

Lake Country Wind Energy nearing key milestone in acreage goal

WILLMAR — Lake Country Wind Energy LLC has almost reached its goal of signing easements on the 30,000 acres of land needed for the community-owned wind energy project in Kandiyohi and Meeker counties.

By: [Gretchen Schlosser](#), West Central Tribune

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Lake Country and National Wind, a Minneapolis-based consultant for 13 similar wind energy projects across the country, announced Wednesday that almost 25,000 acres have been signed onto the project. Landowners of more than 13,000 acres signed the necessary agreements with the project in 2009.

Jan Donahue, field specialist on the project, noted that she is continuing to work with landowners, especially in Genessee Township in eastern Kandiyohi County.

The project footprint includes land in Green Lake, Harrison, Kandiyohi and Genessee townships in Kandiyohi County and Swede Grove and Anton townships in Meeker County. The area is along U.S. Highway 12 between Willmar and Grove City.

The 340-megawatt project will include between 170 to 200 wind turbines, according to Erin Edholm, communications director for National Wind. The first phase of the four-phase project includes the erection later this year of 20 2.05-megawatt turbines, made by REpower Systems AG of Hamburg, Germany. The turbines would come online and produce power in 2011, she said.

A second meteorological tower is expected to go up this spring, Donahue said. The tower — at 100 meters it is the same height as the turbines — will also be in Genessee Township. The first tower, a 60-meter tower north of Atwater, has been collecting wind data for a year.

“The amount of acres signed is the obvious highlight,” Donahue said. “But no less important is that we’ve now collected over a year’s worth of wind data. With that data, our wind assessments team will be able to place our turbines in the most efficient way possible.”

Get more information about Lake Country at www.LakeCountryWindEnergy.com or contact Donahue at 320-295-7570 or visit their office in the Atwater Equipment Building, along U.S. Highway 12 in Atwater.

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