

Muskegon Lake wind turbine in planning stage

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The Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center in Muskegon continues to pursue plans to build a test wind turbine on Muskegon Lake.

MAREC Executive Director Imad Mahawili has written a proposal for a Muskegon Lake pilot project that would put a 600-kilowatt wind turbine in the eastern end of the lake offshore from the Grand Valley State University energy center.

The pilot project would allow MAREC researchers to gather performance data and work on issues of anchoring the turbine and dealing with winter lake ice. It also would give the public the opportunity to see such a large operating turbine up close as citizens gauge their comfort with the new alternative energy systems.

The MAREC proposal contemplates keeping the wind turbine on Muskegon Lake for only a few years with the hopes of interesting further research for a wind farm out on Lake Michigan. The Muskegon Lake pilot project comes with a \$3 million price tag.

With the support of shoreline communities around Muskegon Lake, MAREC has requested federal funding for the wind turbine project through U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra's office, Mahawili said, adding that the proposal is in conjunction with an unnamed wind turbine manufacturer.

"I think people have been very supportive," Mahawili said.

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