



Main Office:
7870 Olentangy River Road, Suite 209
Columbus, OH 43235
ph. 614-985-6131 ♦ fax 614-888-9716

Toll-free: 1-866-GREENOH ♦ www.GreenEnergyOhio.org ♦ geo@GreenEnergyOhio.org

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Contacts:

Aaron Godwin,
GEO Board Member and Project Manager
Green Energy Ohio
Ph: (216) 832-1931
AAron@GreenEnergyOhio.org

Dr. Fletcher Miller
GEO Board Member
Green Energy Ohio
Ph: (216) 251-6865
Fletcher@GreenEnergyOhio.org

Green Energy Ohio Completes Wind Tower On Lake Erie

***Upper stage of the Great Lake's Tallest Wind Monitoring Tower Installed by Helicopter Air-Crane
late on Monday, August 29th ahead of Katrina's outfall***

(Cleveland – August 29) Green Energy Ohio completed today the installation of the upper half of the tallest wind-monitoring tower on the Great Lakes. Racing to beat the weather predicted to arrive tomorrow from Katrina, a helicopter lowered the remaining part of the tower onto the Cleveland Water Crib Monday evening. The Crib is located about three miles north of the Lake Erie shoreline at East 9th Street.

The tower now rises 165 feet above the water and will soon be collecting data to determine the technical viability of offshore wind turbines to generate clean electricity in Lake Erie. The wind study will last two years, during which time Green Energy Ohio (GEO) will organize a series of public meetings to discuss wind power on the lake.

On July 25 the first half of the 6000 pound, 125 foot tower was successfully lowered onto the Cleveland water intake crib by a “heavy lift” helicopter from Detroit. Extremely high temperatures and humidity later in the morning combined to create a haze that reduced visibility, and prevented installation of the upper half of the tower.

Workers and volunteers secured the first half of the tower with three heavy-duty guy lines so that the tower can withstand the worst of Lake Erie's storms. Indeed, the next day, powerful winds along the lake flipped many planes and helicopters at Burke Lakefront Airport, but the tower stood fast, with gusts recorded in excess of 80 mile per hour.

Cleveland Mayor Jane L. Campbell said the project adds to the City's history of wind development.

“In the 1940's the Water Intake Crib had one of the first offshore wind turbines in the country.

Green Energy Ohio is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting environmentally
and economically sustainable energy policies and practices in Ohio.
GEO is the Ohio Chapter of the American Solar Energy Society

Today, the City of Cleveland is proud to support Green Energy Ohio’s efforts as they continue the legacy of green energy pioneering,” said Mayor Campbell.

GEO board member and project manager, Aaron Godwin, said the project is not a mandate for installing wind turbines in the lake.

“It will provide meteorological data that can be used in an overall assessment of the technical, economic, social and environmental viability of wind-generated electricity on Lake Erie,” said Godwin. “Lowering the first half of the tower through an access hole in the roof of the crib was an exciting challenge, but today’s lift was even more difficult,” he said. It took three helicopter flights to find the right conditions and mounting equipment to complete the lift.

The upper half of the tower is outfitted with six, ten-foot long booms that will support wind sensors to record speed, direction, and air temperature at three different heights. In addition, temperature, rainfall, humidity, and other data will be recorded by a full weather station at the bottom of the tower. A “City-Cam” web camera also will be included. This data will be transmitted ashore via a secure wireless bridge and then made available to the public through the web.

GEO founding board member Fletcher Miller said volunteers have been working on the project for several years and that the team’s excitement during both helicopter lifts was palpable. People gathered along the shore and in a few boats to watch.

“Everyone had looked forward to this moment for so long, it was like a dream to see the tower sections get picked up, carried out over the lake, and carefully lowered into place,” said Miller. “The public and media response to this project has been overwhelming and entirely positive.”

Generous financial support for the wind monitoring which is Phase I of the project has been provided by the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Steffee Foundation, and the City of Cleveland. Other significant support has been provided by GEO’s other partners and collaborators (See attached list).

GEO Executive Director, Bill Spratley said he is anxious to launch a second step.

“Green Energy Ohio is currently seeking Phase II support that would provide the additional educational components such as distant learning, web development, and stakeholders events,” said Spratley.

(Editors Notes)

Wind power is the fastest growing source of electricity in the world, and is being used successfully in many areas of the United States. Europe currently is the leader in wind energy, with many new offshore installations coming on line. Energy produced from wind is non-polluting (hence the term “green”), reliable, and has no associated fuel costs (the wind is free).

On June 24, at a Utility Scale Wind Seminar in Cleveland, sponsored by GEO, the City of Cleveland and the Ohio Wind Working Group, several national experts discussed the current and future prospects for offshore wind, including an initial overview of offshore wind power development in Lake Erie.

Green Energy Ohio has conducted similar wind studies in the past with partners such as Lake Farmpark, a Lake County Metropark, Bowling Green Municipal Utility District, and the Congregation of St. Joseph on Cleveland’s West Side. The study with the Congregation of St. Joseph is continues.

At Lake Farmpark the study raised awareness of wind as an energy resource and helped establish the location for a 20-kilowatt wind turbine furnished by First Energy along with a full informational display.

In Bowling Green, the municipal utility, in partnership with AMP-Ohio and Green Mountain Energy Company, has installed four of the largest wind turbines in the United States – with additional turbines planned - and is generating clean power.

In 2005, Green Energy Ohio, with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Ohio Department of Development, launched a statewide effort to monitor winds at heights of 320 feet, to accommodate power output predictions for new, larger wind turbines. Two towers have been outfitted with instruments, and four more are planned. The data from these tall towers and the water crib project will be used to help validate the new Ohio wind map released last year by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (see www.GreenEnergyOhio.org for a link to the map). That map predicted the best wind resource in the state to be over Lake Erie, followed by northwest Ohio.

About Green Energy Ohio (GEO).

Headquartered in Columbus, GEO is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting environmentally and economically sustainable energy policies and practices in Ohio. Founded in Cleveland as Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED) in 1995, the organization changed its name to Green Energy Ohio in 2000 when it took the message of sustainable energy statewide. GEO promotes renewable energy by acting as a clearinghouse to inform Ohioans about sustainable energy, conducts independent research on sustainable energy, and sponsors a wide variety of conferences, workshops, and seminars to educate the public about sustainable energy. For more information on the Crib or Tall Towers projects, as well as other GEO initiatives and past wind monitoring efforts, please visit the GEO website at www.greenenergyohio.org

Contact: Bill Spratley at 1-866-473-3664 (Toll Free) bill@greenenergyohio.org

North Coast Wind Assessment Project Partners and Collaborators:

- Green Energy Ohio - Partner / Coordinator
- City of Cleveland - Partner
- NOAA - Partner
- Leadership Cleveland - Partner
- Cleveland Foundation - Funding Partner
- Gund Foundation - Funding Partner
- Steffe Foundation - Funding Partner
- Ohio Wind Working Group - Collaborator
- US DOE - Collaborator
- NREL - Collaborator
- NASA - Collaborator
- AWS True Wind - Collaborator
- US Coast Guard - Collaborator
- The Renaissance Group - Partner
- Burke Lakefront Airport - Collaborator

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