

## Western Morning News

### **£195,000 STAKE IN POWER OF THE WAVES**

**Date : 28.01.05**

A vital step has been made towards harnessing the energy of wave power off the Westcountry coast - giving hope that the region's landscape can be saved from the threat of wind turbines.

Regen SW, the renewable energy agency for the South West of England, has received an award of £195,000 for a project to collect data on wave energy off the North Cornish coast.

The pioneering scheme is designed to speed up the installation of the world's first wave farms, which could be operating in Westcountry waters within three years. Today, weather permitting, a data-collecting wave measurement buoy will be placed 12 miles off the coast of St Ives, in Penwith, for 15 months.

Matthew Spencer, chief executive of Regen SW, said: "This project will bring the UK's first wave farm a little closer. We're very aware of the great wave resource we've got off the South West coast, but with the help of this award we'll be able to provide wave energy companies with accurate measurements from the sea. They've told us they need this data to encourage investment in their wave machines, so this project will help speed up their progress in getting devices out to sea."

Last night the news was welcomed by campaigners keen to see the Westcountry landscape kept free from turbines. North Devon Lib-Dem MP Nick Harvey, whose constituency includes Braunton, where a huge 22-turbine windfarm is planned, said: "I think it would be an act of mindless vandalism to desecrate the Westcountry landscape when we are just three years away from something far more reliable and sustainable. Wave power is the renewable energy contribution the Westcountry should be making."

The coastline off Lynton and Lynmouth, also part of Mr Harvey's constituency, is already the site of a pioneering £3 million underwater turbine. He said: "I believe this sort of thing is a viable alternative to wind power, and it is great that Regen SW have got this money to press ahead. Many of us have high hopes for wave power."

Members of a pressure group trying to prevent the construction of three turbines in the North Cornwall countryside said news of the wave project was "marvellous".

John Moxey, of Morwenstow Against Turbines, said: "It is great news, marvellous - and a coincidence because now is our deadline to send objection letters about the turbines, and one thing we have done in them is pointed out the viability of wave energy. We are not against renewable energy - we just don't think the beautiful countryside is the place for it."

Green energy company RWE npower donated the project's money from its npower Juice fund, in partnership with Greenpeace. The company's energy is generated from the UK's first major offshore wind farm, developed by npower renewables at North Hoyle, off the North Wales coast. For every npower Juice customer, npower makes an annual monetary contribution. The fund is then used to support energy technologies such as wave and solar.

The St Ives area is thought to have great potential for generating electricity from waves, and is being investigated by the South West Regional Development Agency as the possible site for Wave Hub, a connection point out at sea into which developers can plug generators.

Wave energy companies will be able to use the data from the buoy to develop their designs. This data will also help prove to investors that projects will be financially viable.