Great Lakes Commission
December 31, 2011

OSTI Final Technical Report

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Principal Investigator/Project Director:

Victoria Pebbles
Program Director
Great Lakes Commission
2805 S. Industrial Hwy., Suite 100
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6791
ph: 734-971-9135
fax: 734-971-9150
email: vpebbles@glc.org

Working Partners: See Attachment A: Best Practices Workgroup Roster

Cost-Sharing Partners: Great Lakes Legislative Caucus

Mike McCabe
701 E. 22nd Street, Suite 110
Lombard, IL 60148-5095
630/925-1922
mmccabe@csg.org

DOE Project Team: DOE HQ Program Manager – Megan McCluer
DOE Field Contract Officer – Pam Brodie
DOE Field Contract Specialist – Kelly Morris or Fania Gordon
DOE Field Project Officer –Michael Hahn
DOE/NAVARRO Project Monitor –Sam Nelson

Distribution Limitations: None

Executive Summary:

The Great Lakes Wind Collaborative (GLWC), a multi-sector coalition of wind energy stakeholders, proposes to impact the market for wind energy through the development and strategic dissemination of information tools on the best practices that can overcome barriers to and promote the benefits of wind development in the 8-state Great Lakes region and beyond. This project identified ways the eight states in the region can learn from each other and establish more consistent wind siting policies and practices. Some of the Great Lakes states – such as Minnesota – have robust policy structures for their wind industries, and this information can help nascent markets develop their own more quickly.

In the Great Lakes region, there is a significant need for information that can advance wind development in complex siting scenarios – both onshore and offshore – by informing public

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understanding and public policy of the real costs, benefits and tradeoffs of wind. The information generated from this project showcases benefits from proper planning, siting, construction and decommissioning of wind facilities.

Objectives

- Identify best practices and policies for wind development in the Great Lakes region.
- Build awareness and knowledge among all Great Lakes wind stakeholders about best practices and policy options for wind development in the Great Lakes region.
- Build capacity among state policymakers to create policies based on an assessment of the benefits of wind power projects in the Great Lakes region.

Deliverables

The project had two concrete deliverables: First is an online toolkit featuring each of the 18 best practices, which are downloadable and viewable as individual documents ranging from 4-7 pages in length. Additionally, the best practices were also compiled into a single document which was professionally designed and 1,000 copies were printed and distributed to selected stakeholders and decision-makers. The compiled document is also available online at <http://www.glc.org/energy/wind/bestpractices.html>

In total, we identified 18 different, yet complimentary preferred practices and policies. The best practices cover all phases of the wind energy development process—from the policies that allow for wind development, to the sustainable operation of a wind project, to the best practices for decommissioning a spent turbine—including applications for offshore wind. The practices include those that have been previously tested and proven effective, as well as new practices that were identified by experts in the field as needed for future wind developments. Each best practice includes information about the opportunities and challenges (pros and cons), and offers a case example that illustrates how that best practice is being utilized by a particular jurisdiction or wind project.

Methods

The best practices were identified through a year-long process that included a literature review, online survey and interviews under the guidance of a Great Lakes Wind Collaborative workgroup that included environmental groups, industry, academia, and federal, state and local government regulators. The following tasks/methods were undertaken to complete the project.

- Publish an analysis of state wind policies
- Develop evaluation criteria to determine what is considered a “best” policy or practice
- Test criteria with focus groups or stakeholders
- Compile candidate list of best practices
- Work with advisory workgroup review and evaluate candidates to develop shorter list
- Stakeholder review and evaluation of shorter list of candidate best practices using established criteria
- Interview stakeholders to get additional feedback and information on candidate best practices
- Develop informational materials (fact sheets) that contain descriptions of the best practices and policy options identified in Task 2.
- Publish materials created in Subtask 3a in the form of a virtual toolbox of best practices and policy options on the Internet

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- With project partners, conduct a strategic outreach plan to state and local
- decision-makers

The best practices are framed as advice to wind energy decisionmakers across the binational Great Lakes region. Regulators, communities and developers should choose the mix of policies and practices from this suite that best advances the development of clean, locally-generated wind energy, protects natural resources, and honors the needs of communities.

Benefits/Outcomes

This project advanced general and technical knowledge of the potential benefits wind power can offer and the means to bring it to fruition in a sustainable manner. This promoted a more sustainable and energy-secure future for the Great Lakes region. The online toolbox of best practices and policy options produced will enable regulators and developers alike to work in a consistent and collaborative manner across the Great Lakes region in siting wind projects. These practices will have a net positive effect for both the environment and economy in the region.

