GERONIMO
WIND ENERGY

Founded in 2004 with roots in agriculture and investing, Geronimo Wind Energy is a utility-scale wind energy developer based in Edina, MN, with offices across the Midwest.

Geronimo's goal is to bring the benefits of renewable energy to rural communities throughout the Midwest by developing wind farms that are farmer friendly, community driven and good for the environment.

The company has a development portfolio of more than 4,000 megawatts, (MW), or enough wind energy to power more than 1.5 million American homes.

Development projects are underway in Nebraska, South and North Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Michigan.

(Source: geronimowind.com)

Land will be leased along southern edge for lines, towers.

A $150 to $200 million wind energy farm is planned along the southern edge of Dawson County.

Geronimo Wind Energy of Edina, MN, plans to bury transmission lines and erect wind turbines on farm and pasture land along the southern edge of Dawson County between Gothenburg and Cozad.

Representatives of the company have met with landowners, including several from Gothenburg, in the area since June about leasing ground for the project.

Approximately 40 landowners have signed up to be part of the project which involves 12,000 acres, according to Geronimo director of development Charlie Daum.

Daum spoke at a Nov. 10 appreciation dinner at Walker's Steakhouse and Lounge for landowners who have signed on to the project.

Because wind, transmission and environmental studies need to be completed and state permits granted, Daum told the group that construction probably won't begin for three to five years.

Lease payments will be made on a per acre basis. Compensation will be higher for landowners who agree to the erection of wind turbines on their property.

Daum said Dawson County was chosen for the project because of strong wind resources, the number of landowners willing to be part of the project and transmission infrastructure already in place.

Nebraska is ranked sixth in the nation for having the greatest energy potential from wind power.

Geronimo is one of several wind energy developers that have built or plan to construct wind farms in the state.

With leases in hand, Daum said the next step is measuring wind, where project will be built, to determine when, where and how hard it blows.

“By predicting output, we know how much we can sell,” he explained.

Officials will also get a sense of how many wind towers will be needed for the most efficiency.

Once operational, Daum guessed that between 100 and 200 megawatts of power will be produced.

Customers could include large power providers in the state like Nebraska Public Power District or Omaha Public Power District or outstate buyers.

Daum said power will be sold once construction is completed.

“We’re selling something with value and it’s a boom for customers, ratepayers and utilities,” he said.

People will be employed to build the project who will eat, shop and lodge in towns like Gothenburg that are close to the construction area.

After completion, employees will be on site to maintain the project.

Daum noted that the cost of constructing a wind farm has dropped because the energy source is becoming more competitive with traditional sources like coal-generated power.

“Of nuclear, coal and natural gas-generated sources, wind is the lowest cost of new generation,” Daum said.

Because wind energy is an imperfect science, he added that energy produced from coal, nuclear and natural gas is still needed.

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