

Save Ontario Shores Urges Public Participation in Great Lakes Wind Feasibility Study Public Feedback Session

Save Ontario Shores, Inc. (SOS), the grassroots organization opposed to plans to erect dozens of massive industrial wind turbines in the lakeshore communities of Somerset and Yates, is calling on members of the public to take part in The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Great Lakes Wind Feasibility Study Public Feedback Session. The virtual event will be held Wednesday, June 9, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Registration for the event is required: <https://tinyurl.com/j4bfa6tm>).

“How many towns, marinas, boaters, and those in the tourism business along Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are aware of a feasibility study to look at the possibility of placing industrial wind turbines in the lakes Ontario and Erie?” asked SOS President Pam Atwater. “As we speak with stakeholders we realize that most are not aware of this study. It is crucial for residents to voice their concerns about the negative impacts this project will have on the quality of life for lakeshore residents.”

“In Somerset we are particularly concerned as one of the locations where transmission lines could come onshore would be at the Somerset Beowulf property where they would use the existing transmission lines. That would put the turbines right off our shore. New York State has an expansive amount of Great Lakes shoreline and it is an enormous resource to the local economy. Millions have been spent over the past decade to restore the Great Lakes environment. Now the state is spending a million dollars to decide if it is feasible to industrialize it! And as is standard practice in New York, the rural communities and businesses who would be most impacted are not brought to the table.”

According to NYSERDA: “The study will consider existing and emerging technologies for fixed and floating turbines (including icing considerations unique to the Great Lakes), new technology development timelines, geospatial conditions, resource assessment, regulatory processes, permitting requirements and risks, potential conflicts, costs and economic opportunities, electrical infrastructure, and overall cost-reduction pathways.”

“The fact that floating turbines are not likely due to ice issues, means that development would be limited to lake depths of 197 feet or less until new technologies emerge. This would still allow for offshore wind development throughout much of New

York's Lake Erie waters, but limit development to within a couple miles of shore within New York's Lake Ontario waters," said Atwater.

An August 2020 survey commissioned by SOS found 83 percent of Somerset and Yates respondents opposed to plans by the state to allow for installation of industrial wind turbines up to 10 miles off the shores of Lake Erie and one to two miles off Lake Ontario's shores.

"These distances are far less than the 30 miles offered to shoreline areas off Long Island," said SOS Vice President Kate Kremer. "If these offshore industrial wind projects are allowed to proceed, they will have a devastating impact on eco-tourism, fishing and boating, and recreation which people now enjoy in an unencumbered manner," Kremer said.

Residents can also email NYSERDA with their feedback about the feasibility study: greatlakeswind@nyserda.ny.gov.

NYSERDA Great Lakes Wind Feasibility Study link:

<https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All%20Programs/Programs/Clean%20Energy%20Standard/Important%20Orders%20Reports%20and%20Filings/Great%20Lakes%20Wind%20Feasibility%20Study>