

# B.C. Citizens for Green Energy

[www.greenenergybc.ca](http://www.greenenergybc.ca)

## Presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

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Thank you for this opportunity to address the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.

My name is David Field and I'm speaking on behalf of B.C. Citizens for Green Energy. We are a citizen advocacy group representing a cross-section of British Columbians who encourage a legacy of clean, sustainable electricity, now and for future generations.

What I would like to speak to you about today is the revenue side of the provincial budget, and the revenue contribution that developing our province's renewable green energy resources has in the present and for the future.

*“Now is not the time to abandon the goal of electricity self-sufficiency and the jobs that renewable energy development creates and supports and the investment it brings; developing B.C.'s renewable clean energy resources creates jobs all over the province.”*

I applaud the vision of the BC Jobs Plan: Taking the strengths of British Columbia, converting them into competitive advantages, and turning opportunity into lasting economic benefit for all British Columbians.

To me, that means developing the wealth of renewable energy resources we have here in B.C. and supporting what we've already started in this province with the clean energy investment we've attracted and the tax revenue it generates.

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There's certainly going to be heightened job activity in the Northeast and Northwest of B.C. under the Jobs Plan. However, developing B.C.'s renewable clean energy resources creates jobs all over the province. This helps all B.C. communities, including First Nations communities, to be part of expanding the B.C. economy and contributing to provincial tax and other revenues.

Mines, in particular, consume a lot of energy, and the Jobs Plan calls for eight new mines by 2015; and expansion of at least nine existing mines. So the question our group is asking is how we're going to power these new mines and the increased industrial activity coming to this province? We believe we need to do it right and serve new load growth from new industrial activity the right way with clean energy from renewable sources.

Each new mine that starts up employs thousands of skilled workers with high paying jobs and brings in billions of dollars worth of investment, while providing tax dollars for the government's coffers.

*“WindVision would generate 7,500 person-years of employment over the 20 to 25 year lifespan of the wind energy projects. – Add to this the escalation and development of other green energy such as bio and run-of-river, will increase the supply we have available to trade, developing job creating, tax reducing benefits for all British Columbians”*

A recent report commissioned by The Canadian Wind Energy Association (CANWEA) has identified likely new electricity loads for B.C. and concluded that additional demand will hit 12,000 gigawatt hours of electricity in 2017 and 24,000 GWH by 2025.

These new load forecasts are more than double BC Hydro's forecast of only 5,800 gigawatt hours by 2017 and only 6,500 by 2025 of additional electricity load.

Clearly we need to prepare now for a greater future demand.

In their report, “Wind Vision”, The Canadian Wind Energy Association believes that the share of wind energy alone as a percentage of total generation in the province can increase from 1 per cent of electricity demand – to 17 per cent, by the year 2025.

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The fulfillment of WindVision would result in \$16 billion dollars of investment in the province, with over \$3.7 billion of direct benefits to BC communities. Implementing WindVision would generate an estimated 22,500 person-years of employment during construction, and 7,500 person-years of employment over the 20 to 25 year lifespan of the wind energy projects. And this is just the net benefits of wind energy alone.

As we’ve learned from the example of W.A.C. Bennett, no matter how we build it, or how much it costs, our power will be the cheapest in North America 20 years from now.

B.C. has long been an exporter of clean energy, and only in the last decade have we become net importers of electricity due to lack of generating capacity occasioned by growth in our population and industrial base.

Developing our province’s other renewable energy sources, such as wind energy and run-of-river, will increase the supply we have available to trade, and export and this has enormous potential to add significantly to the province’s revenues.

Today’s renewable energy is tomorrow’s cheap electricity.

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If B.C. wants to be a “climate change leader” as the Jobs Plan states, then we need to stay the course with all renewable energy development and our self-sufficiency plan, and not miss the opportunity we have to meet future electricity load growth in our province the right way with renewable clean energy — today’s renewable energy is tomorrow’s cheap electricity.

We congratulate the government for their vision to encourage the development of tomorrow's cheap electricity. What we are asking you to consider in relation to the province's budget is to ensure that we are properly leveraging B.C.'s renewable energy advantage for the benefit of B.C. taxpayers.

By finding ways to escalate the development of all our green energy potential you will create investment, jobs, and future revenue to help reduce taxes that will make us the most attractive and competitive jurisdiction in North America.

We recognize that current global economic conditions, particularly in the United States, are not that good. This has temporarily reduced demand for electricity. But poor economic conditions will not last forever and now is the time for B.C. to be building up our renewable energy generating capacity.

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BC Citizens for Green Energy released a research report entitled "A Triple Legacy for Future Generations: British Columbia's Potential as a Renewable Green Energy Powerhouse" a couple of years ago in which we outlined B.C.'s immense untapped potential for generating renewable green energy and the substantial revenue that could potentially be generated for the people of B.C. through an effective export policy.

In our report, we looked at several widely available estimates of B.C.'s potential for generating renewable green electricity, and based on these we found that B.C.'s green energy generating potential could easily be equal to the current clean, renewable generating capacity available from BC Hydro's heritage hydroelectric dams, and potentially two to three times this amount if not more.

*BC's Job Plan IS green renewable energy*

Everyone in B.C. stands to benefit greatly from the development of our province's enormous green energy potential, and the benefits are ones that will be there for our children, for our grandchildren, and for generations to come.

BC's Job Plan IS green renewable energy.

*Today's renewable energy is tomorrow's cheap electricity*

I thank the committee for your time and consideration, and for considering the important role that developing our province's immense green energy resources has for the B.C. economy and for provincial revenues.

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