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Canadian giant in the wings



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Greengate Power plans to start construction of Canada's largest wind farm as soon as it wraps up financing. The Calgary-based developer expects to break ground in the spring on the 300MW Blackspring Ridge 1 project in Alberta, Greengate president and CEO Dan Balaban *told reNews*.

"We're in the process of finalizing the engineering and the financing of the project," said Balaban. "We expect to be under construction later this year and be fully operational in the first part of 2014."

Alberta regulators last week approved a switch in turbines to the Vestas V100 1.8MW machine from the V90 model. The Danish manufacturer is expected to begin delivery of 166 turbines in the third quarter, said Balaban. Mortenson was named general contractor.

Blackspring Ridge 1, located about 165 kilometers southeast of Calgary, will tie into an existing 240kV transmission line via a six- to eight-mile wire that runs almost entirely through the project site. The Alberta Utilities Commission is reviewing an interconnection application by transmission facility operator AltaLink.

“We expect approval of that permit imminently,” said Balaban.

Blackspring Ridge is Greengate’s second wind farm. Capital Power in 2011 bought the 150MW Halkirk project, which achieved commercial operation in December.

Greengate won 20-year deals with Pacific Gas & Electric of California for renewable energy credits from the Blackspring Ridge and Halkirk wind projects.

Image: Greengate switched to V100 1.8 turbines for Blackspring Ridge 1 (Vestas)