



# Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Daniel R. Ebert, Chairperson  
Robert M. Garvin, Commissioner  
Mark Meyer, Commissioner

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## **PSC Says Forward Energy Wind Project is Right for Wisconsin Denies Petition for Rehearing**

MADISON—The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin affirmed its July approval of the state's largest clean energy project in Wisconsin when it denied a petition for rehearing of the decision today.

“Approval of this major wind energy project moves Wisconsin in the right direction,” PSC Chairperson Dan Ebert said. “It is a major step towards energy independence for Wisconsin. It helps the local, agricultural economy. It is good for the environment.”

“The Forward project quadruples the state's commitment to renewable energy, and wind is a longstanding priority of this state. Project opponents continue to point to bird mortality as a reason to delay this project. I would point out that there is a state highway that cuts right through this marsh and yet the marsh, and the birds, continue to thrive. The greater environmental benefits to our air and water outweigh the concerns,” Commissioner Mark Meyer said.

At the Open Commission Meeting today, Chairperson Ebert listed the following overriding benefits of the Forward Energy wind project:

### Energy Independence

Wisconsin currently spends around \$9 billion each year to import fossil fuels for its overall energy needs. The Forward Energy wind project will use a sustainable, renewable energy source to generate enough electricity for approximately 72,000 households.

In addition, unlike the increasing and sometimes volatile costs of fossil fuels, wind is free. Once the turbines are up and operating, they will provide a stable and affordable source of electricity for ratepayers throughout the state.

### Boosts the Agricultural Economy

Farmers hosting the wind turbines on their property will see financial benefits, in turn helping them maintain their farming operations and preserving the agricultural use of the land in the area.

In addition, local governments will see additional shared revenues payments for hosting the wind turbines.

### Good for the Environment

Wind is a clean energy source. It has no impacts on air and water resources. For example, the same amount of energy produced from coal-fired generation emits about 700,000 tons of carbon dioxide, 12 pounds of Mercury, 240 tons of nitrogen oxide and 340 tons of sulfur dioxide in a year.

Horicon Marsh System Advocates filed a petition on August 3, 2005 with the PSC requesting a rehearing of the Commission's July decision approving the 200 megawatt wind project, mainly citing concerns about the impacts on the Horicon Marsh.

Today, the Commission denied the petition and said its order issued July 14, 2005 recognized those concerns and required a larger buffer zone between the wind turbines and the marsh, as proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission's decision requires that turbines must be at least 2 miles away from the Horicon Marsh to protect the wildlife. On average, turbines will be 4 to 4.5 miles away from the marsh.

In the order, the Commission also required Forward Energy to pursue post construction studies for continued monitoring of the impacts on birds and bats in the area.

Forward Energy, a subsidiary of Invenenergy Wind LLC, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, applied to the PSC to construct and operate 133 wind turbines that would have an operating capacity of up to 200 megawatts. Wisconsin currently has nearly 53 megawatts of wind power capacity. The project area covers 32,400 acres consisting predominately of farmland near Brownsville, within the towns of Byron, LeRoy, Lomira and Oakfield. These towns are located in Fond du Lac and Dodge Counties.

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