

FILE

Asim Z. Haque, Chairman  
The Ohio Power Siting Board  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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Dear Chairman Haque:

I am writing to express opposition to LEEDCo's Icebreaker project to construct an "experimental" wind energy facility in the Central Basin of Lake Erie, offshore Cleveland, with the expressed goal and apparent public, political, and commercial expectation of an additional build-out of upwards of 1,500 turbines.

The coastal areas and open waters of Lake Erie are well documented as a major migration corridor and stopover habitat for millions of migratory birds in spring and fall, including Endangered and Threatened species such as Kirtland's Warbler (federally endangered), Piping Plover (federally endangered), and Common Tern (state endangered).

The shoreline habitat along Lake Erie serves as a crucial connecting point between avian wintering and breeding grounds. In addition, the open waters of Lake Erie are crucial habitat for millions of water birds such as ducks, loons, and gulls that utilize the area for resting and feeding during migration and in winter. These shores and waters are such an important confluence for birds that the entire Central Basin of Lake Erie is designated as a Globally Important Bird Area (GIBA).

I support the position of Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO)—an Ohio-based organization with more than 30 years of migratory bird monitoring knowledge and expertise—that the pre-construction studies did a very poor job of assessing the potential impacts to birds. I also support BSBO's request that the OPSB revise the Staff Report to address the concerns the Observatory raised about that document.

A known threat to birds and bats, any wind energy development should be held to the highest level of scrutiny and the most rigorous scientific methodology. And with weak pre-construction studies--and no feasible method of studying post-construction mortality over open water--Icebreaker should not be approved.

While I do support the need to develop renewable energy solutions as a means to

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address climate change, a Globally Important Bird Area is not the place for wind energy development. I implore the Ohio Power Siting Board to be on the right side of history, and set a precedent for respecting and protecting our most bird sensitive areas and the tremendous asset birds and birding represent for Ohio.

Sincerely,

*Deborah L. Weston*

*Lima, Ohio*

*45807*