



NEW ENGLAND  
WIND ENERGY  
EDUCATION PROJECT

ISSUES AFFECTING PUBLIC  
ACCEPTANCE:  
NEWEEP REPORT

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# SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ADVANTAGE, LLC

***Mission: Sustainable Energy***

***Approach: Sustainable Advantage***

***We help build Renewable Energy Businesses, Markets, Policies & Projects through Analysis, Strategy & Implementation***

## ***Services***

- ◉ ***Interdisciplinary consulting & advisory services*** (regional & national)
- ◉ ***New England Renewable Energy Market Outlook<sup>sm</sup>*** (REMO) subscription briefings
- ◉ ***New England Eyes & Ears<sup>sm</sup>*** Regulatory, Policy & Legislative Tracking and Analysis Subscription Service

## ***Practice Areas***

- ◉ ***Power market and public policy analysis, tracking, development & implementation***
- ◉ ***Strategy development***
- ◉ ***Financial analysis & economic feasibility***
- ◉ ***Renewable energy supply & procurement***
- ◉ ***Quantitative analysis and modeling***
- ◉ ***Transaction facilitation, contract development and negotiation support***
- ◉ ***Business infrastructure development***
- ◉ ***Green power product development & pricing***

# TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- ◉ Intro to New England Wind Energy Education Project (NEWEEP)
- ◉ Program Components
  - Webinars on Key Wind Acceptance Issues
  - Public Acceptance Conference
- ◉ What Have We Learned?
- ◉ What's Next?

# NEWEEP PROJECT OVERVIEW

- 2-year project through Nov 2011
- Grant funded by DOE Wind Powering America 'Market Acceptance' program. Co-applicants:
  - Sustainable Energy Advantage - Proj. Coordinator
  - National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)
- Directed by Steering Committee consisting of New England state agencies, regional & national research organizations, New England's regional grid operator
- Free Webinars open to public (5 so far)
- Full-day Conference & Workshop:
  - *Wind Energy in New England: Understanding the Issues Affecting Public Acceptance. June 7, 2011, Marlboro, MA*
- Web-based repository for webinar-related materials
- Connected to New England Wind Forum

## Steering Committee Members

- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- Connecticut Clean Energy Fund
- Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
- University of Massachusetts - Wind Energy Center
- Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources
- ISO-New England
- Utility Wind Integration Group
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
- Clean Energy States Alliance
- New Hampshire Office of Energy & Planning
- Renewable Energy New England (RENEW)\*
  - An organization consisting of environmental advocates & wind businesses

# NEWEEP OBJECTIVES & PHILOSOPHY

- ◉ Objective: Provide siting decision-makers & potentially-impacted public with **objective information on which to make informed decisions** about proposed wind projects by:
  - **Collecting and disseminating** accurate, objective, up-to-date information on critical wind energy issues impacting market acceptance of proposed wind projects
- ◉ Philosophy/Perspective: Wind Energy has benefits, but...
  - Not every place is the right place for wind generation.
  - Consequences rarely as dire as depicted by opponents...
  - And are often not as free of consequence as proponents would hope (and represent)...

# WHY IS NEWEEP IMPORTANT?

- ◉ Wind turbine siting in New England = complicated
- ◉ Emotion (VOLUME) → crowding out opportunity for decision-makers to consider facts
  - Change is perceived as threatening
  - 'Public' objectives can conflict
  - Heated debates!
- ◉ Misunderstanding → Poor decisions
  - Conflicting info (from sponsors & opponents)
  - Both valid & baseless concerns commonly voiced
  - Scarcity of independent data (scientific, peer-reviewed)
  - Increasingly, decisions made based on fear & hyperbole
- ◉ Good Info → Good decisions

# APPROACH:

## IF WE WERE IN YOUR SHOES, WHAT WOULD WE WANT TO KNOW?

- ◎ Knowledgeable & credible speaker(s)
  - Addressing research with various points of view
- ◎ Content :
  - What is known, what is not known?
  - Research: speaker's, and review of the literature
  - Credible → emphasize scientific/peer-reviewed research
  - Discuss Mitigation & Identify research needs
- ◎ Webinar Q&A → read all questions
- ◎ Post-Webinar Surveys
  - The right balance? Credible, objective, informative?

