

Facebook

Twitter

Reddit

Email

Tumblr

Pinterest

LinkedIn

Share this story

Ontario cancels nearly-built \$200M wind farm over threat to bat populations

Facebook

Twitter

Reddit

Email

Tumblr

Pinterest

LinkedIn



The Conservative government of Premier Doug Ford has abruptly cancelled a nearly completed wind farm outside Crysler opposed by land owners, including from left, Jean-Serge Brisson, Randy Lamb, Ruby Mekker, Beth Trudeau and husband John Trudeau. *WAYNE CUDDINGTON / POSTMEDIA*

Benke is a founding member of the grassroots organization Concerned Citizens of North Stormont. She appealed the approval from the Review Tribunal, which had held nine days of hearings in the fall of 2018.

The retired principal, a lifelong resident of the area, said she had to read the Yurek letter twice to make sure she didn't misunderstand the stunning outcome.

"I was thrilled," she said Monday. "There is no real mitigation measure to protect the bats." She's been fighting the battle for more than four years and estimates Concerned Citizens has spent in excess of \$100,000 to fight the plan.

EDP Renewables said it "strongly objects" to Yurek's decision. It has, however, halted construction and is assessing "all potential legal actions" because the project was already approved by Yurek's own's ministry and ratified by the tribunal.

The Conservative government of Doug Ford — and the premier himself — have been critical of so-called industrial wind farms but this was the last one approved by the departing Liberal government in May 2018, only days before the election writ was dropped.

In July 2018, only weeks after taking office, the Ford government nixed the Green Energy Act and cancelled 758 early-stage renewable-energy projects.

EDP says the project has created more than 230 construction jobs and, over the next 30 years, would pump some \$45 million into the local economy through municipal taxes, a community benefit fund, charitable contributions and landowner fees. It has already built a network of roads and laid a great deal of electrical cable in the area.

Since signing a contract in 2016, EDP has done a number of studies related to the effects of the wind farm, including noise models, a wildlife analysis, geological work, and following regulated setbacks of 550 metres from the nearest house.

It said experts had provide evidence the project would have “no material adverse effects” on the natural environment, including the bat population.

“Decisions of this nature should be based on science and law, yet there was no expert testimony or evidence presented at the Tribunal or to the Minister that would provide a reasonable rationale for the Minister’s decision.”

Opponents were thrilled to hear about the reversal, as even their own MPP had told them the project was too advanced to stop.

“I am ecstatic,” said Ruby Mekker, 68, a retired educator and one of the project’s most vocal opponents. “I can’t believe that they actually sided in favour of the people. I’m so thrilled.”

She says a handful of wells in the area have already had problems suspected to be connected to the wind farm infrastructure.

About six of the turbines are fully built and another half-dozen have the towers erected. The project was to be finished in the first quarter of 2020.

To contact Kelly Egan, please call 613-726-5896 or email kegan@postmedia.com (<mailto:kegan@postmedia.com>).

Twitter: [@KellyEganColumn](https://twitter.com/kellyegancolumn) (<https://twitter.com/kellyegancolumn>)

ALSO IN THE NEWS

[Christy Natsis granted full parole after 'exemplary' time in Ottawa halfway house](https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/christy-natsis-granted-full-parole-after-exemplary-time-in-ottawa-halfway-house) (https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/christy-natsis-granted-full-parole-after-exemplary-time-in-ottawa-halfway-house).

[Worries over suburban mobility, girth of urban boundary unloaded at official plan meeting](https://wp.me/p4wplu-6nuA) (https://wp.me/p4wplu-6nuA).

[Holiday benefit concert in memory of Jonathan Pitre](https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/holiday-benefit-concert-in-memory-of-jonathan-pitre) (https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/holiday-benefit-concert-in-memory-of-jonathan-pitre).

This Week's Flyers

COMMENTS

Postmedia is pleased to bring you a new commenting experience. We are committed to maintaining a lively but civil forum for discussion and encourage all readers to share their views on our articles. Comments may take up to an hour for moderation before appearing on the site. We ask you to keep your comments relevant and respectful. Visit our [Community Guidelines](https://pages.postmedia.com/community-guidelines/) (https://pages.postmedia.com/community-guidelines/) for more information.

