

# Draft Public Scoping Document

## Ecogen, LLC Prattsburgh/Italy Wind Farm

Town of Prattsburgh, Steuben County, New York  
and  
Town of Italy, Yates County, New York

March 25, 2004

**Lead Agency:** Steuben County Industrial Development Agency

**Project Sponsor:** Ecogen, LLC

**Proposed Action:** Construction of 53 ± wind turbine units for the purpose of generating 79.5 megawatts, or less, of electricity.

**Project Location:** The project area is generally bounded by Twelve Mile Creek Road to the west, McMichael Road to the east, Shay and Sliter Roads to the North and West Creek Road to the south. The project area is generally bisected by NYS Route 53. See Figure 1.

### Draft Public Scoping:

The Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA) identified the project as a Type 1 action for the purposes of SEQR under 6 NYCRR Part 617 – State Environmental Quality Review. The SCIDA, in its role as Lead Agency, coordinated the review with other involved agencies and interested parties. The SCIDA reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the Action against the criteria listed in Part 617.7 and determined that the Action may have a significant effect on the environment and that a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) will be prepared.

As part of the DGEIS process and in accordance with SEQR §617.8, a public scoping session will be held on April 22, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the Prattsburgh Central School, 1 Academy Street, Town of Prattsburgh, NY. The scoping session will be conducted to solicit public input into the preparation of this document in order to ensure that the DGEIS will include relevant public concerns and will be appropriate in its scope and content. This document presents the Draft Public Scoping for the preparation of the DGEIS.

An Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) - Parts 1 and 2 were prepared in order to describe the project and to identify potential environmental impacts. Those impacts identified as being potentially large were further evaluated in an EAF Part 3. Potentially large impacts that require further evaluation in the DGEIS are presented in the Notice of Determination of Significance – Positive Declaration, adopted by the SCIDA, in their role as Lead Agency on March 25, 2004.

The issues of concern and the proposed scope to study these impacts are summarized below:

### **Project Description**

- A comprehensive project description will be included in the DGEIS. A project location map identifying initial target areas having adequate conditions for wind energy generation will supplement the project description. Within those target areas, approximately 100 initial sites showing potential for turbine unit installation will be identified. These initial target areas and turbine sites have been identified for initial review at this time and will be better defined as the project develops. The intent is for the environmental assessment to result in criteria to be used in selecting approximately 53 viable sites having the least impacts. See Figure 1.

### **General Setting**

- This section of the DGEIS will present the general environmental setting, addressing existing conditions and providing base line information.
  - This section will describe the current status of land use regulations in the Towns. It will acknowledge that the Town of Italy is currently preparing a master plan with the intent to create zoning for the community.
  - This section will discuss the implications of the Town's possible adoption of new land use controls on the project, as well as the project's influence on the planning process.
  - This section will discuss the implications on the project from the proposed Local Law A: "Town of Italy Wind Turbine Tower, Relay Station and Support Facility Moratorium Law 2004".
- This section of the DGEIS will characterize topographic and geologic features and landforms. This will be done for both the Finger Lakes regional setting as well as the local project setting.
- This section of the DGEIS describes the general land use and residential / rural character of the study area.

### **Impact on Land**

- This section will assess the project's potential impacts on land forms as discussed in the general setting, including steep slopes and hillside development.
- This section will assess the potential impact on existing land use patterns, including impact on future residential development.

### **Impact on Water**

- This section of the DGEIS will include a description of all streams within proposed project site. Specifically, locations of state or federal protected streams within the proposed project area will be identified, as well as an analysis of potential effects on streams from project construction and project operation.
- Impacts to the physical qualities of the on-site streams and surface waters shall be discussed in the DGEIS. Impacts on hydrology and water quality shall be assessed and suitable mitigation measures proposed for any potentially significant impacts that are identified.
- A storm water management plan for the construction phase of the action shall be prepared and describe measures proposed to mitigate impacts from changes in drainage patterns that will result from topographic alterations.
- The DGEIS shall discuss how the project will meet the conditions of regulatory agencies storm water permits including preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan in accordance with the "Watershed Regulations" and NYSDEC's State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) "General Permit". Suitable storm water management mitigation measures shall be proposed for any potentially significant impacts identified.
- The DGEIS shall also discuss how proposed sediment and storm water controls will be developed, maintained during construction and following construction.
- State and federal wetland boundaries shall be identified as will any state wetland adjacent areas.
- The DGEIS shall include a description of the wetland delineation methodology.
- Site planning consideration given to wetlands shall be discussed in the DGEIS. The DGEIS shall also discuss what measures were taken to avoid or minimize wetland impacts.
- Permitting requirements for any wetland activities shall be discussed in the DGEIS.

