

Wind farm remains on track in Aroostook

BY ANTHONY BRINO
BDN STAFF

Despite the termination of an electricity purchase agreement, plans for what would be the largest wind farm in the state, proposed for Unorganized Territory of central Aroostook County, are still on track, according to the company behind the project.

“We are still pursuing Number Nine. It is one of the best, most mature energy projects in New England,” Katie Chapman, project manager with EDP Renewables,

said. While the estimated 119-turbine Number Nine Wind Farm originally was slated to come online by 2017, Chapman said that after several setbacks the company is working toward a goal of completion by 2020.

EDP Renewables’ power purchase agreement with two Connecticut utilities, signed in 2013 to line up customers for some of the power from the project, was terminated in July because of a number of delays, Chapman said.

The power purchase agreements with Connecticut utilities

Eversource Energy and United Illuminating Company were terminated “once it became clear that we would not meet the project schedule milestones due to extraordinary delays in the interconnection process, the technical process for connecting to the grid.”

Chapman said the company has been waiting for three years for a study of the connection to the electricity grid from ISO New England, the organization that runs the grid for New England’s six states but not for northern Maine, which has its own network con-

nected to New Brunswick. Exporting power from the Number Nine wind project would require connecting to the ISO New England grid via a new transmission line between Haynesville and Houlton.

Marcia Blomberg, a spokesperson for ISO New England, said in an email that “ISO has worked diligently and in a timely fashion with EDP to conduct the required engineering studies to identify what is required to interconnect their project without having an adverse impact.” She added that the transmission connections

would be in areas that “were not designed or constructed to carry large amounts of electricity.”

The discontinuation of the purchase agreements left EDP on the hook for nearly \$5 million in termination payments to the two utilities. “It is important to note that the past, present and future costs for the project thus far are entirely EDP’s and have not been passed and will not be passed to ratepayers or utilities,” Chapman said.

Going forward, Chapman is confident the transmission issues will
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SUN JOURNAL FILE

A logging truck delivers logs to the Verso paper mill in Jay in August 2015.

Maine’s economy still relies on logging

BY DARREN FISHELL
BDN STAFF

Bath Iron Works’ loss of a crucial contract last week casts a pall over more than 1,000 shipbuilding jobs in Maine. But another traditional industry argues it still has a bright future in the state, no matter the headlines.

Logging has big potential ahead, “despite the steady drumbeat of doom and gloom in media reports suggesting Maine should move on from its forest-based heritage,” the industry’s top representative, Dana Doran, wrote in a recent report.

Even with the fall of Maine paper mills, the state relies more on the logging industry for jobs than any other place in the country.

Federal data show that Maine has a higher concentration of logging and forestry jobs than any state, beating out Washington for that title in 2015.

The figures highlight part of Maine’s continuing reliance on traditional manufacturing — such as shipbuilding — and

production industries, despite a general shift toward more service-sector jobs.

The report by Doran’s trade association, the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine, illustrates what’s at stake for a forest products economy that has logging at its roots. It estimates that logging and forestry contributed \$882 million to Maine’s economy in 2014, and employed more people than federal figures show.

That estimate includes all of the industry’s indirect impacts, such as wages in industries supplying logging and forestry businesses and household purchases with income wholly or partly dependent on the industry.

The study reflects a period before many of the state’s paper mills closed and when the market was stronger for selling lower-grade wood to biomass generators in Maine.

The industry in the past year wielded its influence in Augusta and Washington, securing bills to prop up the state’s biomass generators, ease taxes on certain logging equipment, and to study and develop a path

forward for the forest products industry, even getting help from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Trends in exports show some signs of the broader forest product industry’s troubles. While the PLC study notes that wood, wood pulp, and paper and paperboard were among the state’s top exports in 2015, those categories have been declining overall and have lost rank against other product categories.

Lobster sales have led seafood exports to the top spot.

Paper and wood pulp categories have lost the most ground, reflecting a declining in-state market for raw wood fiber. Other wood products including wood chips, wood pellets and other wood used for everything from firearms parts to furniture have remained steady.