SIGN IN TO COMMENT

follow



Join the conversation

LOG IN | SIGN UP

Newest ▾

All Comments 27



Richard Mann 22 MIN AGO

It is well past time to turn off Turbines due to known and documented health harm. Please ask

anyone who denies health harm of Industrial Wind Turbines to watch this presentation.

University of Waterloo, Waterloo Ontario Canada.

Title: "Infrasound and Low Frequency Noise: Physics & Cells, History & Health"

Speaker: Dr Mariana Alves-Pereira

Location: University of Waterloo

Date: September 12, 2019

Video archive of presentation:

<https://livestream.com/itmsstudio/events/8781285>

Dr. Alves-Pereira's research profile is at: www.researchgate.net/profile/Mariana_Alves-pereira

Note; there is approx 2 mins of dead air at the beginning. The talk is ~50 minutes, followed by a long Q&A

REPLY 0 0

DG

Dan Gigigi 20 HRS AGO

If the Minister was doing his job properly, it'd never have got to this point in the project.

REPLY 0 0

MB

Michael Ball 1 DAY AGO

Some fun facts: Wind supplies only 4.4% of the power to Ontario. Yet has 9.4% of the installed capacity. We are grossly underusing what we have already. In fact, Ontario makes way more energy now than it uses. Selling off excess at a loss. And when the wind stops, the power must come from gas-fired plants. The past Liberal governments have gotten us into such a mess with our electricity: cancelled gas plants, stupid eco-projects that costs is 100's of millions with a loss on return, and crippling 20 year contracts overpaying for electricity we don't even use. All this for green optics to the voters.

I assume not one poster against stopping windmills has one of these monstrosities in their backyard. Not only are they visual and noise pollution, the terra forming of the landscape to build and maintain the towers is massive. And the 10,000 of birds and bats killed per year. Devalue your property. For what? I think NIMBY is warranted in this case.

Here, a good article:

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/why-does-electricity-cost-so-much-in-ontario/article33453270/>

REPLY 5 REPLIES 4 2

RT

Raymond Troung > IN REPLY TO **Michael Ball** 23 HRS AGO

Give scientific evidence not a news article

REPLY 2 REPLIES 0 0

GT

Glenn Taylor > IN REPLY TO **Raymond Troung** 22 HRS AGO

Funny you should mention that. Climate activists post news articles all day long as proof and no scientific evidence but that's deemed acceptable.

REPLY 2 0

MB

Michael Ball > IN REPLY TO **Raymond Troung** 21 HRS AGO

The news article I provided has many sources including STASCAN, IESO, Canadian Electricity Association, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario and so on. What more do you need? If you are talking about the bats, sheesh, a quick google from the University of Colorado, Scientific American, etc. have great information on Bat Deaths from Windmills. So, it is both a eco-hazard and financial stupidity from the pervious governments.

REPLY 2 0

DG

Dan Gigigi > IN REPLY TO **Michael Ball** 20 HRS AGO

Many very good points against wind energy.

Still a terrible reason to cancel yet another nearly-completed energy project.

The government of Ontario has destroyed at least a billion of dollars in these bait-and-switch debacles.

That's not to mention several more billions of dollars in mis-managment and cost overruns in existing facilities.

I'd at least like to see an efficiency report, to prioritize shutting down the least efficient operations first.

We've got politicians telling us the world will start ending in 12 years, but apparently there's some profound lack of bats which suddenly surpasses that need.

All of it is ridiculous.

If the Minister was doing his job properly, it'd never have got to this point in the project.

REPLY 1 REPLY 1 0

MB

Michael Ball > IN REPLY TO **Dan Gigigi** 20 HRS AGO

Good points Dan. Even with the wasted dollars and effort spent, the savings will be in the long run. We are loosing money on windmills and solar. In the end it is all about buying votes - that's why it is so ridiculous.