# NEWEEP WEBINARS

- ◉ The Impact of Wind Power Projects on Residential Property Values (5/5/10)
- ◉ Understanding the Impacts of Wind Turbine Sound (7/13/10)
- ◉ Wind Turbines Noise and Health: Fact vs. Fiction Simulcast of Live Meeting on Cape Cod (7/15/10)
- ◉ Wind Power's Impact on Grid Reliability, Backup Supply, and Fossil Fuel Use in New England (10/26/10)
- ◉ Understanding the Current Science, Regulation, and Mitigation of Shadow Flicker (2/10/2011)
- ◉ Final Webinar: planning underway, mid-November
  - Topics: mitigation and a recap of lessons learned from NEWEEP webinars/conference



# NEWEEP PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE CONFERENCE, JUNE 7, 2011

- ◎ Setting agenda
  - Planning Comm. chose topics, recruited speakers
- ◎ Target audience
  - General public, local officials, facility siting decision-makers, policy-makers, and others interested in a review of objective information on the impacts of wind energy.
- ◎ Engagement model: code of conduct
  - Developed ground rules and principles
  - Attendees required to sign in advance
- ◎ Pre- and Post-surveys of audience

# NEWEEP PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE CONFERENCE AGENDA

- ◉ Overview of NE Wind Development
- ◉ Experience From the Field
- ◉ Wind Development Impacts (environmental and human)
- ◉ Wind Power Economics
- ◉ Best Planning Practices
- ◉ Offshore Wind
- ◉ Mitigation Techniques
- ◉ Reliability Impacts
- ◉ Breakout Workshops: research, networks, bylaws, better outcomes

# WHO ATTENDED?

- Pre-registrants self-identified...

○ Gov't	69	○ Utilities	4
○ Service Firms	53	○ Project Hosts	3
○ Public	28	○ ISO	1
○ NGO	32	○ Mediators	1
○ Law	16	○ Students	1
○ Wind Dev, Manuf., Investor	16	○ Union	1
○ Educators	12		
○ Research Inst.	12	○ Total pre-reg.=	<u>249</u>

How should project developers and public leaders engage the undecided majority who typically exist in early stages of a siting process and are often key in determining the success of the initiative?





# LESSONS LEARNED FROM CONFERENCE (SURVEY RESULTS)

## ○ Attendee “Likes”

- Open, respectful dialogue; time for questions
- Credible speakers with variety of P.O.V.
- Case studies: real world experience

## ○ Largest Challenges

- Public opposition
- Lack of accurate information
- Population density, limited locations
- Inadequate:
  - Outreach/education to increase public awareness
  - Funding for pre-construction studies
  - Clear guidelines consistent across jurisdictions

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM CONFERENCE (2)

## ○ Future needs

- Have more face-to-face time, varied locations
- Include reputable skeptics and opponents, local public officials, project abutters
- Prioritize public education and awareness
- Develop accurate information
  - aimed at lay audience
  - to counter misinformation & address public opposition
- Go deeper on impact topics, especially health, noise, visual, etc
- Create tools for local decision-makers
- Keep up with evolving technical information

# ROLE OF DOE'S WIND POWERING AMERICA

- ◉ Recent webinar:
  - [http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/podcasts\\_webinar.asp](http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/podcasts_webinar.asp)
- ◉ Held 7 regional meetings in last year
- ◉ Revamping program/creating new framework
- ◉ Much will be web-based
- ◉ Setting priorities (states, regions, issues)
- ◉ Funding: cut or level
  - Elimination of funds for outreach and stakeholder engagement, state WWGs



# NEXT STEPS?

- ⦿ Original NEWEEP funding no longer available
- ⦿ Feedback strongly supports continued NEWEEP-like effort
- ⦿ What is needed - initial concepts
  - A regional research hub
  - More interaction of full range of stakeholders
  - Education of media
- ⦿ Prospects for keeping it going
  - Challenge: If industry is the only source of available funds, how to fund efforts at research or NEWEEP-like outreach without 'tainting' the results by virtue of the funding source?
- ⦿ Suggestions welcome

# HOW TO KEEP IN TOUCH

- ◉ WWG will post Conference Survey and Rules of Engagement with this presentation
- ◉ Webinars: to view or sign up
  - Use link to sign up at the bottom of this webpage:  
[www.windpoweringamerica.gov/newengland/neweep/webinars.asp](http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/newengland/neweep/webinars.asp)
  - Email - [info@neweep.com](mailto:info@neweep.com)
- ◉ Conference proceedings
  - <http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/newengland/neweep/conference.asp>
- ◉ New England Wind Forum
  - <http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/newengland/about.asp>