



## **First Wind Begins Construction of Oahu-based Kahuku Wind Project**

*Gov. Lingle, state and community leaders attend ceremony to break ground for a 30 MW project that will produce enough renewable energy to power up to 7,700 Oahu homes*

**Honolulu, HI—July 13, 2010—**[First Wind](#), an independent U.S.-based wind energy company, held a groundbreaking ceremony today to commemorate the start of construction of its 30 MW Kahuku Wind project, the only utility-scale wind energy project on Oahu and one of the largest in Hawaii. As part of the ceremony, state, local and community leaders joined First Wind at the project site on Oahu’s North Shore to recognize the economic and environmental benefits of the project, which upon completion will have the capacity to generate enough clean, renewable energy to power up to 7,700 Oahu homes each year.

Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle led the celebration, as she, officials from First Wind, community leaders and others conducted a traditional groundbreaking ceremony using o’o (Hawaiian digging sticks).

“The Kahuku Wind project brings Hawaii another step closer to reducing our state’s dependence on imported foreign oil and increasing our energy security,” said Governor Lingle. “These wind turbines will provide another source of clean energy for Oahu’s power grid, further building on the progress Hawaii has made in becoming a world leader in clean energy.”

Construction of the [Kahuku Wind](#) project, which was spurred along by an expected \$117 million loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), will create immediate economic benefits for Oahu such as employment opportunities during design, engineering and construction including approximately 200 construction jobs. The loan guarantee is expected to close soon.

Once completed, the project will support the ambitious Hawaiian Clean Energy Initiative, which aims to have 70 percent of the state’s energy for electricity and ground transportation come from clean energy by 2030.

“The start of construction of Kahuku Wind is a major milestone for First Wind and this significant renewable energy project would not have been possible without the hard work and support from the DOE, the Governor, state and local leaders and members of the community, many of which I’m pleased could join us at today’s groundbreaking ceremony,” said Paul Gaynor, CEO of First Wind.

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“In particular, it is important to acknowledge the vital role that DOE and its Loan Program Office played in advancing this project as the loan guarantee enabled us to secure the necessary financing to build this innovative wind energy project, which will create jobs, generate clean power for the people of Oahu, and help Hawaii gain greater energy independence,” Gaynor added.

Located west of Kahuku town in the hills near Charlie Road, the Kahuku Wind project is incorporating innovative technologies. The project will consist of twelve 2.5 MW Clipper Liberty wind turbines. Manufactured in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the Liberty turbines are the largest wind turbines manufactured in North America.

Kahuku Wind will also include a battery energy storage system to assist in meeting performance standards and smoothing fluctuations in wind energy output. The battery storage system was developed by Xtreme Power, Inc. and will be the largest of its kind in Hawaii. The project will also include a dedicated communication system to connect the wind energy project to Hawaiian Electric Company’s system operations and dispatch center.

“Our continued collaboration with First Wind underscores the importance of power management systems in mitigating the variability of wind energy,” said Carlos Coe, CEO of Xtreme Power. “We are excited to work with First Wind on the Kahuku project and look forward seamlessly delivering clean energy to the Hawaiian grid.”

In early May, Hawaii Public Utilities Commission approved the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) between Kahuku Wind Power and Hawaiian Electric Company for the utility to purchase renewable energy to be produced by the project. As part of the PPA, First Wind will sell as-available renewable energy from the project to Hawaiian Electric at pre-determined prices over 20 years, providing a valuable hedge against fluctuating oil prices.

The Kahuku Wind project has the capacity to help reduce oil consumption by about 139,500 barrels a year and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 96 million pounds per year, according to statistics from the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy.

“This wind farm is a significant addition to our portfolio of renewable energy resources on Oahu. It’s an example of what can happen when our community works together to increase our energy security and reduce our state’s dependence on imported oil,” said Dick Rosenblum, Hawaiian Electric Company president and CEO.

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First Wind successfully built and currently operates Hawaii’s largest wind energy facility, the 30 MW [Kaheawa Wind Power](#) project in Maui. Kaheawa Wind serves nearly 9 percent of Maui’s annual electricity needs with clean, renewable energy – enough to supply nearly 11,000 households annually. As part of the Kaheawa project, First Wind also implemented what it believes is the nation’s first [Habitat Conservation Plan](#) for a working wind energy project. The Kahuku Wind project will also feature a Habitat Conservation Plan so that endangered species can be protected near the project.

“First Wind has been very open with the Kahuku community from the beginning. They met with the neighborhood board throughout the development process and will be a great partner in the years ahead,” said John Primacio, Jr., longtime member of the Ko’olauloa Neighborhood Board and Kahuku Community Association.

### **About First Wind**

First Wind is an independent wind energy company exclusively focused on the development, financing, construction, ownership and operation of utility-scale wind projects in the United States. Based in Boston, First Wind has wind projects in the Northeast, the West and in Hawaii, with the capacity to generate up to 504 megawatts of power. For more information on First Wind, please visit [www.firstwind.com](http://www.firstwind.com) or follow us on Twitter [@FirstWind](https://twitter.com/FirstWind).

First Wind has a partnership in Hawaii with Makani Nui Associates, a Hawaii -based company. The partnership developed, constructed, financed, owns and operates Kaheawa Wind Power. Makani Nui is also a partner in the Kahuku Wind project.

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