



Posted on: Thursday, March 31, 2005

## Maui wind-farm work to start

By [Timothy Hurley](#)  
Advertiser Maui County Bureau

Construction on Hawai'i's first large-scale wind farm in decades is scheduled to begin in a couple of months now that financing is in place for the 30-megawatt project near Ma'alaea, Maui.

Boston-based UPC Wind yesterday announced that it successfully concluded the financing for a \$65 million wind farm expected to be operational in the first quarter of 2006 on the slopes of the West Maui Mountains in a blustery spot known as Kaheawa Pastures.

The developer is Kaheawa Wind Power LLC, a partnership of UPC Wind, which owns 51 percent of the project, and local partner Makani Nui Associates, which owns the remaining 49 percent.

Construction and term financing was arranged by HSH Nordbank, New York Branch.

"We are excited about the benefits this project will bring our community and state," said Mike Gresham, president of Makani Nui. "In addition to the direct environmental and economic benefits, there are many indirect benefits to be gained, such as lessening our dependence on imported oil, not just in our state but for our country as well."

The company plans to place 20 180-foot towers with General Electric wind turbines on state conservation land at the 2,000- to 3,300-foot elevation between Ma'alaea and Olowalu.

Michele Chouteau McLean, land use planner with Makani Nui, said various construction permits still must be obtained, and the company is working to complete a habitat conservation plan required by the state Department of Land and Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Among other things, she said, the company will hire a qualified biologist to make surveys of the nene that live in the area.

The Public Utilities Commission approved the project March 18.

Hawai'i relies on imported petroleum for nearly 90 percent of its energy needs, and last year state lawmakers passed legislation that supports the development of renewable energy sources.

*Reach Timothy Hurley at [thurley@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:thurley@honoluluadvertiser.com) or (808) 244-4880.*

**[Back](#)**

© COPYRIGHT 2007 The Honolulu Advertiser, a division of [Gannett Co.](#) Inc.

All materials contained on this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of The Honolulu Advertiser. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.