



## **Green Energy Act will save Ontario's Rural Communities from Energy "Grid Lock"**

(Milton, June 2, 2008) Frustration is growing in parts of rural Ontario where farmers, municipalities, First Nations, community power projects and locally owned green energy projects are unable to fully contribute to Ontario's green electricity future.

The Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA), with leading trade associations, manufacturers, environmental groups, First Nations, power developers, farmers and landowners, is calling for an Ontario Green Energy Act. The Ontario Green Energy Act will contribute to the achievement of Premier McGuinty's vision of a prosperous and green Ontario. A Green Energy Act will help reduce greenhouse gases and pollution, while ensuring a secure and stable domestic electricity supply and good jobs for Ontarians.

The Green Energy Act aims to create the best policy framework to ensure power conservation and rapid provision and deployment of renewable energy. It will mean that the lights stay on, that rates remain reasonable, that cost overruns on nuclear plants are limited, and that local residents can actually access the grid they have paid for to both sell and buy power.

The Green Energy Act campaign welcomes the participation of citizens, businesses and the public sector to:

- Reinforce the commitment to conservation and renewable energy
- Establish a 'roadmap' to conservation and green energy and address gaps in the present plans including removing barriers to ensure renewables get on line
- Take advantage of the clean slate that is Ontario's electricity system, which requires an estimated \$60 billion to expand and reinforce the grid and bring on new generation
- Identify our opportunities and copy best practices to capitalize on them, just as we did with the RESOP

"The province became a leader in North America by implementing the Renewable Energy Standard Offer. Ontarians with power line access can produce and sell clean power to the grid," says Ted Cowan of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. "For example, a dairy farm with 80 milking cows can earn about \$50,000 a year extra by making electricity with the manure."

"Despite the Ontario Power Authority's recent acknowledgment that the RESOP was meant for communities, it is clear there is not much line capacity left and that increasingly local Community Power is locked out," said Harold Flaming, Executive Director with The Ontario Rural Council. "Even with a real resource, and the perfect program, there is almost no line capacity left in most of rural Ontario. Rural Ontarians want to participate, we need integrated solutions for the sector, addressing the full economic, and ecological costs."

Deborah Doncaster, Executive Director of the Community Power Fund added that, "The time has come for Ontario's policy, the full range of electricity and power focused agencies' and the grid to evolve in a manner that benefits all players rather than pitting Community Power and the private sector against one another for access to the extremely limited transmission capacity."

"First Nations and other Community Power groups as well as private developers and manufacturers are working together to secure Ontario's green energy future," said Michael Fox with the First Nations Energy Alliance. "Ontario is about to spend \$60 billion on an electricity system that has not had significant renewal for over 20 years. Let's be wise and creative. Let's draw a roadmap to reach Premier McGuinty's vision, and provide the correct signals to the agencies of the Crown so everyone benefits."