REPLY 0 0



Add your reply



Kane Hart 1 DAY AGO

I hope no one is as stupid to believe this. If so why they not helping Disabled People, Seniors, why they trying to mess with the greenbelt, etc... This was just a really horrible cover story they made thinking that the seals who don't have any brain cells would clap for them...

REPLY 0 3



Tony Butler 1 DAY AGO

"She says a handful of wells in the area have already had problems suspected to be connected to the wind farm infrastructure."

This is not science - just as the threat to the bats is not science. Suspicions are reasons to do objective research by experts. Suspicions may suggest a reason to delay or slow down a project. But suspicions are not a reason to cancel a project, especially if there has been no effort to document the concerns using objective scientific methods.

BTW: a handful of wells in any area will experience problems every year even without construction activity nearby. Were the wells too shallow, was the pump running too long because the compression tank loss pressure, what aquifer is being used and is it anywhere near the site of the construction,

The wind turbines could be a threat to the bat population. Or not. But being suspicious that they might have an impact is not a reason to completely cancel the project before definitive evidence is provided.

One amusing element of this story is that the Conservatives, who crowed constantly that the Ontario Landowners Association's position on the primacy of the landowner to do as they wish with their land was no less than a sacred trust, are overriding the rights of the landowners to use their property as they wish to earn income.

REPLY 2 REPLIES 6 4



Brian Stewart > IN REPLY TO **Tony Butler** 1 DAY AGO

I see that the Alt-Left only believe their experts. Tony I'm shocked that you of all people don't realize that these windmills are exterminating the bat population as well as birds. The bats are far far more important to the ecosystem than birds.

want to be really green? stop spilling water over Niagara falls and run hydro at full capacity

REPLY 1 REPLY 1 2



Tony Butler > IN REPLY TO **Brian Stewart** 1 DAY AGO

Scientific journal or study reference please on impact of wind turbines of this design on bat populations.

Bats are no more and no less important than birds. Each serves a niche within the ecosystem

Tree bats do appear to be impacted by turbines but no more than by tall buildings and loss of habitat. We cannot tear down the the buildings and have largely failed restoring habitat but turbines can be outfitted to protect bats. And while it seems the tree bat is mostly affected by wind turbines, there is always the potential that the bats in the area of these turbines could be affected but to a much lesser degree. So look at options:

"A whistle that recreates the anatomical structures in a bat's larynx was developed by researchers at the Texas A&M University and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. 3D printed and requiring zero power, the whistle can reach bats at distances of over 100 meters."

So if the issue is bats, outfit the turbines. No reason to cancel the project. If the reason is something else (the political interests of the party in power) then cancelling will prove to be one more large and unnecessary expense for Ontario taxpayers.

Dams are not w/o impact to the environment. Nothing is without cost: in this case damming Niagara would have serious impact both up and down stream. Fertile land would have to be expropriated as well as many residences and businesses Currently a number of hydro generation stations make use of the river to provide power to NY state and Ontario. Expansion of these facilities is underway but through the use of tunnels.

So Niagara is currently being used at close to capacity w/o a major impact on upstream and downstream environments and with minimal impact to what flows over the falls.

REPLY 1 1



Add your reply



John Peterson 1 DAY AGO

lets build giant coal fired generators here instead - much more progressive....

REPLY 3 REPLIES 1 3



Simon Simmons > IN REPLY TO **John Peterson** 1 DAY AGO

or as the other poster said, buy these slightly used turbines and move them to Ottawa, what could possibly go wrong with that? Small modular reactors is the best option. **EDITED**

REPLY 1 REPLY 3 1



John Peterson > IN REPLY TO **Simon Simmons** 1 DAY AGO

agree, Ottawa take the wind turbines and put the coal fired generators in north Stormont. deal!

REPLY 2 0



Dan Gigigi > IN REPLY TO **John Peterson** 20 HRS AGO

Great idea!

Great idea:

Move the turbines, set them up, only to then have the government shut you down after tens or hundreds of millions were spent yet again.

REPLY 0 0



Add your reply



Wayne Porter 1 DAY AGO

The group in the picture is blocking our way to the future. Let engineers work out protection for the bats.

