



West Texas Wind Wire



December 2005

Texas poised for North American lead

“California here we come.”

So goes the melody of the traditional folk song. But in the 21st century this refrain applies to North American leadership in the world’s hottest source of renewable energy — and an important facet of U.S. energy independence.

With projects already underway, West Texas will surpass California as North America’s leader among states and provinces for wind energy generation capacity and production. And we don’t intend to be looking over our shoulders.

West Texas could surpass 3,000 MW of operational wind capacity by year-end 2006, and the Rolling Plains area alone could top California within a year. Texas will have enough operational wind energy in 2006 to power almost 1,000,000 homes.

California is the western hemisphere’s wind energy pioneer, with just over 2,000 MW operating since the 1980s. But technological advances, land costs, and internal environmental challenges have stalled the California industry for many years.

California turbines are much smaller than West Texas turbines — which are taller than the Statue of Liberty.

As an example, 90 California turbines are being replaced near Rio Vista with just 6 GE Wind 1.5 MW turbines (which are typical in West Texas projects) to produce the same 9 MW of power. All told, California projects use about 5,000 towers to produce the same electricity that West Texas can produce with about 1,200 towers.

South Texas projects are now also moving toward reality, with an onshore project announced on the Kenedy Ranch (400 MW) and the nation’s first major offshore project (150 MW) slated for the Gulf of Mexico off Galveston Island.

Texas’ revised renewable portfolio standard (RPS) sets an upgraded target of 5,880 MW, which would represent about 5 percent of Texas energy needs in 2015.

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2006 U.S. wind power projections:

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160 MW Green Mountain at Brazos wind center near Fluvanna in Scurry and Borden counties.



Sweetwater, LoneStar host wind energy events

A Texas-style welcome mat was rolled out in October at separate wind energy appreciation meals in Sweetwater and in rural Taylor County.

As Texas prepares to surpass California as North America's wind energy leader, West Texas communities and businesses are showing their appreciation to the billion-dollar-plus industry that is bringing jobs, tax revenue, and economic benefits to this region.



WTWEC Board president Homer Taylor welcomes almost 300 workers from GE Wind, FPL Energy, Mortenson, TRC, RSC, pilot car companies, and others to a free steak dinner in Sweetwater.

Sweetwater

The world famous Sweetwater Chuck Wagon Gang — a 70-year-old volunteer organization made up of community leaders — served up a free steak dinner to almost 300 workers from Nolan County and Taylor County wind projects.

The event at the Nolan County Coliseum Annex was sponsored by the Mitchell County Board of Economic Development, the Sweetwater law firm of Steakley Wetsel & Carmichael, and the Sweetwater Enterprise for Economic Development (SEED). Other local busi-

ness sponsors included Sweetwater Ready Mix, Sweetwater Electric Supply, and WTWEC Board president Homer Taylor. A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Natural Resources Conservation Service) through the Big Country Resource Conservation & Development Council paid for facility rental costs.

Workers were greeted by elected officials from Nolan, Mitchell, and Runnels counties and the City of Sweetwater. Abilene economic development officials also sent a delegation to the dinner. Staff representatives attended for U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, Gov. Rick Perry, and state Sen. Robert Duncan.

WTWEC executive director Greg Wortham gave the keynote remarks, and everyone in attendance received a Texas-shaped plastic candy dish manufactured by West Texas Moldings in Sweetwater.

Buffalo Gap

LoneStar Transportation cooked up a BarBQ lunch for almost 200 workers at the 120 MW Buffalo Gap wind project site near the Nolan-Taylor County line.

Sweetwater-based LoneStar regional manager Jim McKenzie and Cuppy Graham hauled their BarBQ pit onto the project site for a Texas-style meal with all the fixin's. LoneStar provides transportation for large wind energy components, including turbine blades, throughout the United States.

LoneStar has been hauling

large components to the Buffalo Gap site and recently undertook a major project to offload dozens railroad cars full of Vestas blades and other components in downtown Abilene and transport these to the Taylor County project site. The carbon fiber that is used to make the Vestas blades is manufactured by Zoltek in Abilene, but the blades are made at an out-of-state factory.

To ensure the September 2005 completion of the Buffalo Gap project, LoneStar delivered 67 of the Vestas V80 wind turbines. LoneStar handled a major multi-modal transportation assignment vital to timely completion of the wind project, especially given the transportation logistical challenges caused the active Atlantic hurricane season.

Nacelles, hubs, and blades were shipped from Houston by rail, where LoneStar undertook the rail offloading and truck transport responsibilities. Towers were shipped from Spain via Houston and Shreveport, where LoneStar again took over at the Abilene rail spur. LoneStar handled more than 550 massive components, unloaded 5 trains with more than 65 rail cars per train.



LoneStar Transportation chefs cooked up an on-site BarBQ for almost 200 workers at the 120 MW Buffalo Gap wind project.





U.S. Sen. Hutchison advances Texas Tech, TSTC wind efforts

U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, announced in December that she has secured a \$1.5 million federal appropriation to further ongoing wind energy industrial development efforts at Texas Tech University and Texas State Technical College—West Texas.