Comparison of Objectives with Accomplishments

Objectives	Accomplishments	
1. Identify best practices and policies for wind development in the Great Lakes region.	Best practices and policies were identified; 18 in total, covering topical areas related to: energy policy; siting/planning/construction; decommissioning; offshore, and public engagement	
2. Build awareness and knowledge among all Great Lakes wind stakeholders about best practices and policy options for wind development in the Great Lakes region.	The publication and online toolkit were developed. We have received many emails and personal feedback on the quality and usefulness of the document/toolkit. Between June, 2011 and October 2011, targeted outreach occurred at 7 different events across the region.	
3. Build capacity among state policymakers to create policies based on an assessment of the benefits of wind power projects in the Great Lakes region.	Great Lakes Legislative Caucus	Indianapolis, IN
	Joint Webinar with CESA	
	Michigan Wind Working Group Mtg	Ithaca, MI
	Illinois Wind Working Group Mtg: Advancing Wind Power in Illinois, 2011	Chicago, IL
	GLWC Annual Meeting	Detroit, MI
	GLSLCI Webinar	
	GLLC webinar	

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Summary of Project Activities, Methods, Problems and Alternative Plans

Task Number	Title or Brief Task Description	Task Completion Date				Progress Notes
		Original Planned	Revised Planned	Actual	Percent Complete	
1	Publish an analysis of state wind policies	12/2009		1/2010	100%	
2-a	Determine what is considered a “best” policy or practice—develop evaluation criteria	3/2010		1/2010	100%	
2-a	Test criteria with focus groups or stakeholders	3/2010	6/2010-8/2010		100%	Became part of Task 2-b.
2-b	Compile candidate list of best practices	3/2010-9/2010	3/2010-10/2010	3/2010-9/30/2010	100%	Basic concepts of final list will be accomplished here. Full development of each practice will be done as part of task 3a
2-b	Workgroup review and evaluation of candidates to develop shorter list	4/2010-6/2010	6/2010-8/2010	6/2010-8/2010	100%	on target as planned
2-b	Stakeholder review and evaluation of shorter list of candidate best practices using established criteria developed under Task 2-a	6/2010-8/2010			100%	This was done through an online survey
2-b	Interviews with stakeholders to get additional feedback and information on candidate best practices	N/A	7/2010-9/2010	7/2010-9/2010	100%	Added as new element of Task 2-b
3-a	Develop informational materials (fact sheets) that contain descriptions of the best practices and policy options identified in Task 2.	7/2010-6/2011	9/2010-6/2011	9/2010-6/2011	100%	On target as planned.
3-b	Publish materials created in Subtask 3a in the form of a virtual toolbox of best practices and policy options on the Internet	4/2011-9/2011	N/A	4/2011-7/2011	100%	Ahead of schedule
4	With project partners, conduct a strategic outreach plan to state and local decision-makers	4/2011-9/2011	3/2011-9/2011	3/2011-11/2011	100%	Began ahead of schedule; no cost extension was granted to accommodate changes in meeting dates by project partners. Work completed by end of Nov., 2011

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Products Developed

The project had two concrete deliverables: First is an online toolkit featuring each of the 18 best practices, which are downloadable and viewable as individual documents ranging from 4-7 pages in length. Additionally, the best practices were also compiled into a single document which was professionally designed and 1,000 copies were printed and distributed to selected stakeholders and decision-makers. The compiled document is also available online at <http://www.glc.org/energy/wind/bestpractices.html>.



Additionally, a team of experts was established forming the Best Practices Workgroup (See Appendix A.)

No computer modeling was performed or developed for this project.

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Appendix A

Great Lakes Wind Collaborative Best Practices Workgroup

FEDERAL

Eric Lantz
National Renewable Energy Laboratory
1617 Cole Blvd.
Golden, CO 80401-3393
Phone: 303
Fax: 303
Eric.Lantz@nrel.gov

Robert Sullivan, Program
Manager/Coordinator
Environmental Science Division
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Ave. EVS 900
Argonne IL 60439
Phone: 630-252-6182
sullivan@anl.gov

Tim Sullivan, Fish & Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
New York Field Office (Region 5)
3817 Luker Rd.
Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-753-9334
Fax: 607-753-9699
tim_sullivan@fws.gov

STATE

Larry B. Hartman (*Chair*)
Office of Energy Security/Energy Facility Permitting
Staff
Minn. Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198
Phone: 651-296-5089
Fax: 651-297-7891
larry.hartman@state.mn.us

Brianna Gary
NYS DEC
Division of Fish, Wildlife & Marine
Resources
625 Broadway
Albany NY 12233-4756
Phone: 518-402-8858
bmgary@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Dan Sage
Assistant Administrator, Gas and Energy
Division
Public Service Commission of WI
610 N. Whitney Way
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854
Phone: 608-267-9486
dan.sage@psc.state.wi.us

Mark Clevey
Michigan Energy Office
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: 517 241-6280
Fax: 517- 241-9822
clevey@michigan.gov

Steven M. Ugoretz
Environmental Analyst & Review Specialist
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S Webster Street - SS/7
PO Box 7921
Madison WI 53703
Phone: 608-266-6673
Fax: 608-267-7559
Steven.ugoretz@wisconsin.gov

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Thomas J. Tuffey, Director
Center for Energy, Enterprise and
Environment
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
(PennFuture)
212 West Gay Street
West Chester, Pa. 19380
Phone: 610-696-8061
tuffey@PennFuture.org

