

Michigan  
Great  
Lakes  
Wind  
Council

## Public Engagement Work Group Status Report

June 28, 2010  
Great Lakes Wind Council Meeting – Lansing

### Executive Order 2009-49 Charge

- Inform, engage, and solicit feedback from the people of Michigan on the identified most favorable leasing locations
- Provide guidance to the State Wind Outreach Team (SWOT) in the team's execution of an outreach and education plan related to offshore wind energy
- Provide input on proposed and new Great Lakes wind development legislation and rulemaking as appropriate, including a process for public engagement in the decision-making and development processes

## Recent Council Public Engagement Activities

- Hosted public events in three coastal communities (Saginaw Valley, Escanaba, and Muskegon)
- Received ~ 300 individual pieces of correspondence through website, e-mail, and U.S. mail
- Established e-mail distribution list for council updates and offshore wind energy developments
- Provided speakers at various events (Rotary, chamber)
- Provided recommendations on public engagement processes for consideration in the development of legislation and rules



## Coastal Community Meetings

- Purpose of meetings:
  - Provide educational materials about wind development
  - Present the most favorable leasing locations as of January 2010
  - Present legislative recommendations
  - Solicit feedback from the public

Place and date	Approximate number of attendees
Saginaw (March 25, 2010)	80
Escanaba (April 14, 2010)	40
Muskegon (May 4, 2010)	270+ (exceeded room capacity)

## Meeting Evaluation Forms

GLOW Community Meeting Evaluations (Saginaw Valley, Escanaba, Muskegon)	
Agree (94%)	Overall, this was a useful event.
Agree (76%)	This meeting provided a meaningful opportunity for me to voice my opinions.
Agree (85%)	The meeting was conducted in a way that was fair to everyone.
Agree (81%)	I learned a lot today about issues concerning offshore wind.
Agree (53%)	I made valuable contacts today with others in my community.
Agree (67%)	Before today, I already knew a lot about offshore wind energy development and was actively involved in this issue.



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## Coastal Community Meetings— Interactive Polling

- 350 people participated in interactive polling related to offshore wind energy (26 questions)
- Purposes:
  - Give everyone equal time and opportunity to record their opinions
  - Give participants a sense of their neighbors' opinions through instant feedback
  - Provide data for council consideration and for use by social scientists in the future

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## Caveat - Who did we sample?

- Coastal community venues
  - This is NOT a statewide population sample
- Demographic question could not get zips...
  - “residence with a view”
  - About 30% of these respondents own lakefront
  - This sample represents less than 5% citizens
- Sampling of inland stakeholders proposed

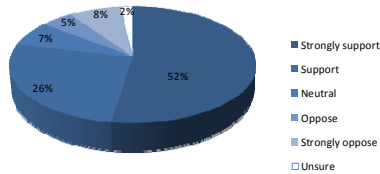
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## Coastal Community Meetings— Interactive Polling (cont.)

- Four sets of questions:
  - How support for offshore wind energy compared to other power sources to meet the state’s new renewable portfolio standard (RPS)
  - How distances from shore might influence public opinions and perceptions
  - Gauge perceptions on impacts of a wind farm on various issues (fishing, boating, energy prices, tourism, aesthetics, job creation, etc.)
  - Demographic questions to compare respondent groups

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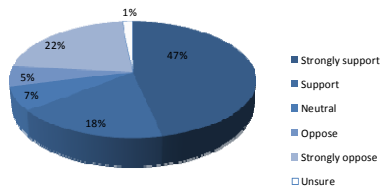
**Q3. To what extent do you support development of commercial wind farms on land to help utilities meet the Renewable Portfolio Standard?**



Strongly support	52%
Support	26%
Neutral	7%
Oppose	5%
Strongly oppose	8%
Unsure	2%

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**Q4. To what extent do you support development of commercial wind farms offshore to help utilities meet the Renewable Portfolio Standard?**



Strongly support	47%
Support	18%
Neutral	7%
Oppose	5%
Strongly oppose	22%
Unsure	1%

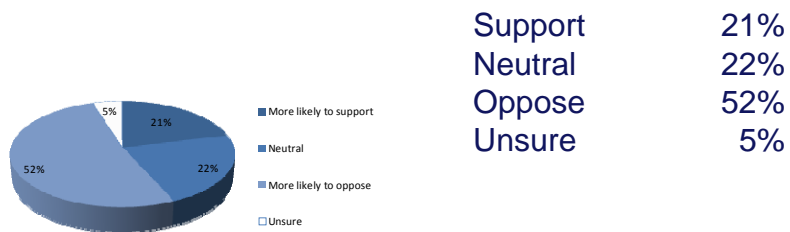
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## Preferences and Location of Residence

- Answers of coastal residents (~1/3 of all respondents) differed significantly from inland resident answers

