

WCO | WIND CONCERNS ONTARIO

January 4, 2012

Ontario Energy Board,
P.O. Box 2319
27th Floor 2300 Yonge Street
Toronto ON
M4P 1E4

Attention: Kirsten Walli: Board Secretary Filings

RE: EB-2011-0394 Notice of Application and Hearing
Application for leave to construct transmission facilities for McLeans's Mountain Wind LP

Dear Ms Walli:

We wish to offer our apologies for the lateness of this letter; however, the application referencing the request from Northland Power on the “transmission” request to the OEB has only just come to our attention .

Wind Concerns Ontario (WCO) writes this letter in support of MCSEA (Manitoulin Coalition For Safe Energy Alternatives) that represents over 600 combined First Nation and non-First Nation supporters and other groups, and LSARC, a grass roots organization with members from Sault Ste Marie to Thunder Bay who wish to conserve the wilderness and ecological values of the shores of Lake Superior and oppose the inappropriate, and needless, industrialization of this wilderness which not only damages the environment but negatively impacts tourism upon which 17% of area employment depends.

Both of the foregoing are members of WCO, *a coalition of more than 50 Ontario citizens' groups, concerned about the effects of industrial wind power generation plants operating in and planned for Ontario's rural communities.* WCO has been a vocal opponent to the industrialization through the use of industrial wind turbines (IWTs) of our rural communities and provincial parklands since its inception.

WCO supports the request for an oral hearing on this matter as requested by both MCSEA and LSARC and the reasons outlined in their respective letters to the OEB and would draw your attention to the key points raised in the “Intervener” requests submitted by the two parties as noted hereunder*:

***NB:** Some of the text has been altered slightly or *italicized* for emphasis.

MCSEA

“The Wikwemikong First Nation Elders and Youth as well as other First Nation members from other communities are against this project as they and MCSEA stand against this industrialization of Manitoulin Island.

This project is on privately owned land which is adjacent to two First Nation designated lands.

Should transmission approval be given then environmental, cultural, economic, visual, health and property rights impacts would be realized for this Industrial Wind Turbine project.

The First Nation Chiefs that have partnered in this project *have not fully consulted the members of their*

respected communities. It is a requirement for proper consultation that all community members are fully consulted on the impacts of this project and transmission line approval.

We also believe that the 1990 lands claim and road use agreement has not yet been settled appropriately and the First Nation people fully consulted.

Transmission line and project approval would also affect approximately 200 lots in our estimation of non participating land owners *losing rights of future dwelling location*, loss of severance rights and use and enjoyment of property. The AOK First Nation land would be impacted also.

This transmission line approval would also affect land valuation and resale value of neighbouring homes, woodlots and land. Manitoulin is unique in its land ownerships and rights of use which is inherent in our culture.

Other impacts are the health of the people. Peer-reviewed evidence shows that 550-meter setbacks from residents and future dwellings which the legislation allows is far too close.

These setbacks are being allowed to cross non participating landowners property lines restricting use within the confines of the land being leased *meaning* adjacent properties lose rights of use.

Hydro One has a safety setback of 500 meters for industrial wind turbines and transmission lines but this does not seem to apply in this project creating a reliability issue.

Manitoulin Island would be severely impacted visually *within* its tourism-based economy due to the transmission lines and wind turbines creating blights on the landscape.

Transmission line approval would also allow this project to proceed in an environmentally sensitive habitat and wetlands. Our local township has “Perch Lake” (in the project) area protected as environmentally sensitive and has building restrictions in the vicinity. Further, the 100-meter tall industrial wind turbines and 100-meter plus blade sweep would be an environmental disaster to this area and known flyway stopover and nesting location.

Manitoulin Island is known for its biodiverse habitat and has many unique flora and fauna species at risk which would be impacted for an unreliable source of generation.

The tourism and economic impact has not been studied *in the form of a cost/benefit analysis* and should be a requirement before transmission approval is given.

The low incomes of the First Nation and Non First Nation people of Manitoulin Island and the province are being impacted due to rising electricity prices and approving these highly subsidized projects would create more burden for the long term. The band offices are assisting their members now with the high electricity rates and paying their bills and government programs are being implemented to assist others.

Economically and for the reasons above, this project’s transmission approval should not go ahead and an oral hearing should be held so that the people are fully consulted on all impacts.”

LSARC

“We also feel that oral hearings provide a more thorough and exhaustive investigation of the issues.”

We also object to this project, on the grounds that no substantive and impartial cost-benefit analysis has been conducted to ascertain that it is, in fact, in the best interests of consumers with respect to prices, reliability and quality of electricity service, the OEB's mandate, considerations which take precedence over the Government of Ontario's ideologically and irresponsible promotion of the use of so-called renewable energy sources.

The Government of Ontario has rashly rushed into the promotion of alternative energy sources, such as Wind Farms, without due-diligence, a cost-benefit analysis or investigating other options which would provide better value, quality and reliability. This is not merely our opinion, but one of the recent findings of the Ontario Auditor General.

LSARC is a grass roots organization with members from Sault Ste Marie to Thunder Bay who wish to conserve the wilderness and ecological values of the shores of Lake Superior and oppose the inappropriate, and needless, industrialization of this wilderness which not only damages the environment but negatively impacts the tourism upon which 17% of area employment depends.

LSARC also opposes the undemocratic Green Energy and Economy Act which deprives communities of their right to decide upon renewable energy developments, and the economically and financially destructive implementation of the Government of Ontario's renewable energy policies, including FIT subsidies, which destroys jobs in Ontario and results in much higher electricity prices for consumers while providing less quality and reliability.”

In closing, please note that we fully support both of the aforementioned groups and their request for an oral hearing and we would also seek (upon your indulgence) as an “intevenor” despite our lateness in filing this request.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Jane Wilson, President,
Wind Concerns Ontario

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