

# Upper Peninsula Offshore Wind Study (LAKE MICHIGAN)

## Developing a Community Model for Offshore Wind Decisions in Michigan

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) recently announced two state grants (one in the Lower Peninsula and one in the Upper Peninsula) for multi-year studies to assess community support and environmental suitability for offshore wind development in Michigan.

The Superior Watershed Partnership (SWP) in cooperation with Northern Michigan University (NMU) and Michigan Technological University (MTU) will coordinate the Upper Peninsula study which includes two potential sites in Lake Michigan (one off of Delta County and one off of Mackinac County). Study areas are located approximately 6-20 miles from shore.

The Upper Peninsula project is being designed to encourage public input in every phase and to incorporate public recommendations into the final study (2012). Starting in April, 2010 the SWP in cooperation with the Great Lakes Commission will begin contacting local units of government, landowners and community organizations. Public engagement opportunities will include local meetings, surveys, focus groups, community workshops and more.

The Upper Peninsula project will include these five broad categories; public engagement, environmental studies, wind studies, transmission studies and financial studies.

"The studies will help us provide people with better decision making tools. The SWP is a local organization working with local communities to make informed decisions about offshore wind," said Carl Lindquist with the Superior Watershed Partnership. "We are designing the project to be a model not just for the Upper Peninsula but for all of Michigan and other Great Lakes states."

Victoria Pebbles with the Great Lakes Commission said: "We are eager to work with these communities to better understand their views on how offshore wind fits into a sustainable energy future for Michigan."

Other project partners include Mackinaw Power, Tetra Tech and AWS True Wind. The grants are part of the Low Income and Energy Efficiency Fund, which provides shutoff and other protection for low income customers and promotes energy efficiency by all customer classes. The MPSC is an agency within the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth.

The SWP is a non-profit organization that includes biologists, planners, technicians and educators who provide creative, science-based solutions for a wide range of Great Lakes challenges facing communities and watersheds across the Upper Peninsula. For more information contact the SWP at (906) 228-6095 or [www.superiorwatersheds.org](http://www.superiorwatersheds.org).