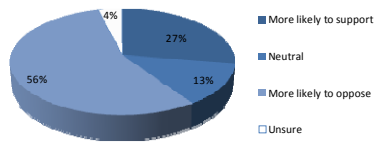
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**Q5. Suppose that instead of an offshore wind project, a natural gas power plant was proposed near the shoreline. Would you be more or less likely to support this than a wind project?**



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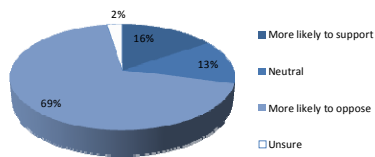
**Q6. Suppose that instead of an offshore wind project, a nuclear power plant was proposed near the shoreline. Would you be more or less likely to support this than a wind project?**



Support	27%
Neutral	13%
Oppose	56%
Unsure	4%

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**Q7. Suppose that instead of an offshore wind project, a coal power plant was proposed near the shoreline. Would you be more or less likely to support this than a wind project?**



Support	16%
Neutral	13%
Oppose	69%
Unsure	2%

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## Photo A (6 miles)

Photo A

Viewing Distance = 10.75 inches



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## Photo B (13 miles)

Photo B

Viewing Distance = 10.75 inches



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## Photo C (20 miles)

Photo C

Viewing Distance = 10.75 inches



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## Polling Results—Perceptions of Offshore Wind Farm Visuals

- Percentage of respondents who would support offshore wind development like the one presented in photos shown:

Photo (approximate distance from shore)	Percent support
Photo A (6 miles)	52%
Photo B (13 miles)	60%
Photo C (20 miles)	70%

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## Twelve Questions About Positive and Negative Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy

- On scale of 1 to 5, “How do you think this project [Photo A] would affect \_\_\_\_\_?”

*Michigan job creation*  
*U.S. energy independence*  
*Air quality*      *Climate change*  
*Fishing*      *Tourism related business*  
*Aquatic life*      *Electricity rates*      *Recreational boating*  
*Property values*  
*Aesthetics of lake view*  
*Birds and/or bats*

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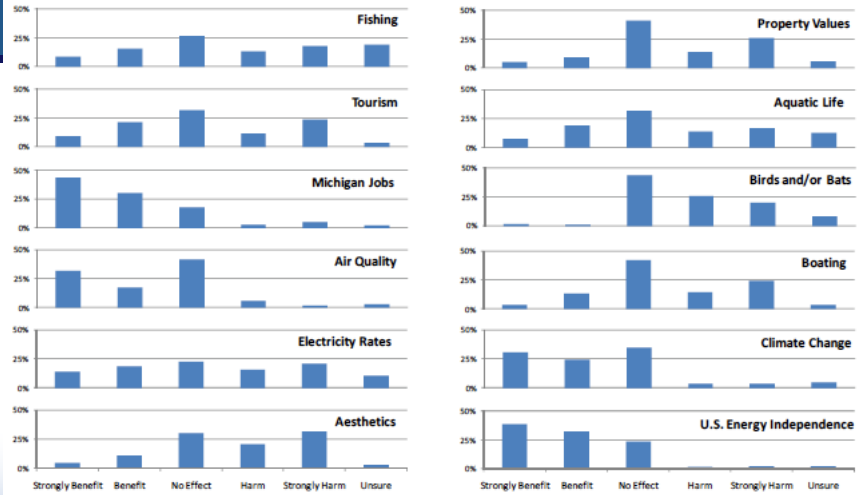
## Twelve Questions About Positive and Negative Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy

### Opinions and Perceptions

- Fairly **even distribution** across benefit-harm scale for fishing, tourism, electricity rates, boating, and aquatic life impacts
- Stronger perception of **negative** impacts for aesthetics and avian impacts
- Stronger perception of **positive** impacts for jobs, air quality, climate change, and energy independence

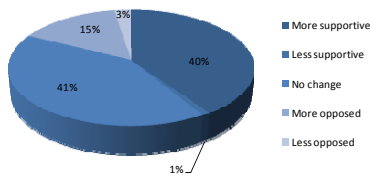
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**EXHIBIT 3**  
Aggregate Participant Responses, Coastal Community Meetings



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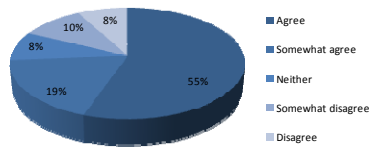
**Q27. Compared with how you felt before this meeting, how have your opinions of offshore wind on the Great Lakes changed?**



More supportive	40%
Less supportive	1%
More opposed	15%
Less opposed	2%
No change	41%

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**Q28. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?  
The Great Lakes Offshore Wind Council is acting  
openly and transparently.**



Agree 55%  
Somewhat 19%

Disagree 8%  
Somewhat 10%

Neither 7

%

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## Table Top Discussion and Additional Input at Coastal Meetings

- Handout question: You just learned about the council's exclusion areas and buffering criteria. Do they seem reasonable and comprehensive for new statewide policy and planning?
- Responses:
  - YES (count = 76)
  - NO (count = 21)
  - INDISCERNIBLE (count = 26)
  - NO RESPONSE (count = 24)

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## Unique ideas and questions (not addressed in the council's presentations)

- Excerpted from table top discussion sheets:
  - “Are you aware there is an important butterfly migration in northern Lake Michigan, perhaps near the Delta [WRA] area?”
  - “Small boats do not have radar to avoid towers in a dense fog.”
  - “Will counties with affected viewsheds be allocated an extra portion of revenues?”
  - “The people that live on the shores of the Great Lakes do not own the lake.”
  - “Get rid of fossil fuel and nuclear subsidies.”
  - “GLOW should consider cost.”
  - “No mention was made of offshore ice...”

