

Business First of Buffalo - May 16, 2008

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Energy answers are blowin' in the wind

Business First of Buffalo - by [Jodi Sokolowski](#) Business First

The region can and should take advantage of developing and promoting the clean, renewable energy of off-shore wind power, according to a report by the **University at Buffalo** Law School's Environmental and Development Clinic.

Flanked by a view of the Steel Winds wind turbines off Fuhrmann Boulevard at noontime Friday, the report's authors described how a regional plan of harnessing off-shore wind power can have both ecological and economic benefits.

UB's strategy would create a demand for wind power energy and a need for large-scale manufacturing of wind power parts, which the region could supply given its existing manufacturing infrastructure and background. Quebec, for example, has attracted more than \$4 billion in investment and generated 1,500 full-time jobs, according to UB researchers.

"New York's Great Lakes offer the potential for clean, renewable energy as well as an opportunity to develop a new industry of the 21st Century," Robert Berger, director of UB's Environmental and Development Clinic, said in a prepared statement.

Rather than having an uncoordinated process by individual developers, a systematic strategy, led by the **New York State Energy Research Development Agency** and the **New York State Power Authority**, should employ all stakeholders from environmental groups to citizens in deciding how and where to put the off-shore wind turbines.

The report said water-anchored turbines could produce much more power than the eight turbines currently operating on the former site of Bethlehem Steel in Lackawanna. Those generate 20 megawatts of power - 2 ½ megawatts each - which supply annual power for about 9,000 homes, according to UB.

Even if only 10 percent of the acknowledged wind power potential for Erie and Ontario lakes was used, about 8,200 megawatts of electricity could be harnessed for private and commercial use, according to the researchers. That's more than 400 times the capacity of the existing turbines, or three power plants the size of the Robert Moses Niagara Hydroelectric Plant, and could meet the annual needs of about 360,000 homes, according to UB researcher Dwight Kanyuk.

"This level of development would significantly offset the greenhouse gas, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and mercury emissions associated with coal power generation and provide a

stably priced supply of energy for years to come," the report stated.

While there are currently no off-shore wind facilities operating in the United States, projects in Europe are generating about 1,000 megawatts of power,

The report recommends that the **Wind Action Group**, a local wind power activist group that asked UB to prepare the report, act as an educator and advocate to move this plan forward within state government.

It also urges the state to provide economic and civic incentives to encourage increasing the percentage of the state's overall power supply generated through wind power.

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