

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

The Island University

6300 Ocean Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78412 361.825.2420 FAX 361.825.2620

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CONTACT: Dr. Larry McKinney 361.825.2020; Steve Paschal 361.825.2336

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Environmental Panel on Coastal Bend Issues to Examine Impact of Wind Farms

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – A panel of recognized experts on wind energy and its implications will discuss the impact of wind farms on the South Texas region at on Monday, Nov. 9, at 6 p.m. in the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Room 127, at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

The meeting is a first in a series of Environmental Panels on Coastal Bend Issues planned by scientists from the University's College of Science and Technology and the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. The panels are designed to provide Coastal Bend citizens with the best available scientific and engineering information around which environmental issues revolve.

"It is important to reduce misinformation about these subjects and to provide our citizens with the facts to raise the level of policy debates and create a common ground of scientific and technical knowledge," said Dr. Larry McKinney, executive director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. "If through our panels we can do this, we will have succeeded in our goal."

The members of the Environmental Panel on Wind Farms are:

- John Metz, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service (NWS) in Corpus Christi, has worked for the NWS for 16 years. He regularly travels across South Texas as a public speaker educating citizens on the hazards associated with severe storms and hurricanes. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in Atmospheric Science in 1992.

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- Kathy Boydston has worked for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for 23 years, 17 years with the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program that reviews development projects across the state. She is the Department lead for wind energy development issues in Texas and has initiated research projects on the effects of wind energy development on fish and wildlife resources. She received her Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Management from Oklahoma State University.
- Mannti Cummins is wind energy director for American Shoreline in Corpus Christi and leads the development of over 3,000 MW of wind power projects in Texas and Northern Mexico. His signature projects include the Peñascal Wind Farm in Kenedy County, the first wind energy facility on the Texas Gulf Coast. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and graduated with honors with a Master of International Management from the Thunderbird School of Global Management.
- Dr. Robert Benson is director of the Center for Bioacoustics at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and professor of physics and astronomy in the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences. His primary research involves the effects of anthropogenic noise on animals and the simulation of animal vocal systems, especially birdsong. His recent research involves the relationship between wind energy development and avian populations in Texas.
- Glenn Webb with the Texas Wildlife Association is an expert on landowner issues concerning alternative power, especially wind power. As an attorney, his law practice is primarily devoted to real estate, probate, trust, tax, and energy law. His main interest is protecting the property rights of Texas landowners negotiating renewable energy (solar and wind) leases. Webb has spoken extensively about property rights and renewable energy leases throughout Texas.