

1 **ENVIRONMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

2 The Talbot Windfarm project is subject to the Environmental Screening process
3 (Category B) under the Ontario Ministry of the Environment's ("MOE") "*Guide to*
4 *Environmental Assessment Requirements for Electricity Projects*" (March 2001). A
5 Notice of Commencement for the environmental screening study was issued on July 6,
6 2007. To ensure that environmental issues were fully considered, RES Canada
7 voluntarily self-elevated its Talbot Windfarm project from an Environmental Screening to
8 a more detailed Environmental Review.

9 An Environmental Review Report/Environmental Impact Statement ("ERR") was
10 completed by Dillon Consulting Limited ("Dillon Consulting") in order to fulfill provincial
11 and federal environmental regulatory requirements. An interdisciplinary team of
12 professionals prepared this report based on extensive field work and data collection
13 activities. These included one year of bird survey work and the conduct of extensive bat
14 surveys and natural feature studies. Field visits were conducted to examine water
15 crossing locations, confirm the presence of natural vegetation/wildlife habitat and the
16 location of noise receptors. Maps, air photos, natural heritage data and studies and
17 land-use planning documents and policies were reviewed. Natural heritage survey
18 programs were guided by the input of provincial and federal government agencies.

19 A "Notice of Completion of an Environmental Review Report: Talbot Wind Farm" (the
20 "Notice") was released on May 1st 2009. The Notice advised the public and key
21 stakeholders that RES Canada had completed the environmental review of the Talbot
22 Windfarm project and had determined that there were no significant environmental
23 impacts (including the natural and social environment) associated with the projects.
24 The Notice triggered the beginning of a minimum 30-day review period during which any
25 interested party who had significant outstanding environmental concerns about the
26 project, could raise these concerns with RES Canada. RES Canada and the concerned
27 party would then attempt to resolve the matter.

28 If the parties were unable to resolve the concern, the concerned party could then
29 proceed to make a written request, to the Director of the Environmental Assessment
30 and Approvals Branch of the MOE, to elevate the project to an individual Environmental
31 Assessment under the *Environmental Assessment Act* ("Elevation Requests").
32 Elevation Requests were required to be made in accordance with the provisions set out
33 in the MOE's Environmental Screening Process for Electricity Projects.

34 The 30-day review period expired on June 1, 2009. The MOE and RES Canada
35 received a total of 37 Elevation Requests. Of these:

- 1 • 35 were on an identical form letter stating general concerns about the health
2 impacts of wind turbines and high frequency electrical pollution. These letters can
3 be further broken down as follows:
 - 4 ○ 19 arrived within the 30-day comment period;
 - 5 ○ 13 arrived after the expiry of the 30-day comment period;
 - 6 ○ 3 were sent directly to the MOE and arrived on an unknown date.
 - 7 • 2 local residents requested and were granted an extension of the review period
8 until June 5, 2009 by RES Canada. These two residents submitted Elevation
9 Requests raising a number of concerns about the health impact of wind turbines,
10 the proper integration of Talbot Windfarm into the rural landscape, shadow
11 flicker, alleged misrepresentations in the ERR, completeness of certain studies
12 used in the ERR, land use issues, the validity of the MOE sound analysis,
13 lightning concerns, impact on tundra swans, beavers, eastern foxsnakes and
14 butterflies, spread of herbicide-resistant weeds, soil compaction through
15 vibration, electrical pollution through electromagnetic fields, and impact on water
16 wells. Most of these concerns were addressed in the ERR and discussed during
17 several public information sessions and meetings of the Talbot Windfarm
18 Advisory Group, as discussed in Exhibit I, Tab 1, Schedule 1. RES Canada has
19 provided further information to the MOE on all of the issues raised by the two
20 residents.
- 21 The MOE is in the process of evaluating the Elevation Requests and the Director's
22 decision is imminent.
- 23 A copy of the ERR, without the appendices, is attached at Tab H, Tab 1, Schedule 2. A
24 copy of the complete ERR with all appendices can be accessed at
25 <http://www.talbotwindfarm.com/environment-and-economic-studies>.