

MEDIA RELEASE
North American Platform Against Wind Power
(NA-PAW)



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PREMIER'S GOVERNMENT OVERRULES SENIOR
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWER, OSTRANDER POINT
TURBINES

"When we start to treat nature and species like a bunch of widgets in a factory, we've completely lost sight of what's truly important for our communities and our very identity as Ontarians," Gord Miller, Ontario Environmental Commissioner, 2013

Potent questions remain after the ERT (Environmental Review Tribunal) hit the pause button at the behest of Toronto environmental lawyer, Eric Gillespie, on September 5th, 2015 (Ostrander Point turbine project). *Why did the Premier's government overrule a senior environmental reviewer?*

Question after question was put to Mr. Joe Crawley, from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, highly qualified as a species at risk

herpetologist with expertise in Blanding's Turtles. (Crawley's "Gold Standard" qualifications include: member of COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), reviewing reports for that committee, decision-making for listings of species at risk, as well as key roles in developing a provincial task team forestry policy regarding amphibians and reptiles.

Why was this expert's advice to the Ministry, to **not grant** the permit to "kill, harm and/or harass endangered or at risk species" at Ostrander, not listened to? Why, given the 5.5 km of roads that would naturally appeal to the Blanding's Turtle as prime breeding sites, was this permit advanced, and who advanced it, given the expert's own admission that these roads would be harmful to the species?

Sherri Lange of the North American Platform, a long-time observer of the ERT proceedings and the seemingly never ending list of projects that have been developed anyway, despite communities' protests and legal challenges, expressed astonishment: It is clear that Mr. Crawley's professional assessment on inevitable damages from wind turbines at Ostrander, his fair and honest approach to an obvious need to protect an endangered species, in juxtaposition to his advice to the Ministry not being followed, advances the possibility that many more secrets lie hidden in "phone call decision-making" and projects pushed along up the chain, possibly to the Premier's office. "Who is making the final decisions for the permits to "harm," destroy important habitat, or even for what most feel are completely questionable projects," Lange asks, "because clearly even highly trained and top level species and at risk experts, advisors to the government, are not listened to. It is time to clear all the decks and FOI (Freedom of Information) every single

turbine project, past, present and pending, in the entire province. There needs to be complete transparency and review, for all the legal proceedings, the decision-making, for all of Ontario's immorally aborted wildlife protection principles."

"Remember," says Lange: "this is a government that [conveniently issues permits to "harm, harass and destroy" Eagles nests](#), even on a Friday to be completed by Sunday, in order to avoid public outrage. This government seems to completely disregard and "with abandon," even "target" endangered species with its placements of projects, and perform speedy paper work permitting in favor of the bustling turbine industry's profit taking."

Gillespie adds: "This case went through Tribunal hearings, then appeals up to the Court of Appeal. The government must immediately explain why critical information seems to have been hidden."

The Tribunal has now ruled: *"That the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry witnesses produce forthwith all papers and electronic correspondence to date relating to roads and/or Blanding's Turtle and this renewable energy approved project and site."*

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RESOURCES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtF6TUYfj8c>

<https://www.osler.com/en/resources/regulations/2014/divisional-court-overturms-environmental-review-tr>

<http://www.intelligencer.ca/2015/04/20/field-naturalists-win-at-ontario-court-of-appeal>

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2013/10/10/gord-miller-ontario-liberals-environment_n_4077716.html

<http://www.canadianlawyermag.com/5725/When-turtles-trump-turbines.html>

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