



## Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment

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### **Siting Board Makes Improvements to Lewis County Wind Farm Project**

***105.8 MW Clean Energy Facility Forecasted to Bring Over \$44.2 Million to Local Economy***

***Siting Board Also Adopts New Rules Expediting the Siting of Clean Energy Projects***

**ALBANY** — The New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board) today made several improvements to its earlier decision granting approval to Number Three Wind, LLC (Number Three Wind) to construct and operate a wind farm in Lewis County. The Siting Board's decision follows an extensive review and public participation process to ensure that the wind farm meets or exceeds all siting requirements.

In November 2019, the Siting Board approved the Number Three Wind project — a 31-turbine project located on several parcels of land in the Towns of Lowville and Harrisburg, Lewis County, about 30 miles southeast of Watertown. Subsequently, Number Three Wind filed a petition for rehearing to which the Department of Public Service and the Department of Environmental Conservation responded, as well as the Tug Hill Alliance for Rural Preservation. Number Three Wind's petition for rehearing focused largely on the Siting Board's findings related to three issues: first, compliance conditions related to turbine noise; second, findings related to the impacts to two protected grassland bird species — the Northern Harrier and the Upland Sandpiper; and third, the aspect of the order that denied a request to waive the Town of Lowville's local law related to undergrounding of transmission lines.

While denying the rehearing regarding several aspects of the petition, the Siting Board decision did give Number Three Wind more flexibility in modeling post-compliance turbine noise and in creating an offsite mitigation plan for the protection of bird species. In addition, the Siting Board agreed with Number Three Wind that the cost of installing underground transmission lines would be unreasonably burdensome, thereby waiving local law. The Siting Board highlighted the fact that the Town of Lowville supported the waiver regarding this issue.

The Siting Board today also acted to remove unnecessary barriers related to project modifications that have resulted in the delay of the permitting and construction of renewable energy projects. Without these minor changes, the economics of projects will continue to be jeopardized in a manner that could increase costs to New York ratepayers and slow the State's progress to combat climate change. The rule changes that were approved today will allow the project developer to make minor alterations to the layout of the project that benefit the environment without triggering the need for a time-consuming hearing. The Board's rulemaking action triggers a 60-day comment period during

which the public will have an opportunity to comment on the changes before they are made permanent.

The need to adopt this rulemaking immediately is based on the number of projects that have been certificated to date, and the fact that the construction season is quickly approaching. A delay could cause developers to miss this year's construction season, potentially making it more difficult and costly for the State to meet the clean energy goals set by the Public Service Commission and the recently enacted Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, or CLCPA.

Today's decision related to Number Three Wind may be obtained by going to the documents section of the Department of Public Services Web site at [www.dps.ny.gov](http://www.dps.ny.gov) and entering Case Number 16-F-0328 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number". Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission documents may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call 1-800- 342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.