

**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

Councillors tell Energy Minister Todd Smith to Stop Ignoring his Regulator's Veto of TC Energy's Pumped Storage Scheme

Meaford, ON - Another key cottage-country municipality has joined the growing chorus of opposition against TC Energy's contentious \$4.5-billion Pumped Storage Project in Meaford, Ontario. Today, the council of the Township of Georgian Bay—which includes Port Severn, Honey Harbour, Cognashene and historic Go Home Bay—voted against the megaproject as a threat to the environment and the area's vital tourism, sport and commercial fishing industries.

But the councillors also urged Energy Minister Todd Smith to stop supporting the project in the face of two negative reports from his provincial regulator, the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) that concluded it fails to deliver any net economic benefit to Ontario ratepayers. On January 9th, the minister refused to take no for an answer and tasked the IESO with reviewing the proposal yet again, while negotiating to pay TC Energy for its development expenses on this untendered project.

The township is the third municipality around the Georgian Bay basin to come out against the proposal in three months. On November 17th, the council of the Township of The Archipelago in Parry Sound District first passed a resolution “vehemently” opposing the project. Then on December 18th, the Town of Blue Mountains, which includes Thornbury, followed suit with a similar resolution that also denounced the project as “a bad financial deal for Ontario.”

“This resolution rightly recognizes the waters of Georgian Bay follow no municipal boundaries,” says Tom Buck of Save Georgian Bay. “The water touches all of us. Because of that, everyone on the Bay should have a say.”

The trio of votes—two from municipalities on the eastern shore of Georgian Bay nearly 90 kilometres away—refutes TC Energy's claim that mounting protests from volunteer groups like Meaford-based Save Georgian Bay are merely a case of NIMBYism.

“This demonstrates there is widespread concern about this project beyond the immediate area and the opposition of Save Georgian Bay,” says Rupert Kindersley, executive director of the Georgian Bay Association, an umbrella advocacy group for 18 community associations. “We add our voice asking Minister Smith to reconsider the project and consider more cost-effective alternatives for energy storage.”

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