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## Unique ideas and questions (not addressed in the council's presentations)

- Excerpted from table top discussion sheets:
  - “I was worried about a company coming into an area and bulldozing a project through that doesn't meet official goals.”
  - “200 rusting hulks would not be conducive to tourism.”
  - “No permitting for foreign, inexperienced companies.”
  - “Shoreline counties need veto power.”
  - “Why are we not requiring the new gearless [low oil, low maintenance] turbines?”
  - “Interior of farm would produce higher fish populations because of reef effect, could boaters go inside?”
  - “Need a realistic future cost of various electrical energy options.”

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## Correspondence Received by Council

- ~ 300 individual pieces of correspondence received through website, e-mail, and U.S. mail
- Scandia Aegir project impetus for most comments
- Majority of correspondence expressed concerns/opposition but increasing number of favorable comments more recently
- Common issues or questions raised in correspondence related to:
  - Distance from shore
  - Role of local governments and the public in siting and permitting decisions
  - Effects on tourism, wildlife, fisheries (including access issues), property values
  - Public trust
  - Economic growth/job creation
  - Accuracy/completeness of mapping data used by council

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**Sent:** Tuesday, March 09, 2010 3:22 PM  
**To:** DeBeaussaert, Ken (DNRE)  
**Subject:** A message from David Klooster  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

You have received the following message through the Contact Us form on your Microsoft Office Live Small Business Web site:

From: David Klooster  
E-mail: [klooster@hope.edu](mailto:klooster@hope.edu)  
Message:

Please do not allow the Scandia Off-Shore Wind Project to go forward. The exploitation of Michigan natural resources by foreign companies is unacceptable. The project will produce no significant jobs for Michigan residents and it will destroy our best natural resource--the Lake Michigan tourist attraction. And if we begin selling off our natural resources, where will we stop? Will it be possible later on to block additional wind factories like this one? Will we be able to stop efforts to divert our fresh water to other states or countries? I think the project is a terrible idea, and I hope you will fulfill your duties to the people of Michigan by doing all that you can to block this project.

David Klooster  
--property owner in Mason and Ottawa counties.

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**EXHIBIT 4**  
Major Themes from Public Correspondence

Common reasons stated	Example excerpt from comments
<b>Support for offshore wind energy</b>	
Job creation/economic opportunity	I was born and raised in Muskegon, Michigan. We have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Not only do we want wind power....we need it. Muskegon is a wonderful place to live, and I can't stand the idea that we might go under. We NEED this in our area.
Clean, renewable energy	The lakeshore is an ideal location for producing needed energy and SHOULD BE USED. Personally, I would like to look out offshore and see windmills, knowing that they are producing clean energy rather than adding more coal/gas plants. Everywhere we look these days we hear the NIMBY wail. Well, it is time to get over it if it means not getting another ugly and polluting coal, gas or nuclear plant.
<b>Concerns with offshore wind energy</b>	
Opposition to Scandia/Aegir project	I am writing to voice my opposition and request your consideration in denying development of wind-energy projects currently being targeted for Lake Michigan. Your support in keeping Lake Michigan pristine and undisturbed is greatly appreciated and needed.
Tourism impacts	Long-term negative impact on tourism. Tourism, currently a primary source of jobs, will undoubtedly be negatively impacted. Families come to Western Michigan for its natural beauty—nothing is beautiful about large wind turbines next to the shores.*
Habitat impacts	The rapidly spinning blades would kill much of the avian life in the area, including bald eagles, cormorants, geese, ducks, monarchs, and other birds and wildlife.
<b>Other comments and questions</b>	
Public access for fishing and boating near turbines	Question: Would any area built be off limits to people or could fishing still be done in the area?

*From: Justin Hathon 652 N Washington St, Owosso, Shiawassee county*  
*Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 7:25 pm*  
*To: Graf, Tom (DNRE)*





*[Hello Mr. Graft. I'll be brief .](#)*  
*[I support Wind turbines on land and in the water. We need the jobs](#)*



*[I have been building the big turbines for two years now](#)*  
*[Enjoy my pics from work. I took them last August in Wolcott, Indiana.](#)*  
*[I'm an electrician in Lansing Local 665.](#)*



## For More Information

- Go to: [www.michiganlowcouncil.org](http://www.michiganlowcouncil.org) for summary report from Public Engagement Work Group (click on Meeting Information, June 28 meeting)