



## **Green Thumbs Up For Silverton's \$2.2 billion Wind farm**

3 June 2009

The NSW Government has approved the first stage of the biggest wind farm in Australia creating more than 800 construction and operational jobs in Silverton near Broken Hill.

Premier Nathan Rees said the first stage of the \$2.2 billion wind farm project will deliver 282 wind turbines which will generate enough green energy to power around 200,000 households.

"The construction of Silverton Wind Farm Developments' (SWFD) wind farm is great news for jobs and the economy in the Far West and even better news for the environment," Mr Rees said.

"A single wind turbine will generate enough energy to power up to 732 homes per year which is the equivalent of taking around 1,170 cars off the road annually.

"This development will be one of the world's largest wind farms and has the potential to provide electricity to three states across the country.

"It will occupy about 32,000 hectares of Crown Land and will form a central part of the state's electricity infrastructure."

Mr Rees said the project will deliver 700 jobs to the Broken Hill area during the five-year construction period and 120 jobs during operation of the project.

"This wind farm will provide substantial direct and indirect benefits to the Broken Hill and Silverton communities with an injection of \$700 million into the regional economy and up to \$90 million into the local economy," Mr Rees said.

"The local community will also benefit from SWFD's commitment to establish a Community Fund for Silverton, providing for local infrastructure spending of at least \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year."

Construction of the wind farm will be in two stages.

Stage two of the proposal includes a further 316 turbines and a 305-kilometre power line linking the Silverton Wind Farm to Victoria's Red Cliffs substation and requires further environmental assessment and approval.

In approving the first stage the NSW Government has imposed a range of other conditions regarding noise, visual amenity and environmental impacts on the development.

These include ensuring the local community is consulted during the construction process and that Epuron adheres to the accepted noise guidelines.

Other conditions imposed on Epuron include the requirement to:

- Cover the cost of providing reasonable landscaping treatments to screen dwellings or businesses located within a six kilometre radius of the turbines at the owner's request;
- Prepare a Construction Environmental Management Plan, focusing on traffic, ecology, landscaping, heritage and water management; and
- Limit the area of vegetation that is to be cleared for construction and carry out revegetation using native plants and seed, sourced locally;
- Prepare an Operational Environmental Management Plan, focusing on noise and ecology management.

Mr Rees said the Government has negotiated to retain part of the revenues for projects beneficial to all Western Division landholders and not just the four pastoralist lease holders.

Since 2005 the NSW Government has approved 14 wind farms or 908 wind turbines with a total capacity output of 2486 Megawatts.

"When all of these wind farms are up and running they will save more than six million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually," Mr Rees said.

"This is the same as taking over one million cars off the road and will have capacity to power approximately 800,000 houses."

Silverton Wind Farm Developments Chairman, Rob Sauer, said the development has been a successful collaborative exercise between the Crown, the pastoralists and the developer.

"We would like to thank the NSW Government for putting in place a sound mechanism to provide land tenure suitable to a project of this scale and importance.

"We would also like to acknowledge the work of the pastoralists whose continued assistance has been invaluable in the development of the wind farm," Mr Sauer said.

#### **IMPORTANT STATEMENT ABOUT POLITICAL DONATIONS**

New donation disclosure laws came into effect on 1 October 2008. Under the new laws, proponents are required to disclose political donations made by anyone with a financial interest in the project made in the previous two years. Where there is a declarable political donation, the independent Planning Assessment Commission determines the application. More information on the process for assessing applications from proponents who have made political donations is available from <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assessingdev/donations.asp>

Silverton Wind Farm Developments Pty Ltd is a joint venture between EPURON Pty Ltd and Macquarie Capital Wind Fund Pty Ltd, a Macquarie managed fund jointly owned by Macquarie Capital Group Ltd and a subsidiary of Martifer Group.

Records on the Electoral Funding Authority website show that Macquarie Bank Limited has made political donations to the NSW Labor, Liberal and National parties.

[http://www.efa.nsw.gov.au/state\\_government\\_elections/election\\_funding\\_reports/state\\_general\\_election\\_2007](http://www.efa.nsw.gov.au/state_government_elections/election_funding_reports/state_general_election_2007)

The application for the Silverton Wind Farm was received on 23 January 2008, and amended on the 30 July 2008. As such, the Minister for Planning is the consent authority.