



The Honourable Robert Runciman

NEWS RELEASE

L'honorable Robert Runciman

Immediate release

WIND PROJECTS POSE UNACCEPTABLE THREAT TO BIRDS: RUNCIMAN
Ontario Senator calls for moratorium along eastern Lake Ontario

OTTAWA, Nov. 28, 2011 – There is an urgent need for a moratorium on wind energy projects along the shores of eastern Lake Ontario until ways can be found to better protect birds and bats, Senator Bob Runciman told a news conference on Parliament Hill this morning.

Runciman was joined at the event by Ted Cheskey, manager of bird conservation programs for Nature Canada, Rosemary Kent, president, and Cheryl Anderson, vice-president of the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. Runciman is introducing a motion in the federal Senate this week calling for a moratorium in the area from the east end of Wolfe Island to the western edge of Prince Edward County – a major migratory route for birds and bats.

"Under current Ontario government policy, green energy trumps everything, including threats to bird and bat populations, their habitat and their migration corridors, the Planning Act and the Environmental Protection Act," Runciman said. "It is a reckless, damn-the-consequences approach that we don't want to see happen at Ostrander Point and Amherst Island. It's time for the government to step back and assess the implications of what they are doing."

Wind energy projects are planned for both of those locations, although final approval has not yet been granted by the provincial government.

Nature Canada has long argued that industrial wind energy developments should not be located in internationally recognized Important Bird Areas such as Ostrander Point and Amherst Island. Cheskey cited the experience with the Wolfe Island project, which he said is "one of the most destructive for birds and bats in North America."

"We believe in good things in good places," said Cheskey. "To achieve wind energy's greatest promise – a clean, renewable energy source that helps, not harms wildlife – wind turbines should not be located in Important Bird Areas."

Kent and Anderson talked about the long-term threat to vulnerable species posed by the project planned for Crown land at Ostrander Point, which has been cited by experts as one of the best places for birds in southern Ontario.

For more information, please contact:

Barry Raison, Office of Senator Bob Runciman
(613) 943-4020 (office) or (613) 297-2069 (cell)
raisob@sen.parl.gc.ca