

Looks Like South Padre Island Will Get an Offshore Windfarm

It looks like South Padre Island will be home to a wind farm featuring 500-foot tall turbines off the coast.

July 21, 2009

They'll be 10 miles off the coast, but that doesn't mean everyone's happy about it.

Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson has signed a deal with British firm Baronyx to build the windfarm offshore on land owned by the Texas Permanent School Fund. Baronyx paid a nominal fee for use of the submerged land, but will pay a royalty to the PSF -- which benefits Texas public schools -- on all electricity it produces.

The Valley paper The Monitor reports that there have been complaints about the giant turbines spoiling the view and the environment around South Padre.

"There's a lot more than meets the eye with these projects," Walt Kittelberger, founder of the Laguna Madre Foundation, told the paper.

On the other hand, a Baronyx official makes the hard-to-dispute point that Texas has always had "a working coast," as anyone Galveston visitor can attest.

Up in Massachusetts, Senator Ted Kennedy has famously tried to block a windfarm planned for off the shore of Hyannis.

No word yet on whether some local politico will pick up the NIMBY flag in SPI.