



At Last, Construction Starts on Highland, Virginia's First Wind Farm

In a concrete milestone capping seven years of effort, construction started last weekend on Virginia's first wind project.

The ground breaking comes after county officials issued the long-awaited permits paving the way for construction to begin on the 38-MW project, which is located in Highland County and is being developed by Highland New Wind.

The \$80 million project, started in 2002 by Henry T. McBride on 220 acres of his own land near the Virginia-West Virginia border, will use 19 Gamesa G87 wind turbines having a total capacity of 38 MW. The wind farm is expected to provide as much as \$200,000 per year in tax revenue for the county. The project has gone through at least seven years of public hearings, approvals (both local and state), and litigation. Financing and power purchase agreements are still being negotiated on the project, which is expected to be completed by mid-2010.

"This is a day we have long waited for," said McBride, principal of Highland New Wind. "For many years, I looked forward to helping the environment and the Highland community, while preserving our family's land for future generations. Development of this wind project will achieve each of these goals as well as open new doors for renewable projects in Virginia. We are proud to have blazed the trail to a renewable energy future for Virginia right here on our property in Highland County."

Source: Wind Energy Weekly, 21 August 2009