

Innovation meets entrepreneurship

by ERIC BOURQUE
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While wind power is just in its infancy in Nova Scotia, there is much support for the initiative, given the recognized need to pursue clean, renewable sources of energy, a Nova Scotia Power Inc. official said last week in Church Point.

"People have told us they want green power," said Alain Cottreau, Nova Scotia Power's supervisor of the Bear River hydro system.

He was speaking at Universite Sainte-Anne during a meeting organized by the Clare Chamber of Commerce.

Earlier this fall, in the neighbouring village of Little Brook, the power company put up the first commercial-size wind turbine in Nova Scotia and Cottreau noted during his presentation that NSPI customers will be given the option of purchasing wind-generated power as a portion of their electricity bill. It will come



ERIC BOURQUE PHOTO
Alain Cottreau of Nova Scotia Power Inc. was one of the guest speakers during a Nov. 5 session organized by the Clare Chamber of Commerce.

at a higher rate than most of the power they consume—power generated by conventional sources—but the program is strictly voluntary, he said, and customers are under no obligation to sign up for it.



ERIC BOURQUE PHOTO
Everett Titus of A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd. holds one of the samples of material he had on hand as he spoke about the Theriault shipyard last Tuesday at Universite Sainte-Anne.

Nova Scotia Power's other wind turbine is in Grand Etang, Cape Breton. The plan, Cottreau said during the Nov. 5 chamber of commerce session, is for wind-generated electricity

to be available to customers throughout the province next year.

Wind power remains more expensive than electricity produced by sources like coal—NSPI's primary source—but the price may come down with technological advancements, Cottreau said.

In the quest for clean, renewable sources of energy, wind power itself isn't the answer, he said, but it's a positive step.

"You cannot build the backbone of your (power) system with wind turbines," he said.

The Clare region has been very supportive of the wind power project, he said, citing, for example, the efforts of the Western Valley Development Authority.

"I do want to acknowledge their initiative and their help in getting us started down this road," he said.

Based on data collected

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from a monitoring tower, officials decided there was a sufficient wind resource in Clare to locate a wind turbine there.

The Clare turbine, located off the S.F. Comeau Road, was acquired from Belgium and the project has attracted plenty of attention.

"We've had a lot of interest in the Little Brook site," Cottreau told chamber members and other guests during the lunchtime session in the Sainte-Anne's cafeteria.

The future of wind power in Nova Scotia is likely with private operators, he said, describing NSPI's Clare turbine as a "demonstration project."

The Nova Scotia Power presentation was part of a session—put on by the chamber of commerce—whose theme was *Innovation Meets Entrepreneurship*.

Aside from wind energy, the session highlighted some of the work being done at the A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd. shipyard, notably its new research and development department, which was put together over the last year-and-a-half or so, a company official said during last Tuesday's session.

Since it began in 1938, the firm has evolved in terms of the work it does and the types of boats it builds, said Everett Titus, the company's marine superintendent, noting that a potential new market—given the heightened concern about terrorism since last year's attacks in the United States—might be law enforcement agencies involved in coastal patrols, agencies looking for vessels made of extra-strong, bullet-proof material.