REPLY 10 REPLIES 3 6



jack porter > IN REPLY TO **Wayne Porter** 1 DAY AGO

I see the Trudeau family are involved, not often that a Trudeau gets the better of a Ford :)

REPLY 1 0



CONTENT DISABLED

1 REPLY



Joe Pavelich 1 DAY AGO

There's the real argument. NIMBYism at it's finest.

REPLY 1 REPLY 0 2



Simon Simmons > IN REPLY TO **Joe Pavelich** 1 DAY AGO

Good on them for defeating this nonsense, I would love to see Ottawa people faced with the devaluation of their homes and all the problems these things bring to a community.

REPLY 1 REPLY 2 1



Tony Butler > IN REPLY TO **Simon Simmons** 1 DAY AGO

What does this have to do with people in Ottawa? Toronto approved these wind turbines (under Ford) and Toronto has rejected these turbines (again under Ford).

Attempts to reduce our carbon footprint is not just a regional issue, but blaming taxpayers in Ottawa for things that the Ford govt screws up seems like a stretch.

REPLY 1 REPLY 1 1



jack porter > IN REPLY TO **Brian Stewart** 1 DAY AGO

what science? Ford is using the excuse that bats "might be affected", that's not science

REPLY 2 1

**Brian Stewart** > IN REPLY TO **Tony Butler** 1 DAY AGO

that isn't true Tony and you know it. Those windmills were approved by Wynne just before the election. " last one approved by the departing Liberal government in May 2018, only days before the election writ was dropped."

I expected better from you

REPLY 2 REPLIES 0 0

**Wayne Porter** > IN REPLY TO **Wayne Porter** 1 DAY AGO

I know truth is hard for Conservatives. Here's a little bit.

A 2014 study which looked at the ROI found that 2-megawatt wind turbines installed in Northwest USA paid for themselves in 5-6 months. A 2010 analysis of fifty separate studies found that the average wind turbine, over the course of its operational life, generated 20 times more energy than it took to produce.

REPLY 1 0

TB

Tony Butler > IN REPLY TO **Brian Stewart** 1 DAY AGO

"....and is assessing "all potential legal actions" because the project was already approved by Yurek's own's ministry and ratified by the tribunal."

Initial approval under the last govt does not negate the approvals provided by the current govt. Yurek is overturning decisions taken under the current govt. That is not in dispute and is a particular reason that the company has a high probability of winning a large award (costs plus damages and loss profits).

If the Ford govt had put an immediate stop to this when they came into govt no construction would have been initiated. All projects of this nature under go various review and approval processes, as this one did under the current govt.

REPLY 1 1

TB

Tony Butler > IN REPLY TO **Brian Stewart** 1 DAY AGO

BTW as a Texas owned firm this will either be fought in the courts or the Trade Tribunal So far Ford has failed to win one round in the contract cancellations. Expect a quick high value settlement on this one. Property owners that entered into contracts for sites for the turbines will also have a case to seek a settlement from the govt - likely a group action.

REPLY 1 1



Add your reply

ACTIVE CONVERSATIONS



Some Ontario high school teachers hold one-day strike which affects nin...

6

(https://ottawacitizen.com/pmn/news-pmn/canada-news-pmn/some-ontario-high-school-teachers-hold-one-day-strike-which-affects-nine-boards/wcm/138bae7f-c65a-417e-a3c7-6a5c84a03b2f?__vfz=medium%3Dconversations_top_pages)



Woman dies after falling through hole at Ottawa construction site, friend...

10

(https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/1211-death?__vfz=medium%3Dconversations_top_pages)

([HTTPS://WWW.POSTMEDIA.COM](https://www.postmedia.com))

365 Bloor St East, Toronto, ON, M4W3L4, www.postmedia.com

© 2019 Postmedia Network Inc. All rights reserved.

Unauthorized distribution, transmission or republication strictly prohibited.

Powered by WordPress.com VIP (<https://wpvip.com/>)

[utm_source=vip_powered_wpcom&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=VIP%20Footer%20Credit&utm_term=ottawacitizen.com](https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/ontario-cancels-nearly-built-200m-wind-farm-over-threat-to-bat-populations))