

Amherst Island, north-eastern shore of Lake Ontario

Loyalist Township, Ont.— CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE, SITE OF PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINE PLANT

Latest News!

Windlectric Inc. has submitted its application for a [Renewable Energy Approval for the Amherst Island Wind Energy Project](http://www.amherstislandwindproject.com/public-information.html?folderid=link0) (<http://www.amherstislandwindproject.com/public-information.html?folderid=link0>), which included a flawed Heritage Assessment. By the March 8, 2014 deadline, hundreds of submissions were filed to the Ministry of the Environment against the proposed project. Among them were [Heritage Canada The National Trust](http://sites/www.heritagecanada.org/files/HCNT%20Comments%20on%20Amherst%20Island%20Wind%20Project%20as%20Submitted.pdf) (<http://sites/www.heritagecanada.org/files/HCNT%20Comments%20on%20Amherst%20Island%20Wind%20Project%20as%20Submitted.pdf>), Nature Canada, Ontario Nature, Margaret Atwood, Dr. Roberta Bondar, the Dry Stone Wall Association of Ireland, the Hawk Migratory Association of North America, and many more.

On March 6, 2014, the [Association to Protect Amherst Island](http://www.protectamherstisland.ca/well-respected-ontario-qc-bryan-finlay-leads-legal-challenge/) (<http://www.protectamherstisland.ca/well-respected-ontario-qc-bryan-finlay-leads-legal-challenge/>) (APAI) applied to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice for a judicial review of the decision by the Ministry of the Environment to accept as complete Windlectric's applicatio

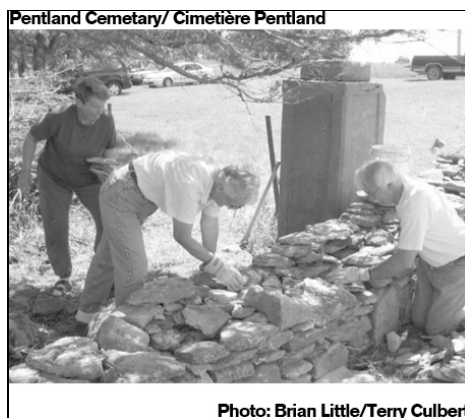
Why it matters

Situated along the north-eastern shore of Lake Ontario just west of Kingston, Amherst Island is 20 km long and 5 km wide. Because the island is only accessible by ferry, the pastoral features that have contributed to its value as a cultural and natural heritage landscape have been preserved over time. Three properties on the island are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA): Neilson's Store Museum and Cultural Centre, Trinity United Church, and Pentland Cemetery. Loyalist Township has identified Amherst Island's rich collection of Irish Stone Fences under Section 39 of the OHA for their cultural heritage value. The Loyalist Township Heritage Committee has initiated the Dry Stone Fence By-Law and is documenting over 100 historic structures of cultural heritage significance on the island.

As well as the existence of significant historic structures, the island's clearly defined geographic areas and landscape features reflect the original settlement, including the roads, farm lot layout, farmsteads and villages—remnants of early Irish-Scottish settlement—most of which have remained almost unchanged over the past 100 years.

A recent archaeological assessment of the island by Stantec Consulting Ltd. concluded an elevated potential for significant archaeological deposits of integrity.

Amherst Island is also an important natural landscape. It is located on the Atlantic Migratory Flyway and is internationally recognized for concentrations of wintering raptors (hawks, eagles and a wide variety of owl species). The Owl Woods nature preserve was established by the Kingston Field Naturalists, two landowners and Loyalist Township. Important Bird Area or IBA Canada (an international conservation initiative coordinated by BirdLife International) has identified Amherst Island as an Important Bird Area of Global Significance.



Why it's endangered

Algonquin Power/Windlectric is proposing the development of an industrial wind turbine power installation that will be

spread across the island comprising 36 wind turbines of 51-storeys with a 2-acre blade sweep area. The project includes a number of individual access roads, a cement plant, a transformer substation, and a network of overhead power lines.

Where things stand

The final public open house took place last March. A series of renewable energy approval reports submitted by Windlectric have been reviewed by Loyalist Township and other stakeholders. With the ability of municipalities to regulate renewable energy undertakings having been removed by the Province in 2009, a Renewal Energy Approval process was established under the *Environmental Protection Act* instead. Final approval authority rests with the Ministry of the Environment. A municipality's role is limited to an advisory capacity.

In April, Loyalist Township sent a copy of the completed Municipal Consultation Form to the Ministry of the Environment and Windlectric wherein it recommends against a Renewable Energy Approval of the project until a number of substantive issues are addressed, including those dealing with natural heritage and cultural assets.



Photo: Brian Little/Terry Culbert

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