Sen. Hutchison spoke Dec. 5 at Lubbock's American Wind Power Center to West Texas community leaders along with representatives of Texas Tech University, the West Texas Wind Energy Consortium, and Texas State Technical College about the significant progress being made in the area of wind measurement and analysis.

She discussed the research potential of the Texas Tech Great Plains Wind Power Test Facility and the improvements that will be made with the support of \$1.5 million Sen. Hutchison secured for the facility in the Fiscal Year 2006 Water and Energy Development Appropriations bill.

"Funding for this new facility will support existing wind research initiatives at Texas



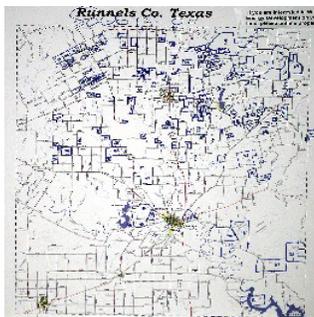
U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, pictured here in a West Texas parade, has secured a \$1.5 million wind energy appropriation to advance the West Texas wind industry.

Tech University," Hutchison said. "Wind is a renewable power source and our state will benefit from the expanded resources developed through this research. Texas has the second highest potential for wind energy in the nation and this renewable source of energy will help address our future energy needs."

The funds allow expansion of the Tech facility's resources for testing, characterization and improvement of wind turbines and wind-driven water desalination systems. Also, the money will be used in several areas, including: creating applications that will integrate wind energy into municipal power grids; pumping and desalinating water using wind energy; developing the software and equipment needed to interface the variable power supplied by wind with water pumping and desalination facilities; training wind technicians through Texas State Technical College and other regional technical schools, and completing the Great Plains Wind Power Texas Facility located at Lubbock's Reece Technology Center.

Winters gathering attracts 200 landowners

A strong south wind aims to add its force to the record-setting West Texas wind energy industry. Almost 200 farmers, ranchers, local officials, and community leaders gathered in Winters in late November to evaluate and demonstrate the



Runnels County farmers & ranchers demonstrated their interest in wind development on county map at November session.

potential for wind industry projects in the region just south and east of current projects.

The crowd from Runnels County and other Concho Valley areas heard presentations from WTWEC executive director Greg Wortham, Sweetwater attorney Rod Wetsel, and James Scott of British wind leader Renewable Energy Systems Americas. FPL Energy was also represented at the informational meeting.

The luncheon meal was provided by AEP Texas. Other event sponsors included Runnels County, the Winters Area Business & Industrial Corporation, Winters Area Chamber of Commerce, Texas Department of Agriculture, West Texas Wind Energy Consortium, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture — Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Similar events are being planned for other West Texas areas, including Mitchell County and Sterling County in cooperation with the Sweetwater-based Big Country Resource Conservation & Development Council.



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Representing America's
energy independence region

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West Texas Wind Energy Consortium invites you to join in a new era of joint action to capitalize on the value of wind energy to West Texas.

Our region supplies more than 25 percent of U.S. wind energy capacity, and only 4 foreign nations produce more wind energy than West Texas. This rapidly expanding industry provides substantial job creation potential and tax base growth for our region, and the outlook is strong into coming decades.

*To facilitate a strong West Texas-wide effort to maximize our common economic benefits, leaders throughout the region — in cooperation with Texas State Technical College-West Texas — are forming the West Texas Wind Energy Consortium across the breadth of West Texas: the Rolling Plains, Permian Basin, Texas Panhandle, and the Texas Mountains — **America's energy independence region.***



2006 luncheons to feature diverse, timely topics

West Texas Wind Energy Consortium luncheons are being scheduled to cover a diverse range of topics relevant to the regional wind industry.

Exact schedules are being confirmed with speakers, but each luncheon will take place at the Sweetwater campus of Texas State Technical College—West Texas. The luncheons are held in the Seminar Room in the Center. The campus is just off of Interstate 20 at Exit 240, 4 miles west of Sweetwater.

The January 2006 luncheon will feature J.D. Davis, superintendent of schools for Blackwell CISD, which by late 2006 will have more wind energy production than any school district in North America. Davis will discuss the interaction of wind energy wealth and

Texas school finance policy. The Texas Supreme Court has directed the Texas Legislature to revamp the State's school finance system before June 1, 2006. Gov. Rick Perry is expected to call the legislature into Special Session in Spring 2006.

On February 22, 2006, Robert J. King of Austin-based Good Company Associates will present an overview of the evolution and projections for the Texas wind industry. King has been

active in various facets of the industry since the first projects in Far West Texas.

In March 2006, the WTWEC luncheon will focus on transmission constraints, transmission development outlook, and ongoing proceedings at the Texas Public Utility Commission.

Later in the spring, TSTC officials will discuss the College's efforts to activate the Nation's premier degree program in Wind Technician Training by the fall semester 2006.

Cost for the luncheons is \$10 for WTWEC members and \$12 for non-members. The exact schedule for the first quarter 2006 meetings will be announced in early January.