The DGEIS shall include a wetland mitigation plan to compensate for any losses in wetland function and value. The mitigation plan shall specify the areas and location of any proposed wetland mitigation.

### **Impact on Wildlife or Habitat**

- Impacts to any rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal species shall be discussed in the DGEIS. Research will include contacting the New York Natural Heritage Program, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, and the US Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- The DGEIS shall contain a description of the flora and fauna of the project site based upon field investigations, interviews and file searches with regulatory agencies, and document research
- A list shall be compiled of all species observed on the site and those species likely to occur on the site based on habitat requirements and documented geographical distribution. Mitigation measures shall be provided in the DGEIS for impacts identified as potentially significant or to offset effects associated with the Project. Potential Avian Impacts
  - Potential impacts to resident and migratory avian species known to occupy wildlife habitats outside the primary study area will be considered in the DGEIS. These areas include an “out-parcel” of the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge, the NYS High Tor Game Management Area and Hemlock Lake.
  - The DGEIS will consider the US Department of Fish and Wildlife Service Interim Guidelines to Avoid and Minimize Wildlife Impacts from Wind Turbines in developing proposed measures to mitigate potential avian impacts.
  - DGEIS will address the Indiana Bat issue, as it relates to the study area.

### **Impact on Agricultural Resources**

- Impacts such as soil compaction, operational limitations and access to agricultural land shall be discussed in the DGEIS.
- Mitigation measures shall be provided in the DGEIS for impacts identified as potentially significant. Potential mitigation measures may include creation of new areas or restoration of dormant agricultural land.

### **Impact on Aesthetic Resources**

- The GEIS will characterize the existing visual environment focusing primarily on the visibility of the project from surrounding lands containing sensitive receptors.
- The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation policy on Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts will be considered during the assessment of visual effects.

### **Impact on Historic or Archeological Resources**

- The DGEIS shall contain a review of Cultural Resources based upon file searches of regulatory agencies, document research and, if necessary field investigations.
- The DGEIS shall discuss potential impacts to historic or prehistoric resources identified during the investigations of the property.
- The results of these reports shall be summarized in this section of the DGEIS and include a discussion of potential presence and significance of any historic or prehistoric cultural resources that may be affected by site planning.
- Any conflict of the development plan with potentially significant resources shall be identified along with the nature of the conflict (i.e. grading, filling).
- A description of any necessary mitigation measures, including avoidance or on-site archeological monitoring during construction, shall also be included.

### **Impact on Energy**

- The DGEIS shall contain a review of the impact on energy resources as a result on the operation of this project.

### **Impact on Noise**

- The DGEIS shall contain a review of the impact on noise sensitive receptors as a result on the operation of this project.
- Where necessary, suitable mitigation measures intended to attenuate potential sound impacts will be proposed, including avoidance or buffer zones around noise sensitive receptors. Mitigation measures shall assess the reduction in sound levels that would be anticipated by implementing the proposed measures.
- The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's policy for Assessing and Mitigating Noise Impacts will be considered during the study of changes in sound levels associated with the project.

### **Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts**

- A description of the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts shall include necessary information on the extent, likelihood and long-term consequences of the identified impacts.

### **Cumulative Impact Analysis**

- The section on potential cumulative impacts will acknowledge the potential impacts that, when taken together, may have a significant environmental effect. This section will consider that status of a second wind energy project in the area, and identify elements of the projects, which may require contemporaneous consideration during the assessment of impacts.

### **Environmental Justice**

- If determined to be appropriate, the DGEIS will consider Environmental Justice issues related to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people.