FW: Ministry of Energy Top Issues - May 08, 2016

From: "Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)" <"/o=govon/ou=exchange administrative group (fydibohf23spdlt)/cn=recipients/cn=teliszewsky, andrew (energy)4fe">
To: "Beaudry, Jennifer (OPO)" <jennifer.beaudry2@ontario.ca>
Date: Mon, 08 May 2017 07:48:59 -0400

RE: Sault

From: Cvjeticanin, Dan (ENERGY)
Sent: May-08-17 7:00 AM
To: @ENERGY All
Subject: Ministry of Energy Top Issues - May 08, 2016

Good morning,

Here's what's making news:

- Despite Wynne's rate drop, electricity costs continue to shock – The Globe and Mail, pg. B1
- Ontario Energy Minister heats up about Sault candidates' chirps on hydro rates | Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan will provide substantial relief on electricity bills that will have an immediate impact on peoples' lives in the Sault, says Thibeault -- Sootoday.com
- Chamber of Commerce calls for axing of cap-and-trade in Ontario; Windsor chapter warns firms will move to coal-burning states in U.S – Windsor Star, pg. A1
- Splashes of humor enter Chamber of Commerce meeting – Sarnia Observer, pg. A1
- Funding for Clean Technology in Ontario -- HazMat Management Magazine (subscription)
- Comments Made This Week | Energy minister accuses Sault PC and NDP candidate of Mistruth -- SaultOnline.com
- Marysville, St. Clair restate opposition to Lake Huron nuclear waste dump -- New Baltimore Voice Newspapers
- Energy Minister accuses Sault candidates of "mistruths" on Hydro Prices -- SaultOnline.com, pg. A4
- Deadline looms for hydro cutoff – Welland Tribune, pg. A1
- The Economic Effects of Nuclear Refurbishment -- Bayshore Broadcasting News Centre
- Wind-farm tree-cutting case back in court July 14 -- Sarnia Observer, pg. A3

Despite Wynne's rate drop, electricity costs continue to shock

The Globe and Mail

Mon May 8 2017

Page: B1

Section: Report on Business

Byline: SHOWWEI CHU

An Ontario artisanal cheese maker wants to take his business off the grid and a food processor is being counselled to use more electricity in order to qualify for an energy-conservation program.

These small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) are contemplating actions they normally wouldn't take in order to deal with Ontario's soaring electricity costs, even though the province has pledged more financial aid to relieve them.

On April 27, the Wynne government promised to spend $2.5-billion over the next three years on relief programs to help households and SMBs deal with their crushing hydro bills.

Under the Fair Hydro Plan, households and about 500,000 small businesses and farms can expect their electricity bills to drop an average of 25 per cent starting this summer. The reduction includes an 8-per-cent rebate that began on Jan. 1 and an additional 17 per cent that comes from lower time-of-use rates effective May 1.

Julie Kwiecinski of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business said the group's 42,000 Ontario members are in waitand-see mode.

"The real picture of what the government's hydro plan will mean to each of our members won't be revealed until they start seeing their bills this summer."

Electricity costs have been an issue for SMBs in Ontario after mandatory smart meters were introduced in November, 2010, charging time-of-use prices.

Unlike households, many small businesses operate during regular business hours and have to pay on-peak rates for electricity that are more than twice as much as off-peak rates.

"We would like to have seen time of use eliminated altogether," Ms. Kwiecinski said. "But at least time-of-use rates are going down and some of the pressure is being taken off."

Ratepayers face other pressures on their hydro bills. In addition to time-of-use rates, there is a regulatory charge, a debt-retirement charge, a delivery charge for distribution and transmission of electricity and a global-adjustment fee, which partly covers the $50-billion investments the provincial government made in recent years on nuclear reactors, natural-gas-fired power plants and wind turbines.

Tor Krueger, owner of Udder Way Artisan Cheese Co. of Stoney Creek, Ont., said his hydro bills really shot up this past winter and that's why he wants to get his power off the grid.

"I'm definitely pushing for it because, for me, it's the thing that makes the most sense," he said.

Mr. Krueger recently got a loan from the Business Development Bank of Canada to upgrade his facility so he can get federal certification and sell his handmade goat cheeses across Canada. To get off Ontario's electricity system, he'll need to get his landlord on board because he cannot afford the $50,000 to $60,000 investment.

