

Opinion

Ohio Insider

I'VE BEEN HEARING TALK that the future of the much talked about Lake Erie offshore wind project is very much in doubt.

According to a story late last year in the *Ohio Capital Journal*, the Icebreaker project that would put a series of wind turbines offshore at Cleveland is in doubt due to the ongoing fallout from the state's energy scandal.

The Icebreaker project from the Lake Erie Energy Development Corp. (LEEDCO) has been in the works since 2009 with backing from the city of Cleveland, Cuyahoga and Lorain counties, and a host of other influential backers. The project has also passed through most of the state's regulatory process and was largely given the green light.

In fact, Icebreaker showed so much promise that the U.S. Department of Energy gave it a \$40 million grant in 2016.

Some environmental and trade industry groups, though, have opposed the project, but it was until recently poised to move forward.

The *Ohio Capital Journal* says the history of the Icebreaker project has been "long and laborious" in its hearings and special interest groups coming forward. But, the trouble now is directly connected to the ongoing investigation over energy company FirstEnergy and the HB6 alleged corruption scandal in the Ohio Legislature that toppled former House Speaker Larry Householder.

The *Ohio Capital Journal* in its story goes into great detail about a former lobbyist and his involvement with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and whether or not that lobbyist was involved in some impropriety when the Icebreaker project was approved.

In the end, it will be up to the courts to determine the future of Icebreaker. The Ohio Supreme Court was scheduled to hear oral arguments on Dec. 7, 2021, meaning there will likely be no ruling into well into 2022.

Ohio Outdoor News will continue to follow the developments.

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WANTED TO FOLLOW UP WITH A SMALL DETAIL that ended up on the cutting room floor with regard to the record book Hud Baker buck that we featured in our Jan. 7 issue.

As Paul Harvey used to say, here's the rest of the story.

If you recall, Baker shot the buck with a longbow and Buckmasters certified the 213 ½-inch non-typical as the largest such deer on record.

I was interested as to why Baker shoots a longbow? He told me he started bowhunting when he was 15 with a compound bow but he never used the bow's sights. He shot it insinctively, Baker told me.

"So, I shot my first deer (with the compound bow) and my uncle, Hunter, asked me why I was lugging that big, heavy thing around," Baker said of the compound. "He said 'if you're not using the sights just go to a stickbow. It's a lot lighter.'"

The rest of the story is history.

"That sounded like a good idea to me, so I bought a stickbow and just never put it down," Baker said.

I also thought it was important to note that Baker said he won't stop hunting now that he's shot one of his largest bucks.

"I'll just shop harder," he laughed.



MIKE MOORE
EDITOR



"I'd say that's a double-reed diaphragm. Probably brand new, from the sound of it."

Commentary

Benefits of active forest management

By Anthony F. Pappas, CF

So, you own 10 acres, maybe even 1,000, most of it wooded. You may have purchased the property for hunting, wild-life viewing, aesthetics, or even as a timberland investment. But have you considered actively managing your woods? Manipulating tree species composition? Creating escape cover? Providing late winter woody browse? Maybe now's the time to consider the many benefits of active forest management. The purpose of this short article will be to introduce the landowner to the benefits of active forest management.

What is "active forest management?" Well, it usually starts with a visit from a professional forester (different than a logger), who then takes

your goals and objectives for your property, as well as the current state of your woods, and formulates a written forest management plan. There are a couple of programs Ohio has that offer landowners substantial tax benefits by having one of these plans on file. This plan will cover the entirety of the property and describe different forest treatments in order to improve the overall health and ecosystem functionality of your woods.

A good place a landowner can start is by simply walking their woods. Get in to the center of the woodlot, and look up. Do all the tree canopies touch each other? Is there nothing but shade reaching the ground? Can you see 50 yards through your woods? This may be a sign of an over-

mature forest. No sunlight on the ground means very little to no desirable understory (think hip height and lower) or oak regeneration. If your large trees are oaks, but you don't see any younger oaks beneath them in the understory, there's a good chance you don't have nearly enough sunlight to promote their regeneration. Oaks in the overstory of the forest will die, so what's left to take their place? If you have an overmature forest as described earlier, most likely its American beech, red maple, sugar maple, and other assorted shade-tolerant tree species (depending upon where you live, these species could be different, but they're all shade-tolerant). Oaks, red and white included, are shade-intolerant,

(See *Commentary* Page 8)

Letters to the Editor

Commentaries and letters are the opinions of the writers, not necessarily those of *Ohio Outdoor News*.

