



Eco Awareness Society Newsletter

“Men stumble over the truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened.”

Winston Churchill

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No. 16



Are You Confused About Wind Energy?

Ontario – Is it working? Are you confused about wind energy yet? Confusion was the remedy offered by Sussex Strategy Group last fall in a pitch to the Ontario Government. Seeing that the McGuinty Liberals were facing tough headwinds from voters on its energy policies – the Toronto based public relations firm offered to help. Confuse the public was their prescription.

It advised the provincial government to **“change the channel” from rising electricity bills to the perceived virtues of renewable energy. To do this it is “critical to confuse the issue of renewable energy” according to the plan devised by the PR hacks.**

For a handsome fee they would try and change the story. Nothing particularly new here. Public relations firms were invented to try and change the story – create new brands, improve the image of fading ones and restore the fortunes of brands that are suddenly out of favour.

What made the proposal newsworthy, however, was that McGuinty seemed prepared to entertain and embrace the “induced confusion” campaign. It reveals the level of anxiety felt in Liberal ranks in advance of next fall’s election. This is because Ontario residents are opening their electricity bills in fear these days.

The renewable energy zealots say that consumers don’t like price hikes at first, but will adjust. **But others suggest that Ontario residents are getting wise to the high cost and severe limitations of wind and solar generated electricity.** Others are learning firsthand that living close to massive wind turbines could be dangerous to one’s health.

Dalton McGuinty’s worst fear is that the average consumers begins to ask troubling questions about the sketchy energy path his government has led this province down. It is why he has turned to hacks to try and confuse the issues. When Sussex’s proposal was splashed all

over the media last October – it seemed a black eye for the government and the firm. But not so for Sussex Strategy. The McGuinty Liberals were forced to back away, but there was a large gaggle of private developers who were just as interested in seeing the public “confused” by renewable energy. For the province it could scarcely have worked out better. Sussex is out trying to change the channel and the industry is paying for it...

Gilead Power is one of the developers that has retained Sussex Strategy to improve its fortunes. The move reveals a significant shift in tactics of the Peterborough-based wind developer. It hardly has the resources to be spending on a PR firm yet it has concluded that it can’t afford not to.

With the bankruptcy of Skypower two years ago, Gilead’s plans in South Marysburgh suddenly rose to prominence. The developer is hoping its Ostrander Point project will be the first large-scale wind factory built in the County...

But by hiring a public relations firm, especially this PR firm, Gilead is tipping its hand that it is worried the McGuinty government’s resolve might not hold much longer. It has sunk a great deal of money into this project and Gilead is likely fearful the opposition to wind energy is growing. If the province were to buckle under the pressure, or even allow delays to creep into the approvals process, the results could be catastrophic for the smallish developer.

Other developers are in the same boat. This is all keeping Sussex Strategy quite busy these days. **Business is good in the confusion game.**

(Excerpt from “Sussex Strategy Group: Confuse the Public”, Rick Conroy, Wellington Times, January 26, 2011)

Planners Approve Two-Mile Setback for Wind Turbines

Oregon – The Umatilla County Planning Committee has voted unanimously to send a proposed two-mile setback of wind towers from rural homes and from city urban growth boundaries to the Umatilla County Commissioners for approval.

This guarantees both the cities and the rural homeowners the right to say “no” to wind towers encroaching upon their properties against their will. If they say “no”, then no tower can be built closer than two miles from a home, nor will a wind tower be built closer than two miles from a city’s urban growth boundary.

(Excerpt from “Planners Approve Two-Mile Setback for Wind Turbines”,

Clinton Reeder, East Oregonian, March 16, 2011)

Municipalities in Ontario Fight Wind-Turbine Developments

March 31st 2011 – Grey Highlands wants to charge hefty fees for new wind turbines in the municipality. Council proposes a \$35,000 building fee for each industrial turbine and an additional \$100,000 surety to help cover the cost of decommissioning if the owners fail to meet their obligations.

