

Blow baby blow

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Tower gathering data for Dawson County Wind Farm

The Dawson Wind Farm remains a high priority for its developer—Geronimo Wind Energy, officials said.

Since mid-January, a meteorological tower—seven miles northeast of Farnam—has collected wind data that is transmitted cellularly to company headquarters in Edina, MN.

Project manager Jordan Burmeister said wind velocity, direction and other data will be analyzed for a year.

“We do know it’s a great wind site and we’ll pin down more precise data,” Burmeister said.

The wind farm will span about 20,000 acres, between Highways 21 and 47. Approximately 50 towers will be constructed.

Once operational, possibly in 2015-16, Burmeister said the farm is expected to generate 100 megawatts of electricity, or enough to provide power to 600 homes.

Most of the owners with land where the towers will be located have signed leases and are receiving payment from Geronimo. Officials are still negotiating rental agreements with a few property owners.

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One of the biggest challenges, Burmeister said, is finding companies to buy the power.

“Getting the power sold makes the project,” he said.

These days, Geronimo is concentrating on completion of a 200-megawatt Prairie Rose Wind Farm in Rock County, MN.

The farm has 119 turbines and is expected to be operational by the end of 2012.

“Much of my efforts have been spent there over the past year but my time has lessened so I will be devoting more time to the Dawson Wind Farm again,” Burmeister said.

Besides the Dawson and Prairie Rose Wind farms, Geronimo has other wind projects scattered throughout Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, the Dakotas, Wisconsin with plans to expand to the west.

Despite a possibility that a federal wind production tax credit may disappear at the end of the year, Burmeister said he feels positive about the future of wind.

ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com

308-537-3636