NOTICE TO PROSPECTIVE AND NEW COMFIT APPLICANTS

In order to enable the Community Feed-In Tariff (COMFIT) One Window Committee (OWC) members to process COMFIT applications more efficiently, applicants submitting wind project applications are asked to follow the process outlined below regarding project siting.

When providing information on a project's location to Government, applicants are required to submit both a KML[1] and shapefile. The standard for digital geographic information used by the Government is a shapefile (format associated with ESRI's ArcView products) using the coordinate reference system UTM NAD83 (Zone 20). The shapefile is commonly found as an output option in other GIS/GPS systems (e.g. Trimble's Pathfinder Office will output a shapefile).[2] A shapefile is comprised of three mandatory extensions (e.g. shp, shx, and dbf) along with other discretionary extensions (e.g. prj, xml).

The following outlines a three-tiered approach as the proponent moves through the approval process.

A. Those proponents applying through the COMFIT process must provide, with their application to the Department of Energy, the following digital information to assist in the timely review by the COMFIT One Window Committee.

- An outline of the project area, approximate locations of towers (within 100 meters), road service network, and property ownership by PID.
- Each tower location should also contain the project name, proponent's name, proposed tower height, and proposed tower capacity (in Megawatts).
- The project area can be identified either as a point within the property(s) of interest locations, polygon representation of the area of interest, or the actual boundaries of the properties themselves. The Department of Natural Resources identifies the point/polygon with the Application ID. The area of interest is the preferred representation as a parcel boundary may greatly exceed the area being influenced by the proposed project. If using a point to identify the property, make sure the Property Identification Number (PID) is well within the parcel boundaries as some minor shifting may occur when translating or projecting. This is particularly important when using a KML file as it defaults to latitude/longitude as mentioned above.
- A second file will provide the approximate location (within 100 meters) of the wind tower(s) in the project area.

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[1] If access to ArcView or another GIS system is not available at this stage of the review process, one can use Google Earth (steps below assume a "marker" [point]).

- To create Add/Placemark.
- When dialog box pops up, enter project reference name and information in the appropriate places, e.g. Name: project group; Description: application id.
- Click Okay.
- To export, right click on the appropriate marker.
- Save Place As: give it a name and select KML as the extension (KMZ seems to be the default but the preference is KML).
- Coordinates: default to geographic (i.e., latitude/longitude).

B. Proponents submitting Draft and Final Environmental Assessment Registrations to the Department of Environment must provide with their application the following digital information in addition to the shapefile specification above to assist in the timely review by government agencies.

- An outline of the project area, approximate locations of towers (within 25 meters), road service network, and property ownership by PID.
- Each tower location should also contain the project name, proponent's name, proposed tower height, and proposed tower capacity (in Megawatts).

C. Proponents receiving, or having previously received, project approvals following Environmental Assessment Registrations or other processes, e.g. COMFIT or federal Environmental Assessment, must provide the following digital information (in addition to the shapefile specification above) to the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources.

- An outline of the project area, exact locations centered on the towers with sub meter accuracy, road service network, and property ownership by PID.
- Each tower location should also contain the project name, proponent's name, proposed tower height, and proposed tower capacity (in Megawatts).

After receipt of the appropriate information, the following process will be followed by OWC members:

1) The Department of Energy or Environment will forward the application folder containing shapefile information (consisting of 3 mandatory and 2 option extensions; Google Earth for COMFIT projects in Stage 1) as required of the proponent in the tiered approach. The Departments will also forward notification of approval or rejection of submission to the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Division c/o Frances MacKinnon (mackinfm@gov.ns.ca).

2) The Department of Natural Resources will maintain 2 maps of the project:

    a. An internal map not for public distribution showing approved and proposed wind developments that will be made available to government regulators; and

    b. A general distribution map of wind energy developments registered under the Environmental Assessment process or approved and announced under the COMFIT process. This will be posted online as a downloadable shapefile and will be available for download.

3) Upon approving a project, Nova Scotia Environment and Energy will provide the Department of Natural Resources with the project's updated information as required. This information will be used to update the Wind Energy Site Map for Nova Scotia.

Questions regarding this process can be directed to Randy Milton, Manager—Wildlife Resources, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.