

3.7 Cultural Resources

3.7.1 Archeological Resources

3.7.1.1 *Affected Environment*

A review of archeological site files maintained by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, that functions as New York's SHPO, revealed 12 Native American and 5 Euroamerican archeological sites previously recorded within one mile of the Project. The Native American sites include one Paleo-Indian find, three Woodland Stage sites (including one St. Lawrence Iroquois village site), and eight sites of unknown Native American prehistoric period chronological association. The five Euroamerican archeological sites include the remains of nineteenth-century structures. An additional two sites are recorded within the site files of the New York State Museum that have not been attributed to either the prehistoric or historic time periods.

Review of historic cartographic sources indicates that early Euroamerican settlement in the area was near roads, most of which reflect current roadways within the area of potential effects (APE). Given the Project design goal of locating wind turbines no closer than 1,200 feet and 615 feet of existing structures and roads respectively, the Project also achieves the unintentional goal of avoiding most historic structures and potential archeological remains of former historic structures within the APE. Four previously listed National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) properties, the Nicholas Cocaigne House (90NR01121), the Warren Wilson House (90NR01130), the Xavier Chevlaier House (90NR01120) and the Claude Vautrin House (90NR01129), are located within the APE for archeology and may have associated historic archeological resources.

Cultural resources studies have been initiated to determine the presence of archeological and historical architectural resources. These studies have been designed to be in compliance with the *New York SHPO Guidelines for Wind Farm Development Cultural Resources Survey Work* (2006). A field inspection was conducted of a majority of the Project area of potential effects for archeology (archeology APE) to identify aboveground evidence of archeological sites, areas that have the potential to contain intact archeological resources, and areas recommended for no additional testing due to wetlands, extreme slopes and/or visible evidence of ground disturbances. Field inspection of the Project revealed that the APE for archeology is relatively undisturbed and the general topography of the APE exhibits low relief. Most of the APE appears to be suitable for archeological testing.

The Project APE may have been an attractive environment to Native American populations. Potable water sources are plentiful and the APE retains proximity to aquatic food resources along

lowland streams and marshes and across large upland marshes. Lithic resources such as Black River chert nodules are relatively abundant along many streams and riverbanks throughout the APE. Canoe travel was possible along the shore of Lake Ontario and across the portage between the Chaumont River and French Creek, east and north of the Project APE. Ceremonial or burial places have been recorded at several locations within the general Project APE. Thus, the Project APE would have been optimal for occupation and/or use by Native American populations. One factor that may have limited Native American populations within the Project APE may have been the availability of well drained soils that would likely have been preferred for settlement locations. Approximately nine percent of soils within the Project APE currently exhibit good drainage.

A Phase IA cultural resources report is being prepared and will be provided to the SHPO, the USACE, and the Town of Cape Vincent Planning Board for their review and comment. Phase IB archeological investigations have been recommended to take place within the archeology APE (TtEC, 2007). A testing strategy would be developed and implemented following consultation with the SHPO. Proposed cultural resources investigations would follow the *New York State Historic Preservation Office Guidelines for Wind Farm Development Cultural Resources Survey Work*.

If archeological sites are discovered as a result of the Phase IB survey, a number of identified sites may qualify as potential historic properties (i.e., resources that are potentially eligible for inclusion in the NRHP). If so, a subsequent Phase II survey would provide information sufficient to assess if identified sites may be eligible for the NRHP.

3.7.1.2 Impact Analysis

Construction and operation of the Project could affect archeological resources that are potentially eligible for the NRHP. Project impacts could be direct or indirect. Direct impacts could include the physical destruction or damage to all or a portion of a site. Indirect impacts could include the introduction of elements that could potentially diminish the integrity of sites or alter settings associated with historic properties. The proposed Project includes a wind-powered electrical generating facility consisting of up to 96 turbine locations and ancillary structures and land development described on page 2-2. The total Project APE includes approximately 674 acres. SLW intends to avoid impacts to archeological resources that may be potentially eligible to the NRHP to the greatest extent possible.

