

# **The Alliance to Protect Prince Edward County**

January 13, 2011

Senate Community Affairs Committee

Department of the Senate

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Australia

Subject: The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Please accept the Alliance to Protect Prince Edward County's submission to the Senate inquiry on The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

The Alliance (or APPEC) is a citizens' advocacy group which challenges wind energy development in our part of Ontario, Canada, as well as throughout the province. Although APPEC opposes industrial wind turbines because of a range of adverse economic, environmental, and health effects, this submission focuses only on local economics.

By way of context, Prince Edward County (population of 25,000) is a 1000 sq. km. island/peninsula in Lake Ontario, with 800 km. of shoreline. Historically, the economy has been based on agriculture, but over the past ten years, tourism and a creative economy have developed. Restaurants, small inns, over two dozen vineyards and wineries, and Sandbanks (Ontario's most popular provincial park) attract visitors from the greater Toronto area, about 150 km. away. The real estate sector has also grown because artists, writers, and those able to use IT for home-based businesses have joined retirees in building new houses or renovating old homes.

The attached report, prepared in 2009 by the municipality's Office of Economic Development, examines the financial rewards of hosting industrial wind turbines versus the cost to the non-agricultural parts of the economy. It concludes that wind development would put at risk tourism and the creative economy because people would be less inclined to visit repeatedly or to settle in the midst of wind turbines. Moreover, residential development would be constrained by the required setbacks. Projected annual financial gains of \$1-2 million Cdn. (depending on the number of turbines) therefore jeopardized economic growth of anywhere from \$2.5 to 40 million.

Though the report analyzes a special economic situation, it should be useful in questioning the typical wind industry claim that projects attract tourists and have no impact on property values. When not located on marginal land in remote areas, wind projects are bound to affect the choices everyone makes about where to vacation and where to live, especially during retirement. Is it wise

to turn over huge tracts of land, for twenty or more years, to an industrial usage that precludes economic activities other than farming?

To date, though still under threat, Prince Edward County has no wind projects.

Sincerely,

H. G Garand

Chair, Alliance to Protect Prince Edward County