



Funds help Ontarians develop and own renewable energy projects

First round grants totaling \$1.1 million announced for community power

(Toronto, Ontario, January 29, 2008) The Community Power Fund announced the disbursement of \$1.1 million in grant money today to community groups for the development of local renewable energy projects.

The Community Power Fund was founded in 2007 by the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA) with \$3 million in seed money from the Government of Ontario. The Community Power Fund's goal is to ensure communities wanting to develop and own local renewable energy projects have access to financial resources through all stages of project development.

Once completed, the projects will represent over 170 MW of community-owned renewable energy.

Projects include:*

- 80 MWs of First Nations wind projects located in northern and southwestern Ontario;
- a Toronto housing co-operative solar thermal initiative;
- a northeastern Ontario small-hydro project, and;
- a project involving 13 southwestern Ontario farm families working together to develop over 50 MW of wind on their land.

The Ontario government's Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program provides homeowners, farmers, First Nations and community organizations with the ability to develop and own projects through a 20 year purchase contract for the sale of green electricity they produce for the grid. This program, North America's first, was introduced by the Government of Ontario in March 2006.

"We are excited to announce today the approval of 15 grants to 15 different community power groups, representing a diversity of technologies, geographical regions and cultural backgrounds", said Deborah Doncaster, the Community Power Fund's Executive Director. "We are working with the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association in their efforts to build capacity and the right policy environment for community developed and owned projects. Often what proponents are lacking is financial support - that's what the Community Power Fund is here for."

"Germany is a great model, as it is a leader in both renewable energy development and community power. About 35 percent of Germany's installed wind capacity of over 22,500 MW is owned by local communities," said Joyce McLean, Chair of the Community Power Fund. "It is remarkable the extent to which community power can motivate people with a clear vision for the future, and, particularly in the case of First Nations and rural communities, a sense of economic renewal and sustainability."



The community power sector is key to facilitating a transition away from fossil fuels and nuclear power to a renewable and conservation-based energy economy. When Ontario communities have the ability to own and develop their own natural resources, Ontario will be on the path to sustainability.

The Community Power Fund and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association aim to support the development of at least 10,000 MW of community-owned renewable energy, about 50 percent of Ontario's stated renewable energy goal, by 2025.

** All projects expect to be eligible for the Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program.*

Background:

Successful Grant Applicants

Windfall Ecology Centre, in partnership with the **Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation**, is working on a 20 MW wind project to be situated on Georgina Island. The Fund Board of Directors approved a \$300,000 3 year project development grant.

Windy Hills Caledon is a not-for-profit organization based in the Caledon area. They plan to use a co-operative based share model to capitalize their 10 MW, 5 turbine wind project. The Fund Board of Directors approved a \$300,000 3 year grant.

The **Campbellford-Seymour Community Foundation (CSCF)** is working with the **Wildside Foundation** to develop a 3 MW small hydro project at Teddy's Falls. The Fund Board of Directors approved a \$300,000 3 year grant.

Barrie Windcatchers is a co-operative group working in the **City of Barrie** to erect a 1.5 MW turbine at the City of Barrie's Sandy Hollow landfill. The Fund Board of Directors has approved a \$25,000 feasibility grant.

Local Initiative For Future Energy (LIFE) is a co-operative working within the Waterloo-Wellington region to develop a wind power project in the St. Agatha area. The Fund Board of Directors approved a \$5,000 pre-feasibility grant.

Next Generation Energy Alternatives is a non-profit organization proposing to install a 2 kW solar photovoltaic system on a downtown Toronto condominium or housing co-op. The Fund Board of Directors approved a \$5,000 grant to complete feasibility work for the project.

The **Norfolk Federation of Agriculture (NFA)**, in partnership with **Farmers for Economic Opportunity (FEO)**, are working toward a 10 MW wind project in the Simcoe and Norfolk county area. The Fund approved a \$5,000 grant to complete their pre-feasibility study.



The **Renewable Energy Cooperative North** (TREC North) is a co-operative working in partnership with the **Municipality of Temagami** on a wind project at Friday Lake, Temagami. The Fund approved a \$25,000 feasibility grant.

