



Aamjiwnaang First Nation **Environment Committee**

Comments and Concerns Regarding Wind Power Projects

Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN) has numerous concerns involving wind farms or wind projects that have been proposed by proponents that would be located within Aamjiwnaang's Traditional Territory. Since this project is one that falls within this category, AFN submits the following for consideration. AFN would like to review the reports or studies related to this project. Aamjiwnaang First Nation reserves the right to submit further comments and concerns as they may relate to this project.

AFN would like to see bat and bird studies being conducted in the proposed wind project area. There are also concerns with migratory bird paths such as tundra swans and geese that may be affected by the proposed wind farms. Any studies completed on the bird paths should also be forwarded to AFN.

There are concerns around earthworms both during the construction phase and post construction operation as the earthworms may be affected by the vibration from the turbines when they are operating. There are also concerns with the underground transmission cables as the earthworms may be affected by the electricity flowing through them. Snakes in the affected area may also be adversely affected by both of these occurrences. These are concerns both pre- and post-construction in these areas as well as when wind farms are in operation. There are snakes of the Federal and Ontario Species At Risk listings that may be located in or near the proposed area. AFN would like to ensure precautions are taken to have these habitats remain undisturbed.

There are also concerns with the areas close to the proposed turbine areas that the ground and immediate surrounding area may not be suitable for any type of vegetation restoration once the vibration from the turbines has begun. Nutrient builders are present in the soil to provide nutrients in order for plants and crops to flourish. AFN feels this should be addressed before the construction begins. This would include any reports or studies that have been completed to address this situation.

Normal animal corridors would be affected by the construction phase but may also be affected by the operation of the turbines. As an example, any deer paths presently followed by the deer may change due to the wind farms during the construction phase and the operation of the turbines. The change in these paths may affect the hunting rights that the First Nations peoples exercise in or near the affected areas.

Plants and wetland areas near the project sites should be appropriately monitored and maintained where ever possible. The turbine sites and underground cable locations are designated away from residential areas and roadways but consideration needs to be given to the pre-construction condition of the proposed areas natural environment. AFN would like to see any changes to the affected areas minimized and certainly restored as close to the original pre-construction condition.

There are also concerns that relate to possible medical issues with residents who reside near wind turbines once these projects are in operation. AFN would like to see any reports or studies relating to these residents medical issues attributed to windmill operation near their residences. One issue that may not have been reported on is the flicker of the blades of the turbines. As wind farms are relatively new in the area, flicker or shadow reports should be prepared as part of the reporting process. Some residents who live in close proximity to wind farms may have complaints or perhaps medical conditions due to their residences being located close to these facilities.

One aspect that may not have been considered to this point in time by individual proposed wind farm projects is cumulative effects. With the number of projects now in operation combined with the number of proposed projects, AFN would like to see this aspect addressed. Studies on effects on winds patterns that may affect weather patterns may not have been completed to determine if increased numbers of operating turbines do affect the atmosphere at windmill heights which may cause changes to upper level wind flows. This could affect weather patterns not only in the proposed project areas but could change the patterns in areas outside of the wind farm projects.

Magnetic fields should be addressed as they would affect both plant life and the animals and birds within the proposed project location. Studies should be conducted to determine if these would be affected adversely as this may disturb their natural environment. These changes could affect the growth or potential growth of plants as well as patterns of animals that would possibly be disturbed by the changes caused by the wind farms.