Frequently Asked Questions

Discussions with citizens, landowners, and other stakeholders have identified several recurring questions about the project. This section summarizes the main topics that have come up most frequently in these discussions.

The answers provided reflect the information currently available and will be updated as the project progresses. If you cannot find the answer to your question, please contact the project team at info.qc@firstlight.energy.

Why is this project being proposed?

The Beauharnois Wind Farm Project aims to contribute to Quebec's renewable electricity needs while supporting energy transition goals and greenhouse gas emission reductions. Thanks to its interconnection with Hydro-Québec's transmission network, the wind farm will produce electricity equivalent to the average consumption of 30,000 Quebec households.

The Saint-Urbain-Premier area offers favorable conditions for wind farm development, thanks to its good wind quality and proximity to a Hydro-Québec transmission line.

How are the locations of wind turbines determined?

Locations are evaluated based on several criteria, including wind conditions, minimizing impacts on agricultural land, environmental constraints, regulatory requirements, technical considerations, and stakeholder feedback.

Do wind turbines produce noise?

Wind turbines produce a certain level of baseline noise, primarily due to the movement of the blades in the air. The noise level depends mainly on wind speed and is therefore not constant over time, although it is also intermittent.

The project must comply with the noise limits set by the MELCCFP (Ministry of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Forests and Parks) and the MRC's (Regional County Municipality) RCI Plan. Specifically, a maximum noise level of 40 dBA at the location of a residence is permitted, which is equivalent to a quiet library.

Acoustic modeling and studies will be carried out before submission and during the development phase, in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

What will the benefits be for the community?

The project could generate significant economic benefits for the local community throughout its lifespan. Under the framework for wind energy projects in Quebec, the local community would receive annual royalties of approximately $6,227 per megawatt installed. For a 100 MW project, this would represent approximately $620,000 per year, indexed annually, totaling nearly $25 million over the 30-year contract.

The project will also generate several million dollars in revenue each year. The Beauharnois Regional County Municipality (MRC) and local Indigenous communities will have the opportunity to become partners in the project, with a stake of up to 50%, allowing them to directly benefit from the revenue generated throughout the wind farm's lifespan.

Economic benefits are also expected during the construction and operation phases through contracts awarded to local and regional businesses, particularly in the excavation, transportation, snow removal, concrete, and heavy equipment sectors. Once operational, the park could create five to six permanent jobs to ensure its operation and maintenance.

What environmental studies will be conducted?

The project will have to follow an Environmental Impact Assessment and Review Procedure (EIA), overseen by the Ministry of the Environment (MELCCFP). The impact study analyzes the project's potential effects on the natural environment, the human environment, and the surrounding territory. It documents the issues, assesses the possible impacts, and proposes measures to avoid, reduce, or offset them.

The EIA includes steps for informing and consulting the public, as well as a government review of the project before a decision is made.

Will the wind turbines impact aquifers and private wells?

The protection of water, soil, and natural environments is an integral part of the studies that will be conducted for the project. Construction work will be planned to minimize environmental risks, particularly with regard to surface water, wetlands, streams, and

groundwater. The protective measures to be implemented will be detailed in the next stages of the project.

Is there a risk of ice buildup on the turbines in winter?

As part of the conditions in Hydro-Québec's Request for Proposals, wind turbines must be equipped with an anti-icing system, which significantly reduces ice formation on the blades. In addition, modern wind turbines are equipped with control and safety systems that can detect certain anomalies, such as unusual vibrations, specific weather conditions, or abnormal equipment operation. In the event of a problem, the turbines can be automatically slowed down or shut down to prevent ice buildup.

Why is the information session being held as an open house rather than a presentation followed by a question-and-answer session?

The chosen format aims to encourage more personalized and in-depth discussions with members of the project team. By allowing participants to move freely between the various themed booths, everyone can ask questions directly to the relevant specialists and receive answers tailored to their specific concerns.

This approach also allows for a greater number of questions to be answered and encourages participation from those who prefer to discuss matters individually rather than speaking to the entire audience. Finally, the open house format offers greater flexibility, as participants can arrive at any time during the event without missing a presentation given only at the beginning of the meeting.

Is the project already confirmed?

The project is not yet confirmed and remains in the pre-development stage. Several important steps still need to be completed before it can be approved and implemented.

As part of the current process, the team plans to submit a bid in response to Hydro-Québec's call for tenders in February 2027. However, Hydro-Québec's selection of the project is a crucial prerequisite, and the project can only move forward if it is selected in this competitive process.

Subsequently, if the project is selected, it will still have to undergo various technical, environmental and regulatory analyses, as well as approval and permitting processes before it can be built and become operational.