In addition to lower time-of-use prices, the Wynne government has pledged to cover a number of electricity-support programs previously paid by ratepayers and will eliminate the debt-retirement charge for commercial and industrial users next April.

The government also has promised to refinance a portion of the global adjustment over a longer period of time to give today's ratepayers a break. Mid-size businesses won't qualify for the 25-percent reduction on their hydro bills because they use more than 250,000 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of electricity a year and exceed a demand of 50 kilowatts (kw), according to the government.

Some will now be able to sign up for the Industrial Conservation Initiative (ICI), whose participation threshold is being lowered to 500 kw from a monthly average-peak demand of over one megawatt. The ICI was introduced in 2010 to give larger electricity users a break on their bills by shifting hydro consumption to off-peak hours.

"But there's still a large swath of companies - probably two or three thousand - that really don't have any opportunities available to them," said Ian Howcroft, a vice-president at Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME).

"And we need to ensure that there is some type of program to address their high electricity costs."

The CME has urged the Ontario government to create an industrial-electricity rate - something manufacturers and food processors such as Kisko Products Inc., the maker of Mr. Freeze, could really use.

The Woodbridge, Ont.-based company spent more than $100,000 last year to install energy-efficient LED lighting in its offices and factory. But while its electricity costs dropped, the global-adjustment fee kept rising along with the company’s total bill, which stood at more than $277,000 in 2016.

“As a medium-size business trying to survive in a very competitive environment, how in the world do I recoup that money?” asked Kisko president Mark Josephs, who is celebrating the family business’s 40th anniversary this year.

He said ECNG Energy - an energy-efficiency auditor - recommended Kisko get an assessment to see if it makes sense for the company to use more electricity and qualify for the ICI program.

“I think this is absolutely ridiculous,” he said. “So this is what we’re being told to do in order to ensure we don’t get hosed even more.”

Ontario Energy Minister heats up about Sault candidates' chirps on hydro rates | Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan will provide substantial relief on electricity bills that will have an immediate impact on peoples’ lives in the Sault, says Thibeault

Sootoday.com
2017-05-08
NEWS RELEASE

SUDBURY — The Hon. Glenn Thibeault MPP today released the following statement regarding the Ontario Liberal Government's work to reduce hydro rates:
"Contrary to the mistruths coming from the Conservative and NDP campaigns in Sault Ste. Marie, the Ontario Liberal Government’s Fair Hydro Plan will provide substantial, widespread and long-lasting relief on electricity bills that will have an immediate impact on peoples’ lives in Sault Ste. Marie.

Through the Fair Hydro Plan, we are cutting electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all families starting this summer, along with about half a million farms and small businesses. Families in rural or remote areas of the province will see up to 40 to 50 per cent off their bills.

It is the single largest rate reduction in the province’s history, with rates also held to inflation for four years. Our plan is about real relief for Ontarians and a way to ensure greater fairness in our electricity system.

Ontarians are already starting to see the benefits of the Fair Hydro Plan, through the 8 per cent reduction in January, as well as the Ontario Energy Board’s May 1 rate update, which will deliver further savings to ratepayers sooner than expected. We are also introducing legislation this session that will, if passed, deliver on our pledge to cut electricity bills this summer.ý

Hydro rates have been rising because governments of all stripes neglected to invest in our electricity system for decades, which led to a breaking point with the province-wide blackout in 2003.

We had to rebuild, and we chose to do it with clean energy. We closed our dirty coal plants, which was not only the single largest climate change initiative in North America, but the right thing to do. Smog days are now a thing of the past in Ontario.

The investments we made came with a cost, but our system is cleaner and more reliable than it has ever been, and now the Fair Hydro Plan will make it more affordable.

Patrick Brown and Andrea Horwath have an important job to do holding government to account, but an important part of that job is bringing credible, workable ideas to the table. Neither the NDP nor the Conservatives have managed to do so.

The NDP hydro pamphlet is both short on details and long on hollow promises. Many of that party’s proposals rely on a vague and yet-to-be-determined 'expert panel' that will be convened in the future, as well as pie-in-the-sky negotiations with the federal government.

The NDP’s most expensive idea – buying back more than $4-billion in shares of Hydro One – will not take one cent off electricity bills. What it will do is send billions to the stock market instead of making much needed infrastructure investments in communities across Ontario.

