



## **Ground Broken on 1,300-Job Vestas Facilities**

Colorado Governor Bill Ritter (D) was on hand to celebrate a bright spot in the flagging economy—wind energy—joining Vestas executives, the crown prince and princess of Denmark, and local leaders at a ground-breaking ceremony for two manufacturing facilities that will create 1,350 new jobs in Brighton, Colo.

"Vestas was one of Colorado's earliest visionaries and pioneers in our New Energy Economy," said Ritter. "Thank you, Vestas, for helping to lead Colorado forward and for working with us to develop a sustainable energy future and a sustainable economic future."

The two Brighton factories, a wind plant and a nacelle assembly facility, will be part of the significant manufacturing and research hub the Denmark-based wind turbine producer is establishing in the U.S. Vestas is spending about \$290 million to build the two facilities, which will produce 1,800 blades and 1,400 nacelles a year. Brighton also will be home to a technology and production engineering office as well as a division of the Vestas Business Academy for employee training and development.

Vestas currently operates a wind blade manufacturing plant in Windsor, Colo., and is building the world's largest wind tower manufacturing facility in Pueblo, Colo. When all four plants are fully operational by the end of 2010, they will employ nearly 2,500 Coloradans.

Vestas is forging ahead with its U.S. investment at a time when even the wind industry has been affected by the recession, albeit for the short term. Some companies have even announced job losses following short-term industry challenges such as increased difficulty financing projects as a result of the banking credit crisis and the devaluation of the production tax credit (i.e., companies need to be earning a profit and paying taxes in order to utilize such credits). However, as indicated by the Vestas groundbreaking, net job gains during the last year have remained strong; in 2008 the wind industry added 35,000 jobs, creating a total of 85,000 people now employed in the wind industry.

*Source: Wind Energy Weekly, 27 March 2009*