Coun. Lynn Silverton said the charges are to ensure that the municipality is protected and receives adequate compensation now and for any future costs. **“I’m extremely concerned about our farmers that are leasing out their properties and being left with something like that to dismantle, or their families in years to come,”** Silverton said during a public meeting...

Grey Highlands resident Larry Close recommended that wind developers post a performance bond to cover the cost of repairing any roads, bridges and culverts damaged by heavy equipment during the construction phase. “I think the municipality should have money in hand, a cash bond, to fix up the roads. I don’t think they should leave that to the proponent...”

Close also wants council to ensure that wind developers purchase liability insurance on behalf of the municipality to protect Grey Highlands against future lawsuits. “Even though the municipality is acting legally now, should it subsequently go to court and become party to a lawsuit it could be named as correspondent in a very expensive suit. **I’m thinking if people are facing 40% decreases in their property values that’s their major investment in their life and why wouldn’t they want to recover that,**” Close said...

Chief administrative officer Dan Best told a packed council chamber that the current council is carrying on efforts begun by the former council to stop wind development from taking place in Grey Highlands. “This council has done everything it can do for residents. With one voice it had said that it doesn’t want wind turbines coming into Grey Highlands. Council has worked with integrity and diligence through the process.” he said... (5)

March 22nd 2011 – The Haldimand County council chambers overflowed with residents at Monday night’s council meeting as people came out to support a vote on asking the Province for a moratorium on wind generators.

Vice President of the Haldimand-Norfolk NDP Riding Association Al Buswell was in attendance and fully supported Mayor Ken Hewitt’s moratorium on wind generators. Buswell said he would like to see jurisdiction put back into the County’s hands and stated that NDP leader Andrea Horwath and NDP’s energy critic Peter Tabuns also support this change... (6)

March 16th 2011 – Saugeen Shores council will ask the

Ontario government to suspend approvals for two area wind farm projects until they receive community approval. Nearly 250 people...attended council’s committee of the whole meeting...which heard Deputy-mayor Luke Charbonneau’s motion to seek a halt to the Arran and North Burce wind projects...

Charbonneau’s motion is based on Section 2 of The Green Energy Act, which states “this act shall be administered in a manner that promotes community consultation.” Charbonneau argued the province must discuss the merits of green energy proposals to receive community approval, which has not been done...

The motion, which was approved unanimously by committee of the whole, will be circulated to all municipalities in Bruce and Grey counties and be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for circulation to every municipality in the province. (1)

March 15th 2011 – Arran-Elderslie is considering raising building permit fees for all buildings and structures related to commercial wind turbines...

Deputy-mayor Mark Davis, an outspoken critic of wind energy projects, said he hopes the municipality “never gets to the point of needing such fees” and the municipality will continue its fight to block any wind energy projects “until such time proper studies have been completed that show there will not be adverse health effects on our residents.” (2)

March 9th 2011 – “They are loud and clear. Our Wainfleet does not include wind turbines.” The sentiments shared by Ald. Richard Dykstra were simple and to the point, but were echoed by other members of Wainfleet Township Council who voted unanimously in favour of supporting a moratorium for the development of wind turbines.

The resolution, originally proposed by Ald. David Wyatt last month, calls for the provincial government to enact a moratorium until further third-party studies can be conducted on the environmental, economical, and health impacts on the Township of Wainfleet and its residents. It was approved Tuesday night to a round of applause from the about 50 people in council chambers. (3)

March 2nd 2011 – Huron-Kinloss council has not only endorsed tough resolutions against industrial wind turbines by other municipalities, they have created their own...

Huron-Kinloss...endorsed the resolution from Arran-Elderslie to put a freeze on the issuance of any kind of permits that would lead to the development of industrial wind turbines until the Grey-Bruce medical officer of health, Dr. Hazel Lynn, has completed a study or had a third-party study done to the approval of the Grey-Bruce Health Centre...

