

Media Release

## **Green Energy Act the Solution to Environmental and Economic Crises is theme of Prince Edward County Meeting**

(Picton ON, Feb 3, 2009)- Citizens from Prince Edward County and surrounding areas attended a meeting at the Prince Edward County Community Centre Hall last night (Feb. 2), organized by the County Sustainability Group and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association. The presentation was a preview of what these organizations anticipate seeing in the *Green Energy Act*, which is expected to be introduced into the Ontario Legislature by Energy and Infrastructure Minister George Smitherman later this month.

The theme of the evening was quickly established by the opening comments, "A *Green Energy Act* will bring economic prosperity and new 'green' jobs to Ontario, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and allow individuals, communities and companies to become energy producers and conservers," made by Kristopher Stevens, Executive Director of OSEA, a founding member of the Green Energy Act Alliance (GEAA).

Around 70 people, ranging from high school students to retirees from the Prince Edward County community attended, including two councilors from the area. When asked whether they were in favor of renewable energy, 80% of attendees were in favor.

Renewable energy is the solution to both climate change and the economic crisis but to get enough windmills erected, solar panels installed and biodigesters operating, legislation is needed to make renewable energy a provincial priority.

Stevens went on to say, "The fundamental provision we expect to see in Ontario's *Green Energy Act* flow from similar legislation adopted in Germany. That country is now a world leader able to produce 20,000 MW of new green power, developed in less time than it would take to build a 1,000 MW nuclear plant. Germany is also able to meet tough climate change targets by avoiding the emission of 100 million tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere a year, while a quarter of a million new green collar jobs have been created, all for just an extra \$5 a month per household.

The GEAA is recommending guaranteed access to the electricity grid for all producers of sustainable energy, priority purchase of green electricity before coal and nuclear power, fair prices, fixed over the long term for renewables and a strong commitment to continually improve conservation and efficiency.

Across Ontario farmers, First Nations and communities are eager to contribute to the province's electricity supply by producing clean, renewable energy. However, they are being hindered by outdated regulations that slow the adoption of renewable energy technology, a lack of access to the grid to sell their energy and opposition from lobbyists for the coal and nuclear power industry.

Don Chisholm, co-chair of the County Sustainability Group based in Picton closed the meeting by thanking the participants and reminding them that, "The long term well-being of today's young is in our hands. They will have a renewable energy future, or they will have no future. We cannot let them down."

### **For more information, contact:**

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A schedule of all the GEAA workshops in this provincial series can be found at  
[http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476\\_Handout\\_v2\\_revised.pdf](http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476_Handout_v2_revised.pdf)

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*OSEA works to initiate, facilitate and support the work of local sustainable energy organizations through membership services, province wide capacity building and non-partisan policy work. They work to catalyze the efforts of community organizers and raise awareness of the benefits of community power and renewable energy through various communication channels and by offering a variety of workshops and guidebooks on topics.*

*The County Sustainability Group provides information on the ecological and social symptoms of excess human activity, and on positive steps that other, enlightened communities and governments are taking.*