But at least the NDP have put something forward. It’s been more than 60 days since we announced how we will provide real relief on electricity rates, and in that time Ross Romano and the Conservatives have failed to provide a single constructive idea on how to help families in Sault Ste. Marie.

Their main talking point – ripping up contracts – would actually end up costing ratepayers money in penalties and legal fees, while reducing confidence in Ontario as a business-friendly province. This isn’t very well thought out for a party that prides itself on paying lip service to helping businesses.

It’s my hope that the NDP and Conservatives start taking their job more seriously, and start bringing real solutions to the table. In the meantime, I expect that they will support Fair Hydro Plan legislation so we can bring the significant rate relief Sault Ste. Marie ratepayers need for this summer, because it’s the right thing to do."

—Glenn Thibeault, MPP for Sudbury

Chamber of Commerce calls for axing of cap-and-trade in Ontario; Windsor chapter warns firms will move to coal-burning states in U.S

Windsor Star
Mon May 8 2017
Page: A1 / Front
Section: City & Region
Byline: Trevor Wilhelm
Source: The Windsor Star

The Windsor region's Chamber of Commerce has joined forces with others from across Ontario to demand the province kill its cap-andtrade program, saying it is having a devastating economic impact on local business.

Matt Marchand, president and CEO of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, said Sunday the stakes are high in Essex County. He said the potentially high cost of working under the cap-and-trade system could have businesses, such as Essex County's greenhouses and agrifood operations, fleeing to coalburning jurisdictions like Ohio.

"It's the layering of all these costs - the 400-per-cent increase in electricity prices, now greenhouses have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in carbon taxes," said Marchand.

"And to what end? All we end up doing is shipping the jobs to Ohio so they can plug into a coal plant. I think at some point you have to ask yourself, does this make a lot of sense? I think the collective answer is no it doesn't."

The resolution calling on the government to suspend cap-andtrade passed over the weekend at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting in Sarnia. The Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce was among nine chambers to cosponsor the resolution.

"It's really a collective effort of all chambers across Ontario coming together to speak with one voice on the detrimental impact of capand-trade on our ability to drive investment and jobs here in Ontario," said Marchand.

Cap-and-trade is a governmentmandated effort to reduce pollution by giving economic incentives for reducing emissions.

The government sells permits allowing businesses to produce pollutants. Organizations that want to increase emissions must buy more permits from others willing to sell them.

The chambers argue that with the introduction of cap-and-trade to Ontario on Jan. 1, businesses and communities are at risk of being unable to transition to a lowcarbon economy and still remain viable.

He said businesses like greenhouses that use a lot of energy are more exposed to the effect of capand-trade, and are at risk of subsidizing other industries instead of making the intended transitions.

The chambers maintain that such businesses are not being given enough opportunity to develop new technology and processes to meet the carbon-emission targets.

They argue these industries will pay significant fees for credits while facing major technological hurdles to reduce carbon emissions that will cost millions of dollars.

While the companies are facing these costs, Marchand said there is a risk that cap-and-trade proceeds could be directed away from their industries, giving little support in the development of low-carbon technologies.

If the government won't suspend the system, the chambers have several suggestions for mitigating the "risks."

Those suggestions include investing in local economies an amount equal to what was drawn through cap-and-trade.

The chambers want to ensure that cap-and-trade proceeds from exposed industries are used to develop processes and technologies to help them meet emissions targets. They also want the government to allow adequate time for more research and development or give credit to companies that are developing low-carbon technology.

The chambers are also urging the government to recognize other environmental priorities and regulations so businesses are able to meet all emission targets.

Finally, they want increased cost offsets and support from the government to ensure small businesses can stay competitive.

Marchand said the system puts Ontario at a disadvantage because the only U.S. state using cap-andtrade is California, which recently raised the cost of its credits.

“Essentially, at the moment, we’re just doing cap-and-trade with ourselves,” he said.

“So the end result of all this is Ontario is just too expensive to do business. It hurts consumers paying more at the pump.

“And, as the auditor-general points out, it’s not going to have any impact or little impact on emissions. It’s one of those ideas that sound good when you talk about it in theory. But when you apply it, it actually makes things worse.”

Splashes of humor enter Chamber of Commerce meeting

Sarnia Observer
Mon May 8 2017
Page: A1 / Front
Section: News
Byline: Neil Bowen
Source: Sarnia Observer

Talks with provincial party leaders were a key attraction during the Ontario Chamber of Commerce meeting but splashes of humor entered the serious business.

While Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown was addressing 150 delegates to the Ontario

Chamber's annual general meeting in Point Edward the lights went out.

"That's a cue to talk about hydro," said Brown.

NDP leader Andrea Horwath told a questioner that her good throwing arm proven during a previous dunk tank experience in Sarnia would not be a help in the legislature.

Demonstration of her throwing arm would lead to problems with the speaker, the person in charge of decorum in the legislature, said Horwath.

Those splashes of humor were a momentary pause in the serious business.

The annual meeting held in Point Edward drew all three party leaders with Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne speaking Friday. Brown and Horwath spoke on Saturday.

Appearance of all three was important to Ontario's business leaders, said Michael Kooy, chair of the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber board of directors that hosted the meeting that ended Sunday morning.

The leaders'participation on Saturday was designed to be informal with each one spending half an hour in a chair fielding questions from a Ontario Chamber executive and the delegates.

Hydro rates had a role in each leader's questions.

Rising hydro rates are making business less competitive and have families living in energy poverty, said Brown.

At the same time he said Ontario is giving away power to bordering states due to over-generation that is exclusive of renewable energy sources.

Those renewable energy contracts are atrocious and we don't need them, said Brown.

Horwath said "a whack of contracts" are coming due in 2018 and 2019 and it must be determined if they are needed.

Hydro One should also return to public hands as privatization was a mistake, said Horwath.

Brown called the Hydro One sale a one-time effort to balance the provincial budget.

“It’s not a balanced budget, it is a false balance,” said Brown.

The sessions were fast and both leaders were quickly moved along numerous topics.

When asked about skills development Brown said government needs to be more agile. If business cites a need for new skills from it employees, there should not be years of red tape before colleges and universities are supplying new programs, said Brown.

Horwath said government needs to be “more robust” in the provision of retraining for workers displaced by a changing economy.

There has been a focus on Ontario‘s low unemployment figure, 5.8 per cent in April, but there is a problem among middle-aged men finding jobs, said Horwath.

When people cannot benefit from economic prosperity as seen in Ontario‘s growing Gross Domestic Product, it creates divisions within society, said Horwath.

Cross-border trade was also an issue with Horwath saying Ontario needs to maintain relationships with state governments rather than focusing on the ongoing antics in Washington.

The value of cross-border trade was strengthened for Ontario Chamber vice-president John Capobianco due to his time in Sarnia.

“I’ve seen it with my own eyes, seeing those transport trucks (on the Blue Water Bridge). That’s impressive,” said Capobianco describing that image as more enduring that trade figures on a page.

Marysville, St. Clair restate opposition to Lake Huron nuclear waste dump

New Baltimore Voice Newspapers
2017-05-07

Byline: Jim Bloch

At the urging of Michigan state Sen. Phil Pavlov, the cities of Marysville and St. Clair have passed updated resolutions opposing the efforts of Ontario Power Generation to build a Deep Geological Repository for low- and medium-level nuclear waste on the shore of Lake Huron in Kincardine, Ontario, Canada.

The Marysville City Council unanimously approved a new resolution of opposition to the dump at its regular meeting on April 24. St. Clair followed suit on May 1.

"In 2015, you took the bold action of passing a resolution opposing the proposed nuclear waste dump less than one mile from the shorelines of Lake Huron in Canada," Pavlov wrote to each city council. "Unfortunately, our fight is not over."

Pavlov noted that townships, cities and counties representing 23 million citizens in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and Ontario have passed 187 resolutions opposing the nuclear waste dump.

"In spite of our majority opposition, Ontario Power Generation is continuing to pursue their dangerous plan to bury over seven million cubic feet of nuclear waste directly across the lake from the residents of St. Clair, Sanilac and Huron counties," Pavlov said. "To even consider constructing a permanent nuclear waste disposal site near our valuable Great Lakes is dumbfounding."

City Manager Randy Fernandez and Mayor Dan Damman spoke against the waste repository, proposed to be excavated about six-tenths of a mile from the lake at a depth of 2,200 feet.

"It's mind-boggling that this is still a topic of concern," said Damman. "I'm a full proponent of this resolution."

The measure passed in Marysville 7-0.

