

# Utilities panel OKs wind farm

BY JOHN MURAWSKI - STAFF WRITER

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State officials have approved the construction of a 300-megawatt wind farm in Eastern North Carolina, by far the single largest green energy project proposed in this state.

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The approval by the N.C. Utilities Commission is the first of many local, state and federal permits the Desert Wind Energy Project will need before it can proceed with building the proposed 150 turbines across 31 square miles of farmland in Pasquotank and Perquimans counties.

If Desert Wind is built on schedule next year, it would be the first commercial-scale wind energy project in the Southeast and one of the biggest wind farms in the nation. It would generate enough power for 55,000 to 70,000 homes per year on average.

The \$600 million project, planned to begin generating power at the end of 2012, is proposed by the American subsidiary of Iberdrola, a Spanish energy company that's the world's biggest developer of wind energy projects.