Federal data show payroll employment in logging has remained relatively steady in recent years, though the figures don’t include sole proprietors who operate their own logging business, with no employees.
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Destroyer to be named after Marine Corps general

BY BETH BROGAN
BDN STAFF

BATH — Two days after Bath Iron Works learned it was outbid by a Florida shipyard for a potential \$11 billion contract to build U.S. Coast Guard cutters, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that a destroyer under contract to be built at the shipyard will be named after Marine Corps Gen. Louis H. Wilson Jr.

The vessel — the DDG 126 — is the final Arleigh Burke-class destroyer awarded to BIW in the Navy’s most recent multiyear contract for destroyers.

Wilson was 26th commandant of the Marine Corps and a Medal of Honor recipient. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle of Guam during World War II. In July 1944, Wilson, then a captain in the Marine Corps, led his company in repelling and destroying a larger enemy force, according to the release.



DENNIS GRIGGS | U.S. NAVY

He was promoted to general in July 1975 and assumed the office of commandant of the Marine Corps.

“As commandant, Wilson repeatedly stressed modernization of the post-Vietnam Marine Corps,” the release states. “He insisted on force readiness, responsiveness, and mobility by maintaining fast-moving, hard-hitting expeditionary units, each consisting of a single integrated system of modern ground- and air-delivered firepower, tactical mobility, and electronic countermeasures.”

In a ceremony Saturday in Oxford, Mississippi, Mabus also announced that the DDG 125, to be built by Huntington Ingalls Industries shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, will

be named after Marine Corps hero Jack H. Lucas, also a recipient of the Medal of Honor.

In 2013, the U.S. Navy awarded nine Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, five to Ingalls and four to BIW, with the option for a fifth.

In December 2015, the Department of Defense announced that an additional DDG 51 destroyer would be awarded to BIW.

Of those being built in Maine, the DDG 115, the future USS Rafael Peralta, is 96 percent complete, BIW spokesman Matt Wickenheiser Monday.

The DDG 116, the future USS Thomas Hudner, is 73 percent complete, and the DDG 118, the future USS Daniel Inouye, is 19 percent complete.

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Rosa Maria Peralta etches her initials into the keel plate of the guided-missile destroyer Pre-Commissioning Unit, Rafael Peralta, in October 2014 with the assistance of Bath Iron Works welder Bob Morey. The ship is named after Marine Corps Sgt. Rafael Peralta.



Text messages could lead to empty bank accounts

BY RUSS VAN ARSDALE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NORTHEAST CONTACT

Customers at some Maine banks and credit unions have been receiving fraudulent text messages. The messages are from scammers falsely claiming that there’s a problem with the customer’s account or debit card.

CONSUMER FORUM

You can guess at the rest. There are frantic-sounding instructions to click on a link or phone number contained in the message. Failure to do so will cause some horrendous problem with the account, card or the customer’s credit rating.

“Banks and credit unions will not text, call or email customers asking them to divulge account numbers, PINs or Social Security numbers.”

LLOYD LAFOUNTAIN, MAINE’S BUREAU OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The fix is easy, says the text. Just type in your account or card information and any passwords that you can remember. The sender will take care of everything — like emptying your account or running up bogus charges.

The message seems to come from a customer’s financial institution. On its website, the Maine Credit Union League said members of at least two credit unions in eastern and central Maine appear to have been targeted.

The phony text message said their debit cards had been compromised and to call either 844-334-6152 or 844-611-0709. People who called either number were asked for their card numbers and CVV codes. Divulging that or other personal or financial information is a bad idea.

The superintendent of Maine’s Bureau of Financial Institutions says consumers should not fall for the hoax.

“Banks and credit unions will not text, call or email customers asking them to divulge account numbers, PINs or Social Security numbers,” Lloyd LaFountain III said.

LaFountain said if a consumer believes he or she has received a scam text, the consumer should:

— Not return the text or call the number provided.

— Never provide personal or financial information following such a request. Banks and credit unions will never request personal account information that way.

The Bureau of Financial Institutions has a consumer library containing hints about spotting and avoiding financial scams. There’s also a consumer specialist on staff who can answer questions about scams or accounts in general.

If you’re unsure after receiving an unsolicited email, call someone at the bureau, instead of clicking on anything in the message. The bureau’s phone
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