The resolution noted that some of the waste "will remain toxic for over 100,000 years."

The Great Lakes contain 20 percent of the world’s surface fresh water and 95 percent of the fresh water in the United States "vital to human and environmental health."

"Under the 2012 Protocol Amending the Agreement between Canada and the United States of American on Great Lakes Water Quality, the governments of the U.S. and Canada acknowledge the importance of anticipating, preventing and responding to threats to the waters of the Great Lakes," the resolution reads.

The two governments "share a responsibility to protect the Great Lakes from contamination from various sources of pollution, including the potential leakage of radioactivity from an underground nuclear waste repository."

The resolution noted OPG's insufficient response to the Canadian government's request to consider alternative sites for the dump beyond the Great Lakes Basin.

It reiterated both cities opposition to any nuclear waste dump on Canadian, U.S. or First Nation property with the basin. It urged President Donald Trump to have the International Joint Commission weigh in on the matter. The IJC, set up by the Boundary Waters Act of 1909, is designed to resolve bi-national issues concerning the lakes."

In OPG's Dec. 28, 2016, response to the government, the company did not point to specific alternative sites. Instead, OPG outlined two enormous geological formations comprising about 75 percent of the entire province.

The Canadian government again asked OPG for more information about siting and two related issues. The company said it would respond to the Canadian government's request by May 26.

Ed Smith, a legislative aide of U.S. Congressman Paul Mitchell, attended the St. Clair City Council meeting on May 1. Smith noted that Mitchell, who filled the seat long held by Candice Miller, was among the U.S. Congressional delegation from Michigan that sent a letter to President Trump on Feb. 1, urging him to press Ottawa to scrap the project.

Energy Minister accuses Sault candidates of “mistruths” on Hydro Prices

SaultOnline.com
2017-05-05
Glenn Thibeault, Sudbury MPP and Ontario Energy Minister, today released the following statement regarding the Ontario Liberal Government’s work to reduce hydro rates:

“Contrary to the mistruths coming from the Conservative and NDP campaigns in Sault Ste. Marie, the Ontario Liberal Government’s Fair Hydro Plan will provide substantial, widespread and long-lasting relief on electricity bills that will have an immediate impact on peoples’ lives in Sault Ste. Marie. Through the Fair Hydro Plan, we are cutting electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all families starting this summer, along with about half a million farms and small businesses. Families in rural or remote areas of the province will see up to 40 to 50 per cent off their bills. It is the single largest rate reduction in the province's history, with rates also held to inflation for four years. Our plan is about real relief for Ontarians and a way to ensure greater fairness in our electricity system.

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The NDP hydro pamphlet is both short on details and long on hollow promises. Many of that party's proposals rely on a vague and yet-to-be-determined 'expert panel' that will be convened in the future, as well as pie-in-the-sky negotiations with the federal government. The NDP's most expensive idea – buying back more than $4-billion in shares of Hydro One – will not take one cent off electricity bills. What it will do is send billions to the stock market instead of making much needed infrastructure investments in communities across Ontario.

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It's my hope that the NDP and Conservatives start taking their job more seriously, and start bringing real solutions to the table. In the meantime, I expect that they will support Fair Hydro Plan legislation so we can bring the significant rate relief Sault Ste. Marie ratepayers need for this summer, because it's the right thing to do."

Deadline looms for hydro cutoff

Welland Tribune
Sat May 6 2017
Page: A1 / Front
Section: News
Byline: Michelle Allenberg
Source: With files from the Kingston Whig-Standard.

Welland Hydro customers who are behind in payments might be left in the dark come May 15.

A winter ban cutting power to customers has been lifted, which means many may be scrounging to pay accumulated bills. But the good news is there are a number of options available for people who are struggling to pay.

Welland Hydro director of customer service and employee relations Perry Orosz said he doesn't want to see any customers without power. He said hydro sends customers notices 10 days in advance, and will try to contact customers 48 hours before shutting off power.

Orosz said as of May 1, Welland Hydro has sent out about 300 notices of payment, but that number is always changing. He said most people have made payments or arranged a payment plan.

"We understand that some customers have difficulty paying their bills and we don't want them to feel like they are out of options," Orosz said Thursday.

Options are offered through the Ontario Energy Board (OEB); through social assistance programs, including the Ontario Electricity Support Program, which took effect on May 1; and the Electricity Support Program, a monthly onbill credit to reduce people's bills for low-income customers.

