



Contact: Paula Stevens
517.373.9280

Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Stanley "Skip" Pruss, Director

www.michigan.gov/deleg
Email: mediainfo@michigan.gov

Michigan Great Lakes Wind Council Report Provides Roadmap for Offshore Wind Energy Development

September 2, 2009 - The Michigan Great Lakes Wind Council has issued its report to Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, providing a roadmap for the sustainable development of offshore wind energy resources in the Great Lakes.

"Michigan has world class clean energy resources—both natural and manmade—to attract the offshore wind energy industry to the state and Great Lakes region," said Stanley "Skip" Pruss, chair of the council and director of the state's Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth. "The council's recommendations will help us harness this source of clean energy and create jobs, while protecting the Great Lakes for current and future residents."

According to the report, 20 percent or 7,874 square miles of the 38,000 square miles of state-owned Great Lakes bottomlands has a depth of 30 meters or less, which is practicable for offshore wind development. There are 537 square miles that are considered to be most favorable for the sustainable development of offshore wind energy.

To protect the state's precious natural resources, the council has identified specific areas and resources that need to be protected by a buffer zone, including a 6-mile buffer for shoreline, a 5-mile buffer for habitats of threatened or endangered species, a 1-mile buffer for recreational fish spawning sites and refuges, and a 13-mile buffer for national park lakeshore. Other areas incompatible with offshore wind development, such as navigation channels, airport setbacks, and military operation areas, are categorically excluded.

The council also recommends a package of legislative and rule changes to help guide the development of offshore wind energy going forward. Recommended changes would facilitate the permitting, leasing, construction, and monitoring of offshore wind projects while protecting the resource.

The report also identified "lessons learned" from experiences around the world.

"We have great potential for wind energy development in the Great Lakes," said Granholm. "With this report from the Great Lakes Wind Council, we can move forward with this opportunity without jeopardizing Michigan's valuable natural resources."

(more)

Page 2

The council was established by Executive Order 2009-1, issued on February 6, 2009, to serve as an advisory body to the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth. The council represents a broad array of interests, including state agencies, industry, universities, and residents of Michigan. From March through July, the council met four times and held a series of work sessions to hear from offshore wind energy experts and to formulate its recommendations.

The council recommends that it continue, through September 1, 2010 to identify discrete areas for offshore wind and to solicit input from the public.

The report is available for download at: www.michiganlowcouncil.org.

The Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (DELEG) is investing in Michigan's future by preparing for the new energy economy, helping to create the jobs of today and tomorrow, ensuring that our children and adults have the skills these jobs demand, making Michigan a better place to do business, and training and placing those who need jobs now.

For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/deleg.

###