Pollick's words on hunting hit home for this reader

Just wanted to take the time and tell you how much I enjoyed Steve Pollick's column in the Dec. 17 edition of *Ohio Outdoor News*.

Now that I am an old hunter and fisherman, Steve's column really hit home with me about why I am still freezing in a treestand at 68 years of age. It's not to just shoot a deer. Maybe it's my slowing down that I am able to enjoy the camaraderie of deer camp, the sounds of the woods during the various times of day, or just being a part of nature that we all don't get enough of.

When I take my rifle for a walk or do some forest witnessing, I will think about his column. Just wanted to send a little praise Steve's way for a terrific column.

Rick Lessick Sr.
Eastlake

Online Opinions

This issue's question

Have you filled your buck tag this deer season?

Yes or No

Last issue's question

Did you take part in the Walleye Fall Brawl or Walleye Slam?

Yes 33% No 67%

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P.O. Box 1010, Delaware, OH 43015
E-mail: mmoore@outdoornews.com

Good to know Biden did at least one thing right

I am writing in regard to the article about Joe Biden and good migratory bird policy in *Ohio Outdoor News*.

Thanks for publishing the "Controversial migratory bird policy set for reversal" article in the Nov. 5 issue (page 27).

According to my observations, most men and women who hunt and fish in Ohio despise Joe Biden.

You can include me in this group.

However, it is important for your readership and all of us who are involved in the conservation of bird life to know that Biden did at least one thing right.

At least we now know that he did something good for our precious migratory birds.

Paul Grubach
Lyndhurst

Fish Ohio pins stuck in limbo, but will be shipped

By Jeffrey L. Frischkorn
Contributing Writer

Columbus — If anglers are still wondering what has happened to their 2021 Fish Ohio pin featuring a longnose gar, it may very well be on a slow boat from China.

Or possibly the large pallet of pins is sitting in a warehouse. Or on a shipping dock. Or maybe anywhere but at the Ohio Division of Wildlife's Fountain Square headquarters in Columbus.

In effect, the pins are not missing, just no one one knows exactly where they are at.

"We're checking on the status every day," said Brian Banbury, the wildlife division's executive administrator who oversees the agency's Fish Ohio program. "They could be on a truck or sitting on a dock, but we believe they are (somewhere) in the U.S."

Banbury said the agency has ordered 11,000 standard Fish Ohio pins and 1,200 Fish Ohio Master Angler pins. The total cost for these pins was \$4,938.

To date, the wildlife division has electronically received 8,955 Fish Ohio applications with 688 of these applicants qualifying for Master Angler recognition.



The 2021 Fish Ohio pins feature the longnose gar, the first time for this species on the angler recognition pin.

Photo courtesy Division of Wildlife

at least four different specimens from the recognized list.

The deadline for entering a fish for any particular year's edition of the program is Dec. 31.

This year's Fish Ohio pin delivery is even slower than was last year, and in each case, the problem is traceable back to the

Under the Fish Ohio program, anglers are eligible to receive a pin for catching a length-qualifying specimen from 25 recognized sport fish species. Inland waters/Ohio River and Lake Erie each have special lengths for five of these species.

A Master Angler designation is given to any angler catching

In conclusion, active forest management means taking a directed approach to enhance, sustain, and grow a productive forest on your property. You don't have to own 1,000 acres to make a difference, 10 or even five acres will do. A professional forester can get you started. Simply reach

out to one by doing a quick online search, visiting the Ohio Society of American Foresters directory website (osafdirectory.com/consulting-forester), or visiting the Ohio Division of Forestry web page, and clicking on "Landowner Assistance."

Hopefully, this article is the

beginning of a long journey of sustainable forest management on your woodlot.

Anthony F. Pappas is a certified forester through the Society of American Foresters. He is the owner and lead consultant of Heritage Habitat and Forestry, LLC, in northeast Ohio.

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