

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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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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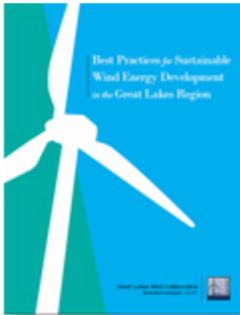
Summary of Project Activities, Methods, Problems and Alternative Plans

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

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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

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