

## **SIERRA CLUB ATLANTIC CHAPTER**

### **AGENDA ITEM – Atlantic Chapter Offshore Wind Policy**

**Date of Meeting – October 15, 2011**

#### **1. PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

Consistent with national policies, the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter strongly supports wind power as an essential element in the reduction of carbon emissions and greenhouse gases that promote our global climate crisis. The decision to support any particular project, including offshore wind projects, will be made on a case-by-case basis taking into account the various environmental, technical and economic criteria pertaining to that project. We recognize that no project will be perfect in all aspects, but we do insist that a comprehensive, well-documented environmental impact statement be completed, widely disseminated and reviewed before making a decision for the approval of any specific project. A proposed offshore wind power project must have planned procedures for removal after its lifespan and procedures for the restoration of any land and water that have been negatively affected by the facility.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

The Beyond Coal Campaign wishes to make public announcements in support of replacing power produced by the Indian Point 2,045 megawatt (MW) nuclear power plant with offshore wind power. The Chapter has not intervened with an offshore wind power policy until this time.

The New York Power Authority (NYPA) Great Lakes 150MW offshore wind project has recently been cancelled due to costs that were estimated at two to four times an equivalent land based wind power project. A few years ago an offshore wind proposal in the Atlantic Ocean near Fire Island was eventually cancelled due to costs to the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). Since then a consortium known as the Long Island–New York City Offshore Wind Collaborative has been formed, and it includes the Con Ed, City of New York, NYPA, LIPA, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The Collaborative has proposed an offshore wind project to be situated 13 miles off the Rockaway peninsula in

the Atlantic Ocean. This offshore project is likely to be designed for 350 MW with the potential to expand to 700MW.

<http://www.linycoffshorewind.com/> . Many of the people in touch with LIPA and its internal goings-on have *real doubts* about the seriousness of management's commitment to it. Critics feel that the offshore project was invented to make LIPA look good; and that its 3-part management structure (LIPA, NYPA, and Con Ed) involves entities with conflicting needs. Con Ed in particular gains nothing from this project.

Peter Gollon, Chair for the Energy Committee of the Long Island Group, has submitted comments regarding the Rockaway offshore wind project and has raised issues concerning the Request for Proposal (RFP) and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Several Sierra Club Chapters on the East coast are supporting the processes for offshore wind power. The Sierra Club Texas Lone Star Chapter has expressed, in comments, their concerns for the proposed Baronyx wind power project impacts onto birds and endangered species.

### **3. ARGUMENTS**

#### **PRO**

- The climate crisis is man made, we must switch from fossil fuels and nuclear to renewable forms of energy. Wind power as an essential element in the reduction of carbon emissions and greenhouse gases that promote our global climate crisis.
- Wind power, on land or offshore, is the only source of significant amounts of renewable base load power. Land based wind power generates only 2% of the New York's electricity.
- Wind power development contributes significantly to a cleaner energy economy.

#### **CON**

- Offshore wind turbines will be insured for only 20 years.
- Offshore wind development is on average twice the cost of onshore wind power.  
(\$0.25 kw/hr versus \$0.10–0.12 kw/hr)
- The public would be better served by the government investments and procurements if they invest in more cost effective options such as

energy efficiency, conservation and/or less expensive renewable forms of energy.

- Developers claim a few thousand construction jobs but these are filled by migrating crews.
- Developers generally plan on leaving the platforms on site after the turbines expire.
- The northeast US is subject to hurricanes. Mitsubishi claims that their turbines can withstand 160 mph winds by locking the rotor, however these have not been tested.
- Adverse impacts onto migration of birds, fish and construction noise impacts onto the marine mammal populations

#### **4. PRIOR CLUB POLICY**

(See Sierra Club policies as attachment)

1. The revised 2011 version of the 2006 Energy Policy Resources.  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/energy.pdf> - page 14
2. Sierra Club Conservation Policy - Wind Siting Advisory - Adopted by the Sierra Club Board of Directors, 1973  
[http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/wind\\_siting.aspx](http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/wind_siting.aspx)

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

<b>Contact Persons</b>	<b>E-Mail Address</b>	<b>Tel #</b>
Frank Eadie	<a href="mailto:eadie2act4water@aol.com">eadie2act4water@aol.com</a>	212 348 6777
Annie Wilson	<a href="mailto:wilson888@verizon.net">wilson888@verizon.net</a>	212 388 9780