

City firm's wind farm plans may be boon

By Fanny S. Chirinos
Saturday, March 29, 2008

CORPUS CHRISTI — A \$2 billion wind farm project by Corpus Christi-based American Shoreline near Hebbronville could bring money to Corpus Christi.

American Shoreline is an oil and gas exploration and wind energy company that contracts most of its work, said Mannti Cummins, American Shoreline's wind project manager.

"We're a small company, but we work real hard," he said.

American Shoreline and its partner, San Diego, Calif.-based Eviva Spinnaker, are developing two wind farms, part of one large project, about 13 miles west of Hebbronville. The project was separated into two wind farms because two separate transmission lines will be used to send the power to the state's electric grid to be sold.

The companies are in the permitting phase and a construction and completion schedule is not available.

The 800-megawatt project calls for 400 turbines about 350 feet tall spread out over 35,000 acres in Jim Hogg, Webb and Zapata counties, said Cummins. The power that would be generated from the two wind farms would power about 220,000 homes.

Beside the power to South Texas homes, the project could mean revenue to area businesses, Cummins said. Laredo, because of its proximity to the project, will feel the largest economic impact, but there still will be contracting opportunities that will affect Corpus Christi and the surrounding area, he said.

The project is the third wind project within 100 miles of Corpus Christi. Oregon-based PPM Energy and Australian-based Babcock and Brown each are planning wind farms in Kenedy County.

"We'll need construction equipment, materials and labor that might have a regional impact," Cummins said.

Some of that contract work could fall on the Port of Corpus Christi.

The port has been receiving wind energy equipment from Europe for more than a year from two turbine manufacturers in Europe. Officials hope to negotiate an agreement to unload parts going to the project, said Michael Perez, the port's director of development.

Cummins said turbine parts most likely will be provided by Eviva Spinnaker's parent company.

Eviva Spinnaker is a company formed in 2007 by Portuguese Martifer SGPS' Eviva Electricity LLC and Spinnaker Wind LLC. Martifer owns Repower, a company involved in wind turbine manufacturing. According to the National Wind Watcher, a wind watchdog organization, Martifer expected to enter production of 280 megawatts of the 800 megawatts by 2009.

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