

# **Appendix C**

## **MNR Correspondence**

June 24, 2010

Nicole Kopysh  
Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
Suite 1 – 70 Southgate Drive  
Guelph ON, N1G 4P5

Dear Ms. Kopysh

Re: **Background Information Request – Records Review  
Belwood Wind Farm, Municipality of Centre Wellington, Wellington County**

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Further to our meeting of June 17, 2010 MNR provides the following additional information and comments for consideration. It is understood that the area of interest is for WPD's proposed Belwood Wind Farm under the new renewable energy approvals (REA) process.

### **About the Renewable Energy Approvals Process**

Under the Ministry of the Environment's regulation for Renewable Energy Approvals (359/09) under the Environmental Protection Act there are several requirements for Renewable Energy projects that must be met/addressed pertaining to the protection of natural heritage features as part of the application process. You can find the Regulation online at:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regis/english/elaws\\_regs\\_090359\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regis/english/elaws_regs_090359_e.htm)

More specifically Sections 24-28 of the Regulation outline natural heritage requirements for renewable energy projects. Section 38 also outlines natural heritage prohibitions and Environment Impact Study requirements.

In order to address the Regulation, a Natural Heritage Assessment (NHA) including specific information must be completed to meet MNR's requirements. The MNR has created the Approvals and Permitting Requirements document (APRD) to help provide direction on the preparation of these materials. This document can be found online at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/277097.pdf>. This document outlines the MNR's requirements for renewable energy projects, including wind proposals.

The Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) may also be able to provide additional natural heritage information. You can submit a request to obtain this information through their website at <http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>. To obtain digital mapping that the Ministry has available for the natural features mentioned below; please contact Land Information Ontario (LIO), or visit their website at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/LIO/index.html>.

To obtain more general information about developing renewable energy projects in Ontario, you can also contact the Renewable Energy Facilitation Office (REFO). They can be reached at [REFO@ontario.ca](mailto:REFO@ontario.ca) or 1-877-440-REFO (7336). You can also visit their website at [http://www.mei.gov.on.ca/en/energy/renewable/index.php?page=refo\\_office](http://www.mei.gov.on.ca/en/energy/renewable/index.php?page=refo_office).

## **Natural Heritage Information**

With respect to wetlands, parts of the provincial significant North Cumnock wetland complex and the provincial significant Living Springs wetland complex are located within the optioned lands and general study area. In addition, there are a number of other wetlands that are unevaluated within the general study area. Mapping for these features is available through LIO.

There is hardly any copy fisheries information available for a number of the water courses with the study area, including Irvine Creek. Please contact Art Timmerman, Management Biologist at 519-826-4935 or [art.timmerman@ontario.ca](mailto:art.timmerman@ontario.ca) to make arrangements to access this information.

The regionally significant Irvine Creek Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) is also within the study area for the proposed wind development. Mapping of ANSI features is available through LIO.

Ministry staff are also aware of an active osprey nest on a hydro pole near the intersection of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Line of W. and Wellington 19 south of the study area.

There are also a number of wooded areas within the general study area; these appear to range from small hedgerow features to larger woodland communities up to roughly 80 hectares in size. Several of the woodland communities have also been identified as deer wintering areas, which should also be captured as part of the overall NHA in relation to significant wildlife habitat. Mapping is also available for identified deer wintering areas and wooded areas through LIO.

The Ministry also has guidelines to assist proponents in developing appropriate bird and bat monitoring protocols, including: Guideline to Assist in the Review of Wind Power Proposals – Potential Impacts to Birds and Bird Habitats; and the recently updated draft Bats and Bat Habitats – Guideline for Wind Power Projects. These documents are available on the Ministry's website at [www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca) under the Energy –Windpower –Policies, Procedures and Guidelines section. Please note that the Ministry is currently in the process of updating the bird guidelines to reflect the recent changes to the renewable energy approvals process.

Further, there are areas of karst which may be potential bat habitat within Wellington County. Karst mapping is provided through the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry (MNDMF). You will need to contact them directly to obtain available karst data and information.

The Ministry has also recently released the new Natural Heritage Reference Manual – second edition, which can be found online at: <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/289522.pdf>.

## **Information Relating to APRD Requirements**

Potential also exists for the following species-at-risk (SAR) to occur within the general area, as these species are associated with habitats within Wellington County, including: American Chestnut (Endangered), American Ginseng (Endangered), Barn Owl (Endangered), Butternut (Endangered), Henslow's Sparrow (Endangered) (Historical - no recent records), Loggerhead Shrike (Endangered)(Historical - no recent records), Redside Dace (Endangered), Spotted Turtle(Endangered), Wavy-rayed Lampmussel (Endangered), Black Redhorse (Threatened), Blanding's Turtle (Threatened), Butler's Gartersnake (Threatened), Chimney Swift (Threatened), Grey Fox (Threatened), Jefferson Salamander (Threatened), Least Bittern (Threatened), Massasauga (Threatened) (Historical - no recent records), Rainbow Mussel (Threatened), Whip-poor-will (Threatened), Bald Eagle (Special Concern), Black Tern (Special Concern), Common Nighthawk (Special Concern), Eastern Ribbonsnake (Special Concern), Hill's Pondweed (Special Concern),

Milksnake (Special Concern), Monarch(Special Concern), Silver Shiner (Special Concern), Short-eared Owl (Special Concern), Snapping Turtle (Special Concern), Yellow-breasted Chat (Special Concern)(Historical - no recent records).

Given the potential for SAR to occur with in study area, the proposed undertaking should consider including investigations for these species within species-appropriate habitat(s). Determining if SAR or their habitat is present is important in order to consider the potential implications of the Endangered Species Act (2007). MNR staff recommend the following approach with respect to identifying SAR appropriate habitat(s) and determining the presence of species at risk on a property.

