

OCTOBER 29, 2009, 4:15 PM

Chinese and American Partners to Build Massive West-Texas Wind Farm

By *JOHN COLLINS RUDOLF*

U.S. Renewable Energy Group “This wind farm project came about thanks to the openness of the United States for investments in the field of renewable energy,” said John Lin, the chief operating officer of China’s Shenyang Power Group.

A consortium of Chinese and American companies announced a joint venture today to construct a massive 600-megawatt wind farm in West Texas, utilizing wind turbines manufactured in China.

Construction of the [\\$1.5 billion wind farm](#) would be funded largely by Chinese financiers, with an assist from the United States government in the form of loan guarantees and grants from the federal stimulus package.

“This wind farm project came about thanks to the openness of the United States for investments in the field of renewable energy,” said John Lin, the chief operating officer of Shenyang Power Group, an industrial group in China focused on renewable energy projects.

The project would mark the first instance of a Chinese manufacturer exporting wind turbines to the United States market, according to Shenyang vice mayor Yang Yazhou, who spoke during a press conference announcing the joint venture.

The farm is to be built 36,000 acres in western Texas — an exact location was not specified — and will use 240 2.5 megawatt turbines manufactured in China. Construction is slated to begin in March 2010. The project is expected to create 300 temporary construction jobs, and roughly 30 permanent jobs.

Partners in the project are the [U.S. Renewable Energy Group](#), an investment firm focused on renewable energy; [A-Power Energy Generation Systems](#), a Chinese wind turbine manufacturer; and Austin-based wind developer [Cielo Wind Power](#).

The use of Chinese turbines in a major American wind project could add fuel to concerns over China’s protectionist policies on renewable energy manufacturing. China is already a dominant player in solar panel manufacturing, and exports 95 percent of its solar components to the United States and Europe.

According to a [recent article](#) by New York Times reporter Keith Bradsher, when China began construction of its first solar power plant earlier this year, 80 percent of the materials for the plant were required to be made in China.

Foreign manufacturers of wind turbines have similarly struggled to gain entry into the Chinese market, Mr. Bradsher found.

Energy Secretary Steven Chu **recently warned** that the United States could lose its competitive edge on renewable energy manufacturing to China, which has instituted ambitious renewable energy mandates in order to reduce carbon emissions and limit pollution.

American pressure on China over the issue of protectionism appears to have borne some fruit. Today, at a meeting in Hangzhou, China with Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Mr. Chu **announced** that China had agreed to remove local content requirements on wind turbines, which have drawn complaints from European and American manufacturers.

The turbines for the Texas wind farm, although slated for construction in China, will use technology from the United States and Europe, including a turbine designed by German wind power manufacturer **Fuhrlander AG** and gear box design by **General Electric**.