Huron-Kinloss council also approved its own resolution,

saying this step was prompted by concerns for the health, safety and well-being of its constituents, as well as the Grey-Bruce medical officer of health, and because the provincial government, having implemented the Green Energy Act, has not shown any concern for the health, safety and well-being of the people the township it represents. (4)

February 17th 2011 – Perth County rejected a North Perth initiative...and called for a moratorium on wind turbines until further impact studies have been completed... Warden Julie Behrns voted with the majority of council in opposing North Perth's stand after council debated the issue... (7)

November 11, 2010 – Meaford council is calling on the provincial government to impose a moratorium on wind power development in Ontario until answers are available about health effects on neighbours and what this form of electricity generation costs consumers. "There are just too many unanswered questions," Coun. Harley Greenfield said in an interview... (8)

November 1, 2010 – Prince Edward County's mayor-elect has reaffirmed his opposition to wind turbines in the county, saying he wants to renew talks with the province. Peter Mertens was one of 110 delegates at a Picton symposium organized by the Society for Wind Vigilance...

Mertens said concerns cited during the symposium weren't entirely new to him, but others need to hear the details. "I think the information is compelling," Mertens said... **"We have to take the politics out of this now and we have to get the science to the forefront."**... (9)

(Excerpts from (1) "Town to Ask Province to Suspend Wind Energy Projects", Patrick Bales, Owen Sound Sun Times, March 16, 2011, (2) "Arran-Elderslie Council Expected to Vote on Higher Turbine Fees", Owen Sound Sun Times, March 15, 2011 (3) "Wainfleet Council Favours Turbine Moratorium", Eddie Chau, Niagara This Week, March 9, 2011 (4) "Huron-Kinloss Council Endorses Tough Resolutions on Industrial Wind Turbines", Lucknow Sentinel, March 2, 2011 (5) "Hefty Wind Farm Fees in Works", Owen Sound Sun Times, March 31, 2011 (6) "Council Carries Resolution for Moratorium on Wind Turbines", Donna Pitcher, The Dunnville Chronicle, March 22, 2011 (7) "Perth County Holding Line on Wind Farms", Donal O'Connor, QMI Agency, London Free Press, February 17, 2011 (8) "Meaford Calls for Wind Farm Moratorium", Don Crosby, QMI Agency, The Welland Tribune, November 10, 2010 (9) "PEC Mayor-Elect Against Wind Turbines", Luke Hendry, The Intelligencer, November 1, 2010

Editor's Note

Seventy-four Councils in Ontario, including those mentioned above, have passed resolutions, motions or bylaws restricting industrial wind turbine development and the Green Energy and Economy Act of Ontario.

To read any of these documents, go to:

<http://windconcernsontario.wordpress.com/councils/>

Committee Recommends Industrial Wind Moratorium

Hammond, New York – The town's Wind Committee is recommending a three- to five-year moratorium on industrial wind development in a report issued...to the Town Council.

"It would be prudent to allow for adequate and scientifically staffed radar, sonar, and other data collection and analysis to be completed to address questions regarding potential bird, bat, and other wildlife impacts," the committee's report says. "This extended time could also be used to evaluate industrial wind development's consequences for property values of adjacent lands."

...**The wind advisory committee report says members have made "an early commitment to focusing its emphasis on evaluating all issues from the viewpoint of all of the Hammond town residents, particularly the nonparticipants," and stresses the importance of a "comprehensive law."**...

(Excerpt from "Committee Recommends Industrial Wind Moratorium", Matt McAllister, The Journal, march 30, 2011)

Holland Slashes Carbon Targets, Shuns Wind for Nuclear

Netherlands - In a radical change of policy, the Netherlands is reducing its targets for renewable energy and slashing the subsidies for wind and solar power. It's also given the green light for the country's first new nuclear power plants for almost 40 years.

Why the change? **Wind and solar subsidies are too expensive, the Financial Times Deutschland, reports.**

Holland thus becomes the first country to abandon the EU-wide target of producing 20 per cent of its domestic power from renewables. This is a remarkable turnaround from a state that took the Kyoto Agreement seriously and chivvied other EU members into adopting renewable energy strategies...

