



NEWS RELEASE

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Wind energy development a boon to rural areas *Wind farms spell big benefits for small towns*

WINNIPEG, Manitoba – An increasing number of small rural communities, many facing economic challenges, are now tapping into one of Canada's truly bountiful resource, wind, and reaping the benefits of harnessing a clean and renewable power source. Two new case studies released today by the Canadian Wind Energy Association (CanWEA) show that wind energy is helping to boost the economy of rural communities through local investments, job creation, land lease fees, new local tax revenues and tourism income.

Alberta's Summerview Wind Farm located near the town of Pincher Creek and PEI's North Cape Wind Farm near Tignish are the focus of CanWEA's first two case studies. Both studies provide practical, real-world examples of the benefits wind energy can bring to a community. With a total capacity of 68.4 megawatts (MW), the Summerview Wind Farm produces enough electricity to power 24,000 homes and attracts numerous tourists. North Cape is a scaled-down version, producing 10.56 MW, but just as much of a tourism hot spot, attracting 60,000 visitors each year.

Vital Statistics: Summerview Wind Farm

- Population Pincher Creek, Alta.: 4,000
- Investment during construction: \$3,520,000 (direct expenditures only)
- Investment in operation: \$4,000,000 each year
- Completed in 2003
- 38 wind turbines
- Total land area occupied: less than 15 km²
- 7 full-time local jobs for operation & maintenance

Vital Statistics: North Cape Wind Farm

- Population Tignish, PEI: 1,000
- Investment during construction: \$3,600,000
- Investment in operation: \$245,000 each year
- Completed in 2003
- 16 wind turbines
- Total land area occupied: less than 1 km²
- 2 full-time local jobs for operation & maintenance

In both projects, development and construction activities generated over \$3.5 million of local sales and created the equivalent of roughly 18 jobs over a one-year period, which is particularly significant in small rural communities.

"Communities like Pincher Creek and Tignish are finding out that wind energy may be their ticket to a brighter future," says CanWEA Robert Hornung. "Not only does it provide a new source of income for landowners, jobs for local people and a new tax base for the municipalities, it's a smart choice environmentally. Wind energy never pollutes the air or produces waste of any kind and, just as importantly, there's an endless supply of it."

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For years, rural areas have faced tough economic times due to declining industries such as mining, forestry, fisheries and farming. Wind energy development, which usually occurs in rural areas because they offer the best wind resource, is giving rural economies an opportunity to improve their prospects. Some of the greatest beneficiaries of wind energy projects are farmers who lease their land. In some cases, leasing fees can make the difference by helping a farming operation to survive.

New wind energy projects have already been commissioned this year in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia; additional facilities in Quebec and Prince Edward Island are also expected to come on line before the end of the year. "Many more communities across Canada will discover that wind energy is a special kind of commodity, because it can deliver a stable financial reward with little or no effort on the part of the landowners and lasting benefits for the entire community," adds Robert Hornung.

CanWEA represents more than 250 companies involved in Canada's wind energy industry, including wind turbine and component manufacturers, wind energy project developers, electric utilities and service providers. The Annual CanWEA Conference and Tradeshow is being held in Winnipeg from October 22-25, bringing together more than 1,000 delegates, 130 exhibitors and over 100 speakers to address policy, technical and business issues related to wind energy.

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The CanWEA Media Room, in the Presentation Theatre at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, will be staffed during the entire Conference.

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