

Offshore Wind – Talking Points

- A. Michigan has significant potential for the development of clean energy from offshore wind
 - a. MSU's Land Policy Institute says that Michigan's offshore wind potential far exceeds our onshore wind potential.
 - b. Without any constraints, Michigan's potential is for wind power in the lakes is over 300,000 MW (equivalent to 300 Fermi II nuclear plants!)
- B. Developing Michigan's offshore wind potential could significantly benefit our economy
 - a. Job creation in manufacturing, installing and maintaining turbines
 - b. Clean and cost-effective energy to fuel our economy
 - c. Help reduce the amount of money we spend on out-of-state coal
 - d. Revenues from leasing bottomlands (lake bottom) for wind siting
- C. Development of Michigan's offshore wind potential could also have numerous negative consequences:
 - a. Impacts on birds and bats, as well as aquatic ecosystems
 - b. Interference with navigational or recreational uses of Michigan's Great Lakes
 - c. Impacts on the aesthetic values of the Great Lakes
 - d. Legislation to completely ban offshore wind projects has been introduced. We think that approach is too extreme and a more thoughtful and public process is necessary.
- D. Regardless of one's position on offshore wind, Michigan has no appropriate regulatory structure to deal with offshore wind development proposals. There is no process to account for issues like:
 - a. Public involvement
 - b. How and where to use Michigan's publicly-owned bottomlands
 - c. How to balance various uses of Michigan's Great Lakes (shipping, recreation, power generation)
 - d. How to ensure protection of wildlife, lake ecosystems and aesthetic values
 - e. Auction and leasing process
- E. Currently, wind turbines **could** be sited in the lakes, using the existing Submerged Lands Act – but:
 - a. This law was designed for regulating docks and marinas
 - b. It's **not** for large scale wind development projects

- c. Under the Submerged Land Act, Michigan would have to consider a lease for offshore wind – but without the protections and public involvement appropriate for a big wind development
 - d. Michigan must enact legislation that is appropriate for this scale of development – to maximize our offshore potential and to protect our natural resources.
- F. In 2009 & 2010, a bi-partisan commission called the Great Lakes Offshore Wind (GLOW) Council (appointed by Gov. Granholm):
- a. Identified and mapped potential wind development areas in the Great Lakes
 - b. Made recommendations on model legislation
 - c. Conducted an extensive public education program about offshore wind opportunities
- G. The legislation:
- a. Establishes permitting guidelines, leasing methods and payment structures
 - b. Creates a process for public input and decision making
 - c. Received a preliminary hearing in 2010, but didn't move
- H. Status of this legislation
- a. The Office of the Great Lakes is working on a new draft of the legislation that sets a strict 6 mile setback from shore and a mechanism for charging potential developers adequate fees to cover the state's administrative costs

At this point, we want to simply let you know that this is important legislation that must be passed, regardless of your attitude about offshore wind. And to ask you a few questions about offshore wind power.

Questions for Lawmakers:

Do you believe that Michigan should consider offshore wind development as part of our state's clean energy initiatives?

Do you agree that it is important to have a transparent and public process for considering offshore wind developments?