Windshare Co-operative is a for-profit wind power co-operative based in Toronto. The Fund approved a \$10,000 feasibility grant for Windshare to explore the possibility of a second turbine at Exhibition Place, Toronto.

Windward Co-operative Homes is a co-operative housing community in Toronto consisting of 101 households. The co-op plans to install a solar thermal system on their building to help offset natural gas use for hot water heating. The Fund approved a feasibility grant for \$11,850.

BlueWater AgriWind is a group of 13 farmers and landowners in Lambton County, working collectively to build a 50-70 MW wind farm on their land. Their projects are now facing a challenge due to lack of distribution grid capacity. The Fund has approved a \$25,000 strategic opportunity grant to assist overcoming this barrier.

M'Chigeeng First Nation of Manitoulin Island has been working toward a 10 MW wind project on the Island. The Fund approved a \$25,000 grant to assist overcoming the barrier of a shortage of distribution grid capacity in their area.

Walpole Island First Nation is working on a 10 MW wind farm that will be located on St. Anne's Island in Lake St. Clair. The Wind Catcher Project is facing a challenge due to lack of grid capacity. The Fund has approved a \$25,000 strategic opportunity grant to help overcome this barrier.

Wikwemikong First Nation, located on Manitoulin Island, has been working on a 30 MW wind project. The project is currently facing a barrier due to a shortage of distribution grid capacity on Manitoulin Island. The Fund approved a \$25,000 strategic opportunity grant to help overcome this barrier.

The **Toronto Renewable Energy Co-operative**, located in downtown Toronto, has been working to develop a solar co-operative (SolarShare) that would enable local citizens and organizations to develop and own a large-scale solar PV installation that would supply green energy to the local grid. The Fund approved a \$25,000 Strategic Opportunity grant to explore the option of incorporating a large-scale solar thermal project into the business plan and co-operative offering for SolarShare.



Ontario's Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program

In the spring of 2004, the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA) launched a campaign for an Advanced Renewable Tariff (ARTs), a market mechanism for renewable energy procurement popular in Europe. OSEA launched the campaign in order to enable local citizens, farmers, First Nations etc., to produce green power and sell it into the grid. ARTs is the dominant procurement mechanism in Germany, France, Denmark, Spain, and the Netherlands, in direct contrast to the Request for Proposal (RFP) mechanism, popular in North America.

ARTs offer a standing, long-term (15-20 year), fixed-price contract (price varies according to technology and productivity) for renewable energy generators ranging from commercial developers to rural landowners and farmers. Anyone can participate in developing green power, and all projects, within reason, have the right to be connected to the grid by the local utility. With the RFP process, proponents are largely, if not exclusively, commercial operators who must compete for power purchase contracts and grid access.

In December 2004, the Ontario Ministry of Energy, under the Honourable Dwight Duncan, contracted OSEA to develop a policy document articulating an alternative procurement process for community power as it was recognized that the community power sector was severely limited from participating in the RFP process in Ontario at the time.

In March 2006, Premier Dalton McGuinty and Dr. David Suzuki announced a "Renewable Energy Standard Offer Contract Program" (RESOP) for Ontario based on OSEA's recommendations for an Advanced Renewable Tariff program. The Honourable Premier Dalton McGuinty stated at the RESOP launch press event, "Until now, it was too costly and complex for small, renewable power producers - such as farmers, rural landowners, community groups, First Nations, business owners or municipalities - to sell their energy to the grid."

In November 2006, the rules for the RESOP program were released. Between November 2006 and November 2007, the Ontario Power Authority, which is responsible for the development and administration of the program, has contracted 543 MW of wind power, 138 MW of solar photovoltaic, 31 MW of small-hydro and 47 MW of bio-energy. Of the projects contracted, 23 MW are in operation. Of the projects contracted and/or in operation, most were developed by commercial entities, as opposed to community owners.

In November 2007, OSEA launched a review and discussion paper of the Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program. This discussion document is available at www.Ontario-sea.org.



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Information on the Community Power Fund can be found at www.cpfund.ca