Matt Buffington
Environmental Supervisor
Division of Fish & Wildlife
Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington St., Room W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: 317-233-4666
Fax: 317-232-8150
MBuffington@dnr.IN.gov

Patrick Ernst
Coastal Lands Manager
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
105 W. Shoreline Drive
Sandusky OH 44870
Tel: 419-626-7980 x4118
Fax: 419-626-7983
patrick.ernst@dnr.state.oh.us

PROVINCIAL

William Martin
Policy and Program Advisor
Renewable Energy Section
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
300 Water Street
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M5
Phone: 705-755-5909
William.Martin@Ontario.ca

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Russell R. Lundberg, Director
Huron County Planning, Building & Zoning
Department
County Building, Rm. 102

250 E. Huron Avenue
Bad Axe, Michigan
Phone: 989-269-9269
Fax: 989-269-6024
LUNDBERR@co.huron.mi.us

NON PROFITS/ASSOCIATIONS

David Ewert
Senior Conservation Scientist
The Nature Conservancy
101 East Grand River
Lansing, MI 48906
Phone: 517-316-2256
Fax: 517-316-9886
dewert@tnc.org

John Freitag, Vice President/Operations
Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives
Box 3787
Springfield, IL 62708-3787
Phone: (217) 529-5561
jfreitag@aiec.coop

Anne Margolis
Clean Energy States Alliance/Clean Energy
Group
50 State Street, Suite 1
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: 802-223-2554
Anne@cleanegroup.org

INDUSTRY

Leslie Garrison
Great Lakes Regional Manager
Bluewater Wind
Phone: (201) 841-7690
leslie@bluewaterwind.com

Richard Vander Veen, President
Mackinaw Power
414 E. Main Street
Lowell, MI 49331
Phone: 616-897-1304
rfv3@mackinawpower.com

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jgriffin@schainlaw.com

Michael Vickerman
Executive Director
RENEW Wisconsin
222 South Hamilton Street
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-255-4044
mvickerman@renewwisconsin.org

Kevin Borgia
Executive Director
The Illinois Wind Energy Association
4745 N. Artesian Ave – Garden Suite –
Chicago, IL 60625-2901
Phone: 773-878-WIND
Mobile: 309-310-9831
kborgia@windforillinois.org

UTILITIES

Matt Wagner
Manger-Wind Site Development
DTE Energy
One Energy Plaza
Detroit, MI 48226
Phone: 313-235-5575
Mobile: 313-418-0507
wagnerm2@dteenergy.com

CONSULTANTS

Maureen Brennan
Baker & Hostetler LLP
and Adjunct Professor at Cleveland-
Marshall Law School
3200 National City Center
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
Phone: 216-861-7957
MBrennan@bakerlaw.com

Jim Griffin, Partner
Schain, Burney, Ross & Citron Ltd.
222 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 1910
Chicago, IL 60601-1102
Phone: 312-422-7653

Ginny Plumeau, REM
President, Principal Ecologist
Cedarburg Science, LLC
PO Box 72020
Cedarburg, WI 53012
Phone: 262-376-0735
Fax: 262-376-0754
gplumeau@cedarburgscience.com

Jim Kupferer, Director, Sales
Infrastructure
Fluor Enterprises, Inc.
100 Fluor Daniel Drive, C602NW
Greenville, South Carolina 29607
Phone: 864-281-8326
Fax: 864-281-8818
Mobile: 864-901-7900
jim.kupferer@fluor.com

Angela Piner, Environmental Scientist
(*Vice-Chair*)
HDR One Company
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416
Phone: 763-591-5478
Mobile: 612-432-4506
Fax: 763-591-5413
angela.piner@hdrinc.com

Anngelia Richter, Regional Director
JFNew
6605 Steger Road
Monee, IL 60449
Phone: 708-534-3450
Fax: 708-534-3480
Mobile: 708-516-2544
arichter@jfnew.com

Steve Rice (alternate)
Regional Director
JFNew
11181 Marwill Ave.

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West Olive, MI 49460
Phone: 616-847-1680
Mobile: 616-502-1637
srice@jfnew.com

Mike Gregerson
Great Plains Institute
2801 21st Avenue South
Suite 230
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone: 612-243-5181
mgregerson@gpisd.net

Terry Yonker
President
Marine Services Diversified, LLC
139 Jackson Street
Youngstown, NY 14174
Phone: 716-745-9129
terryyonker@cs.com

ACADEMICS

Erik Nordman, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Coordinator, Natural Resources
Management Program
223 Henry Hall
Grand Valley State University
1 Campus Drive
Allendale, MI 49401
Phone: 616-331-8705
nordmane@gvsu.edu

Jolene Willis, Coordinator
University of Illinois Extension
Western Illinois Economic Development
Partnership
88A Public Square, Ste 2
Monmouth, IL 61462
Phone: 309-734-4253
Fax: 309-734-8811
jwillis@wiedp.org