Holland's only nuclear reactor, the Borssele plant, opened in 1973, and was earmarked for closure by 2003. In 2006 the plant was allowed to operate until 2034, and the following year the government abandoned its opposition to new nuclear plants...

The UK is expected to urge the installation of 10,000 new onshore turbines, even though some cost more in subsidies than they produce...**Holland's policy U-turn means the EU renewable targets aren't set in stone – and there are more cost-effective ways of hitting the targets.**

(Excerpt from "Holland Slashes Carbon Targets, Shuns Wind for Nuclear",

Andrew Orłowski, The Register UK, February 10, 2011)

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## Landholders Forced to Move

**Australia - Thirteen landholders in the Crookwell district are in shock after receiving letters from a wind farm developer giving them three months to sell out or live in the shadow of 73 giant wind turbines.**

The situation flows from a Land and Environment Court decision late last year giving the developer, Gullen Range Wind Farm Pty Ltd, the option to decide in the next four years whether to buy non-host properties likely to be adversely affected or reduce the number of turbines...

One of those potentially affected is Humphrey Price Jones...the spokesman for Friends of Crookwell which has campaigned against wind farm development in the district. His property is on the provisional acquisition list, meaning if at some future time the company has to put lighting on every tower, it will be obliged to make an offer. He said the situation had sent him and his wife, Jen, into "turmoil"... "It is forcing people off their land and out of their homes. Although it's not compulsory, in some cases it might as well be," (he said)...

Chairman of a group representing landowners in the affected area...said most people who had received letters were "very upset indeed" about the prospect of being forced to sell. **"If they don't sell they will be living in a house that the Land and Environment Court thinks is uninhabitable."**...

(Excerpt from "Ill Winds are Blowing", Alan Dick, [theland.farmonline.com.au](http://theland.farmonline.com.au), March 24, 2011)

## Spanish Region Imposes Visual Impact Tax

**Spain** – Spain's autonomous region of Castile-La Mancha, currently with over 3.7GW online, **has voted to clamp a visual impact levy on all wind plants above 5MW.**

The levy is set at 1.6% of plant generation income for existing and new capacity. **The regional government's vice president, Maria Luisa Araujo, expects the levy to net 15 million Euros annually** and for it to be in force before 2012.

South central Castile-La Mancha is the second region to establish such a tax. Galicia, in the north, enforced a "landscape impact" levy in 2009...

(Excerpt from "Spanish Region Imposes Visual Impact Tax on Turbines", Michael McGovern, Windpower Monthly, March 23, 2011)

## EAS News

The Eco Awareness Society has new designs at our web store: [www.Eco-Awareness-Society.ca](http://www.Eco-Awareness-Society.ca)



**Oh Crap!**

**Another Wind Power Bill Rate Hike!**

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Eco Awareness Society will be held on **Thursday, May 5th, 2011 from 7:00 - 8:30** at the **New Glasgow Library**. Guest speakers to be announced. All are invited to attend.

## Fish Story

Count this among my heartfelt wishes:

To hear a fish tale told by fishes  
And stand among the fish who doubt  
The honor of a fellow trout,  
And watch the bulging of their eyes  
To hear of imitation flies  
And worms with rather droopy looks  
Stuck through with hateful, horrid hooks,  
And fishermen they fled all day from  
(As big as this) and got away from.

Richard Armour

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EAS newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Eco Awareness Society. All work is done on a volunteer basis. Membership is \$10. yearly.

If you would like to become a member or for more information on EAS, please go to our website at: www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca

Or contact us at 902-926-2297 or info@ecoawarenesssociety.ca

The Eco Awareness Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to uphold these principles: that "a subset of society should not be forced to bear the cost of a benefit for the larger society", that a landowner's right to full use and enjoyment of their property be upheld and not taken or hindered for public or private use or development, without just compensation, and that any policy or development with regard to the environment and landscape of Nova Scotia be shown to be effective and based on the principals of environmental sustainability and stewardship of our precious resources.*

*Based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights* and the *Fifth Amendment, U.S. Constitution*