#### I. Botanical Inventory

A comprehensive botanical inventory within the general study area should be completed, in order to map all vegetation communities within the property's boundaries. The vegetation communities should be classified as per the "Ecological Land Classification for Southern Ontario" system, to either the "Ecosite" or "Vegetation Type" level, depending on the habitat specificity of potential SAR on the property.

#### II. Potential SAR on the property

A list of SAR that have the potential to occur on the property can be produced by cross-referencing the Vegetation Types described during the botanical inventory with the habitat descriptions of SAR known to occur within Wellington County. The list of species known to occur within Wellington County is provided above. The species-specific COSEWIC status reports ([www.cosewic.gc.ca](http://www.cosewic.gc.ca)) are a good source of information on SAR habitat needs and will be helpful in determining the suitability of the property's Vegetation Types for a given species.

#### III. SAR surveys

MNR staff recommend that for each SAR identified under Step II should be surveyed for, regardless of whether or not the species has been previously recorded on the property. The survey report should describe how each SAR was surveyed for, and provide a rationale for why, if any, certain species included in the list above are not the subject of the survey (e.g. No surveys for Wavy-rayed Lampmussel were conducted because there are no flowing watercourses within the study area).

With respect to Petroleum Resources, due to possible safety concerns when selecting turbine locations, it is also recommended that you review the Ontario Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Library for information about known well and pool locations (<http://www.ogsrlibrary.com/>) of petroleum in the study area. The Ontario Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Library is the most accurate source of petroleum resource information available. Additional information pertaining to set back requirements from petroleum resource operations is included within the Ministry's APRD document.

#### **General Comments on the Work Plan**

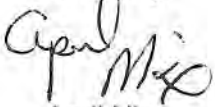
With respect to defining the project location, while the work plan captures the optioned lands where the placement of turbines, access roads, etc. will be located. It should be noted that transmission lines including new poles or adding new lines to existing poles are to be included as part of the project location, and will need to be reflected within the NHA. As such it is recommended that the general study area be refined to identify the route of any proposed transmission lines as part of the project location.

With respect to mapping of the project location in relation to identified natural features as part of the NHA submission, please refer to Section 26 (3)3 of MOE's REA regulation which includes mapping requirements for the reporting of findings relating to the site investigation.

Finally, it is recommended that you also review any other information available from the County of Wellington, the Municipality of Centre Wellington and the Grand River Conservation Authority, if you have not already done so.

I trust this information will be of assistance. If you have any questions about this information or about the preparation of the natural heritage assessment or related materials, you can contact me at [april.nix@ontario.ca](mailto:april.nix@ontario.ca) or at (519)826-4939

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'April Nix', written in a cursive style.

April Nix

Planning Intern  
Ministry of Natural Resources, Guelph District  
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July 14, 2011

Khlaire Parré  
Director of Permits and Environmental Studies  
wpd Canada Corporation  
405 Britannia Road East, Suite 214  
Mississauga, ON L4Z 3E6

To Ms. Parré:

In accordance with the Ministry of the Environment's (MOE's) Renewable Energy Approvals (REA) Regulation (O.Reg.359/09), the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has reviewed the natural heritage assessment and environmental impact study for Springwood Wind Project in the Township of Wellington Centre submitted by wpd Canada Corporation on June 30, 2011.

In accordance with Section 28(2) and 38(2)(b) of the REA regulation, MNR provides the following confirmations following review of the natural heritage assessment:

1. The MNR confirms that the determination of the existence of natural features and the boundaries of natural features was made using applicable evaluation criteria or procedures established or accepted by MNR.
2. The MNR confirms that the site investigation and records review were conducted using applicable evaluation criteria or procedures established or accepted by MNR.
3. The MNR confirms that the evaluation of the significance or provincial significance of the natural features was conducted using applicable evaluation criteria or procedures established or accepted by MNR (if required).
4. The MNR confirms that the project location is not in a provincial park or conservation reserve.
5. The MNR confirms that the environmental impact assessment report has been prepared in accordance with procedures established by the MNR.

This confirmation letter is valid for the project as proposed in the natural heritage assessment and environmental impact study, including those sections describing the Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan and Construction Plan Report. Should any changes be made to the proposed project that would alter the NHA, MNR may need to undertake additional review of the NHA.

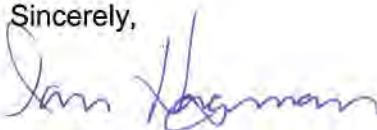
Where specific commitments have been made by the applicant in the NHA with respect to project design, construction, rehabilitation, operation, mitigation, or monitoring, MNR expects that these commitments will be considered in MOE's Renewable Energy Approval decision and, if approved, be implemented by the applicant.

In accordance with S.12 (1) of the Renewable Energy Approvals Regulation, this letter must be included as part of your application submitted to the MOE for a Renewable Energy Approval.

Please be aware that your project may be subject to additional legislative approvals as outlined in the Ministry of Natural Resources' *Approvals and Permitting Requirements Document*. These approvals are required prior to the construction of your renewable energy facility.

If you wish to discuss any part of this confirmation or additional comments provided, please contact Erin Harkins, Planning Ecologist at 519-826-5121 or at [erin.harkins@ontario.ca](mailto:erin.harkins@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



Ian Hagman  
District Manager  
Guelph District MNR

cc. Jim Beal, Renewable Energy Provincial Field Program Coordinator, Regional Operations Division, MNR  
Andrea Fleischhauer, A/Southern Region Renewable Energy Coordinator, Regional Operations Division, MNR  
Narren Santos, Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch, MOE  
Nicole Kopysh, Project Manager, Stantec