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Stopping green power: What's wrong with the wind?

One of the earliest decisions of the Doug Ford's government was an abrupt right turn away from supporting and developing Ontario's growing renewable energy sector. Smearing the Liberal Green Energy Act as "a waste of money," he proceeded to cancel nearly 800 already signed contracts with renewable energy developers.

"I'm so proud of that," Ford said of his decision. "I'm proud that we actually saved the taxpayers \$790 million when we cancelled those terrible, terrible, terrible wind turbines that really for the last 15 years have destroyed our energy file." Ford went on to defend by boasting that "if we had the chance to get rid of all the windmills we would."¹

Opposition critics argued that cancellation of this program would cost Ontario taxpayers \$100 million. They were wrong. To date, it's cost us all \$231 million and counting. That's because almost every cancellation has been taken to court. After all, these developers had clear contracts with the Ontario government. While the government attempted to concoct legislation to restrict

their liability, that did not stop court challenges. Ford continues to fight every court battle.

This despite Conservative House Leader Todd Smith's claim that cancelling green energy projects would "be a net benefit to the people of Ontario. No longer are we going to have to produce electricity when we don't need that power."²

Smith's riding includes Prince Edward County where the government cancelled the nearly-complete nine-turbine White Pines project in 2019. The developers, wpd wind, had spent ten years securing the necessary approvals. The turbines were subsequently removed.



¹ "Doug Ford 'proud' of tearing up hundreds of green energy contracts," *CBC News*, Nov 21, 2019.

² "Ford government says cancelling wind farm won't cost taxpayers," *iPOLITICS*, Jul 11, 2018.



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Nation Rise, an Ottawa-area project developed by EDF Renewables, won a 2020 court reprieve. The Ford government failed to convince the court that there were grounds to cancel the 100 MW project. It was forced to pay costs. Nation Rise would go on to operate, since 2021 successfully supplying the Ontario grid with electricity sufficient to power 35,000 homes.

The Truth about Wind Energy

A 2021 International Energy Agency (IEA) analysis showed that wind energy is one of the world's fastest growing sources of new electricity generation. It is emission-free, relatively quick to install and can be used effectively on both land (onshore) and in water less than 20 m (offshore). Another 2021 report, this one from Ontario's own Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), showed that the province is currently enjoying reliable electricity produced by wind energy -- eight per cent of power generation is wind power.³ This needs to grow if we're serious about stopping climate breakdown.

There's a clear international scientific and political consensus that major investment in wind energy and other renewables is essential if we are to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C. As the industry has grown, the global price of wind power has dropped 71 per cent since 2009. It has now reached parity with fossil fuel sources of energy. Wind energy is a known climate solution.

The People First/Climate First Solution

- ! The Ontario government should tell the truth about the true cost of wind energy.**
- ! The Ontario government needs to stop wasting public money by fighting wind farm projects. And making false claims that these projects are expensive for Ontario's people.**
- ! The Ontario government needs to stop the unproven claims that gas and nuclear are "green" options: They both produce greenhouse gases and dangerously toxic waste products.**

³ <https://www.ieso.ca/en/Corporate-IESO/Media/Year-End-Data>