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Best Practices for Sustainable Wind Energy Development in the Great Lakes Region

A new online guide to advancing wind energy while protecting the environment and addressing community concerns was released today by the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative (GLWC), a public/private coalition of interests advancing sustainable wind energy development within the Great Lakes region.

Best Practices for Sustainable Wind Energy Development in the Great Lakes Region highlights policies and practices to ensure wind development is environmentally protective, sensitive to community concerns and maximizes economic development potential. Best Practices for turbine siting, noise, environmental impacts and financial mechanisms are among the 18 “best practices,” which cover all phases of developing a wind energy project, from initial planning to operations and eventual decommissioning of spent turbines. Each best practice features a case example of that practice in action in the Great Lakes region or across the country.

“The stakeholders of the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative are steadfast in their belief that the need for renewable energy in the region must be balanced with sound economics and protection of the Great Lakes basin ecosystem,” said Terry Yonker, GLWC Steering Committee co-chair and president of Marine Services Diversified, LLC. “The development of wind power requires us to utilize the best practices that are available to us to insure that what results meets the highest possible standards of acceptance.”

The best practices were identified through a year-long process that included a literature review, online survey and interviews under the guidance of a Great Lakes Wind Collaborative workgroup that included environmental groups, industry, academia, and federal, state and local government regulators. The project was coordinated by the Great Lakes Commission, a compact of the eight Great Lakes states and the provinces of Ontario and Québec based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

“These best practices will serve as a catalyst for innovation that will drive community and economic reinvention, diversification and development in the Great Lakes region,” said Mark Clevey, GLWC Steering Committee co-chair and manager of Consumer Education & Renewable Energy Programs for the Michigan Energy Office.

"*Best Practices* will help us develop wind farms to help meet our growing energy needs in an environmentally sustainable way," added Matt Wagner, wind site development manager at DTE Energy. "Good project planning always involves communicating with our customers."

Although federal siting guidelines exist, ultimate decisions about whether and how a wind farm gets built are made at the state and local levels. The best practices identified in the report include both those that have been tested and shown to be effective, as well as new practices identified by experts as needed for future wind developments. They are intended to provide guidance for regulators, researchers, and wind industry interests who can choose from a mix of policies and practices that best advance the development of responsible and clean Great Lakes wind energy within a given locality, state or region.

Best Practices for Sustainable Wind Energy Development in the Great Lakes Region can be found on the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative web site at <http://www.glc.org/energy/wind/bestpractices.html>.

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