3.7.1.3 Mitigation Measures

The proposed Project layout would be modified, if necessary, to avoid impact to historic properties to the greatest extent practicable. If NRHP-eligible sites are identified, and if the Project design cannot be adjusted so that the sites may be avoided, it may be necessary to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which would outline steps to be taken to mitigate adverse Project effects. It is expected that SLW, the SHPO, the Town of Cape Vincent Planning Board, the USACE and identified interested parties may be signatories of the MOA. Project construction would begin following successful implementation of all agreed-upon mitigation measures.

3.7.2 Architectural Resources

3.7.2.1 Affected Environment

The area of potential effects for architecture (architecture APE) has been defined by the Project viewshed which is included in the Visual Resource Assessment prepared by Saratoga Associates (Appendix C). The architectural site files maintained online by the SHPO indicated that there are currently 23 NRHP-listed properties located within one mile of the Project, including 1 NRHP District (Broadway Historical District). Four of these historic properties, the Nicholas Cocaigne House (90NR01121), the Warren Wilson House (90NR01130), the Xavier Chevlaier House (90NR01120) and the Claude Vautrin House (90NR01129), are located within or near the APE for archeology.

A survey to inventory architectural cultural resources that may be style-dated as 50 years old or older has been initiated within the positive viewshed area located within one mile of the Project. A total of 467 additional structures and 7 cemeteries have been recorded. Of these, 66 structures are recommended as potentially eligible to the NRHP. SLW would meet with SHPO to discuss the initial 1-mile ring survey results. Following this consultation, an architectural historical survey would continue to encompass the remaining portions of the architecture APE for the Project. Once the survey has been completed, the potential visual impacts of the Project on architectural resources listed in, nominated to, and recommended potentially eligible for the NRHP would be assessed. A report that summarizes the architectural historical survey methods, results, and visual impact assessment would be developed and provided to the SHPO, the USACE, and the Town of Cape Vincent Planning Board for review and comment.

3.7.2.2 Impact Analysis

Studies are being performed to determine if the Project may be visible from structures listed in, eligible for, or recommended as potentially eligible to the NRHP (historic properties). Assessments would be made to determine if the Project may result in adverse effects to potentially significant structures located within the architecture APE. Visual effects that may

result in a change to the setting and/or character of a historic property may be assessed as adverse. Given the low relief of the APE and the limited areas with stands of trees, it is probable that many of the inventoried structures within one mile, and possibly within five miles, of the project will be afforded views of one or more Project turbines.

3.7.2.3 Mitigation Measures

If it is determined that the Project would result in adverse effects, SLW would consider if minor redesign may be feasible to avoid adverse effects. If avoidance of effects is not possible, SLW would work with the Town of Cape Vincent Planning Board, SHPO, the USACE, and interested parties to develop a MOA that would stipulate appropriate activities that would be performed to mitigate effects.

3.8 Visual Resources/Community Character

3.8.1 Affected Environment

To evaluate Project visibility and visual impact, a Visual Resource Assessment (VRA) was prepared by Saratoga Associates, Landscape Architects, Architects, Engineers, and Planners, P.C. The VRA (included as Appendix C) followed basic New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Program Policy “Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts” (NYSDEC, 2000) and SEQRA criteria to minimize impacts on visual resources. This visual policy requires a visual assessment when a proposed facility is potentially within the viewshed of a designated aesthetic resource. In the case where significant impacts are identified, the Applicant (e.g., developer) is required to employ reasonable and necessary measures to eliminate, mitigate or compensate for adverse aesthetic effects. This NYSDEC visual policy is also included in Appendix C for reference. It should be noted that this visual resource study and assessment was performed prior to minor turbine location modifications. As a result, SLW is committed to performing updated visual resource impact studies as part of the SEQRA and permitting process.

The VRA for this Project included, but was not limited to, the following components:

- Define the existing landscape character/visual setting to establish the baseline visual condition from which visual change is evaluated;
- Conduct a visibility analysis (viewshed mapping and field investigations) to define the geographic area surrounding the proposed facility from which portions of the Project might be seen;
- Identify sensitive aesthetic resources to establish priority places from which further analysis of potential visual impact is conducted;