

Important:

An Environmental Assessment for this project was registered with the provincial government on January 18th, 2013 in accordance with Part IV of the Environment Act.

This document is available for public review in hard copy at the Municipal Offices of the District of West Hants, Windsor Town Hall, and the Windsor Public Library. It is available digitally at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/martock-ridge.asp

Any member of the public is invited to submit their comments directly to the Department of Environment until February 23rd, 2013. A ministerial decision regarding EA approval of the project is expect March 9th, 2013.

A Class I Environmental Assessment has been carried out for the Martock Ridge Community Wind Farm by an experienced, third-party environmental engineering firm. The registration document is approximately 200 pages in length, and covers a diversity of study topics ranging from archaeological study, to plant and wildlife surveys, to sound modeling, to socio-economic impacts.

Environmental Assessment Summary

Of the vast scope of topic examined, three areas of particular relevance were given more detailed consideration; Avifauna (birds), Bats, and specific Species of Conservation Interest (SOCI)

These three areas of particular concern underwent a thorough "Effects Analysis" which identified potential impacts and discussed mitigation measures where possible. Overall, the project was found to have a relatively low impact by way of habitat loss and sensory disturbance. Collision mortality for both birds and bats will be an outcome of this project. However, while this may pose a threat to individuals, the magnitude of this impact is not anticipated to affect overall population levels.

Nevertheless, an ongoing monitoring program will be instituted during the operational phase of this project to track actual impact of this project on local bird and bat populations. The details of this program will be approved by NS Environment as part of the EA process.

Watershed Stewardship

With employees, investors, family and friends reliant on the Mill Lakes for their water supply, your water is also our water. Everything from facility design, to clearing and construction activity procedures, to monitoring and operations protocol is being scrutinized to ensure the safety and protection of this important resource. Wind energy in watershed areas can and has been carried out successfully. Here's how we are going to do it.

Development

- The EA process identifies potential risks associated with construction and operation of this project. This aids in planning and allows us to incorporate appropriate mitigation and best management practices early on.
- A draft Environmental Protection Plan has been developed. This document details specifically how construction will be carried out in a way that protects the watershed. The EPP is approved by NS Environment prior to construction and will incorporate feedback from municipal Public Works, and the Watershed Advisory Committee
- The detailed design of the facility will include feedback from Public Works to ensure micro-siting of infrastructure mitigates any potential risk. Other municipal departments are also being engaged, such as the Fire Dept., to determine if additional design features are required.

Construction

- The EPP will guide construction practices to ensure risk of contamination is minimized. This includes risks associated with construction activities, as well as construction machinery and supplies.
- The Construction Manager overseeing this project is experienced with working in environmentally sensitive areas. He has overseen projects for the oil & gas industry as well as other wind energy projects in protected areas such as the MacKenzie Delta and the water supply area for Taber, Alberta.

Operations

- An Environmental Management Framework is a system of documentation covering all aspects of facility operation. This ensures protocols for watershed protection are incorporated into every activity associated with the operation of the project. The EMF will be developed during the construction phase, with input from many stakeholders, based on ISO 14000 standards.
- In addition to industry standard remote monitoring, this facility will be connected to an enhanced monitoring system, manned 24/7 by live technicians. Sensors will track all aspects of turbine operation to identify problems before they occur.
- The monitoring system is part of a larger maintenance program that is among the most vigorous in the industry including a manufacturers warranty that covers the full operational life of the project. Service will be carried out by a central Nova Scotian maintenance team, but a trained local "site guardian" will also be established to give us the capacity for rapid-response to any potential issue.

