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### Scarborough waves farewell to wind turbine plan for Lake Ontario

#### Province nixes all offshore wind energy projects



**Scarborough waves farewell to wind turbine plan for Lake Ontario.** The wind anemometer to test wind speeds in Lake Ontario was set up by Toronto Hydro, southeast of East Point Park in Scarborough, 1.1 kilometres off shore last spring. The province announced today, Friday, Feb. 11, that off-shore wind turbine projects, including the one off the Scarborough bluffs, will not be allowed to proceed. (June 10, 2010) *Staff photo/Danielle Milley*

The people of Guildwood feel vindicated after the provincial government has ruled out offshore wind projects because of a lack of science.

"It was a mix of things. I felt vindicated for one," John Laforet said of his initial reaction to the announcement.

"Guildwood residents were vindicated...At the same time it's really unfortunate that citizens have to play this role to protect their community."

Laforet is the president of Wind Concerns Ontario. He became involved in fighting wind turbines after Toronto Hydro brought forward the idea of testing wind off the Scarborough Bluffs with the aim of erecting a wind farm of up to 60 turbines that would stretch from Ajax to the Leslie Street Spit.

The provincial government made the announcement Friday, Feb. 11, afternoon that no offshore projects will proceed and no renewable energy approvals have been issued. Applications for offshore

wind projects in the feed-in-tariff program will no longer be accepted and current applications will be suspended.

"This decision was based on science, or a lack of science. When it comes to freshwater offshore wind there's only one project," said Minister of Energy, and Scarborough Centre MPP, Brad Duguid.

That project is the recently installed Lake Vanern pilot project in Sweden. There are no projects operating in North America, though Ohio is considering a pilot. The province said it will monitor these projects and the resulting scientific knowledge.

"We will be working with our U.S. neighbours to ensure that any offshore wind projects are protective of the environment. Offshore wind on freshwater lakes is a recent concept that requires a cautious approach until the science of environmental impact is clear. In contrast, the science concerning land-based wind is extensive," Minister of the Environment John Wilkinson said in a release.

Duguid said there has been little interest in offshore projects in the province.

"For us here in Ontario we didn't have a lot of interest in offshore anyway," he said, adding of the 1,500 projects that applied for the province's feed-in-tariff program, only five were offshore projects.

The Ministry of Environment had been doing public consultation on renewable energy and this decision comes out of that, Duguid said.

"The reason that came back ultimately was there wasn't enough science...There's more work to be done," he said.

Toronto Hydro has been testing wind in the lake since the spring when it installed an anemometer off East Point Park. A spokesperson said Friday it would consider this decision before taking it's next step.

"We're going to spend the next few weeks considering the anemometer project in light of this announcement," said Denise Attallah with Toronto Hydro.

Laforet said it was two years ago when Guildwood residents were accused of NIBYism (not in my backyard) for their opposition to the Toronto Hydro project.

"We promised we'd get louder and wouldn't lay down when they announced the Green Energy Act in February 2009...Until the Liberals back down from their industrial wind energy schemes, we will continue to organize to defeat this government in 2011 over this failed green energy policy." he said.

Friday's announcement doesn't affect on-land applications and the province will continue to pursue wind energy as a part of Ontario's electrical generation mix.

"Wind power has quickly become an important Ontario energy source and is growing our clean energy economy, creating more good jobs for Ontarians. We've already brought over 700 onshore

wind turbines online and our Energy Plan will help us continue to build more wind power and position Ontario as a global leader in renewable energy," said Duguid.

Laforet and others such as Sherri Lange, founding director of Toronto Wind Action, said they will continue to fight wind energy projects.

"This is an important decision from a provincial government that has for years been trying to willy nilly put turbines on Crown land, in fresh water lakes, in migratory routes, in bird havens, and too near to people," Lange said.

"However, to have Ontario 'watch' while developers play with the waters off Lake Erie does not feel at all comfortable. We will be continuing to apply pressure to that part of the lakes, to protect their water, their habitats, their bird life, their peaceful cohabitation...We will further apply more pressure to the province to end its mad rush into an energy that even Holland is now turning away from."