Anyone in need of assistance can visit The Hope Centre on King Street in Welland, where staff will help with applications. Orosz said Welland Hydro works closely with the Hope Centre to ensure no one goes without hydro.

Another program available is the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP). Through LEAP people will provide their income information to be considered for a one-time grant.

“People have been inquiring about the different programs … a lot of customers have been keeping up with payments,” he said.

Orosz said the most important thing for customers to do is to communicate with their hydro provider. People can make payment arrangements if they can’t afford to pay their bills.

He said said people should call 905-732-1381 or email Welland Hydro at csr@wellandhydro.com to inquire about assistance.

The Economic Effects of Nuclear Refurbishment

Bayshore Broadcasting News Centre

2017-05-06

Business leaders and politicians in Bruce County met Thursday for a panel discussion on the vital role the nuclear supply chain plays in the area.

It was held at the TownePlace Suites by Marriott Kincardine, and involved members of the Saugeen Shores and Kincardine Chambers of Commerce, the Ontario Chamber and political leaders.

They talked about how Bruce Power helps to add jobs throughout the province and in particular in Bruce, Grey and Huron Counties.

Joanne Robbinson, General Manager of the Saugeen Shores Chamber says not only is Bruce Power a major employer to the area, community minded and discussions were geared toward local small businesses impacted by the nuclear industry.

She says there's a real focus on small local businesses in both Saugeen Shores, Kincardine and surrounding Bruce, Grey and Huron, which is great for the local economy.

Kincardine Chamber chair Matt Smith says the supply chain offered by Bruce Power is an important part of the economic growth strategy for the region.

He says it has a lasting impact on strengthening our local workforce, and those workers buy homes, spend money and pay local taxes.

The event was attended by MPP Lisa Thompson, Warden Mitch Twolan, Kincardine Mayor Anne Eadie and Saugeen Shores Mayor Mike Smith.

It was also attended by local supply chain companies: Jim Sarvinis of HATCH, Paul Irwin of ES Fox, Rolf Eberl of SED Electronics and Eddie Saab of NA Engineering.

An official with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce also spoke about the importance of the project from a province-wide perspective.

Karl Baldauf, Vice-President of Policy and Government Relations says the economic benefits of Bruce Power span far beyond the local region, and will create opportunities throughout Ontario's nuclear supply chain.

The Life Extension Program is expected to see $980 million to $1.2 billion in direct and indirect labour income annually and $751 million to $1.07 billion in direct and indirect annual economic benefit will be realized through the purchasing of equipment, supplies and materials.

In addition, 90% of spending is in Ontario, supporting hundreds of businesses throughout the province

Wind-farm tree-cutting case back in court July 14

Sarnia Observer

2017-05-06

Byline: Neil Bowen Section: News Page: A3

Companies charged with a Environmental Protection Act **violation** by cutting trees to make way for a wind farm project will be back in a Sarnia court July 14.

Prior to the July 14 appearance the companies will be reviewing the prosecution's evidence.

Contractor AMEC Foster Wheeler Americas Ltd., current wind farm owner Cedar Point II GP Inc. and former owner Suncor Energy Products Inc. have been charged under the EPA.

All three companies have been charged with a provincial offence for failing to comply with a condition of a renewable energy approval by removing vegetation and/or woodland during the construction of the Cedar Point wind farm in 2015.

Almost an acre worth of Lambton Shores trees - some in provincially significant wetlands - were cleared.

That's on top of another acre of Lambton Shores woodlands inappropriately removed by a private landowner with ties to the Cedar Point project.

The private landowner paid a fine of $6,000 in early 2016, but the Ontario Environment Ministry didn't lay environmental charges against the companies involved in the separate woodlot-clearing case until recently.

Now fully operational, the 46-turbine Cedar Point wind farm spans across Plympton-Wyoming, Lambton Shores and Warwick Township, generating enough electricity to power 30,000 homes in an average year.

Ministry officials started investigating the tree cutting tied to the Cedar Point project in May 2015 after they received a report of protected trees being cut down by the project's contractor.

Members of We're Against Industrial Turbines, Plympton-Wyoming (WAIT-PW) noticed the damaged woodlots and reported it to the ministry, spokesperson Santo Giorno has said.

Giorno said Friday he will be returning in July to watch proceedings.