

News

## Grants, researchers put alternative energy plans into high gear

Wednesday, December 10, 2008 5:49 AM EST

By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor

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A biofuel production facility on New Haven Harbor got a big boost this week with a major award from the state, one of several issued in recent weeks to advance alternative energy sources and research.

"We are very excited about this. It is going to be a huge boost in our accessing private equity funds," said Gus Kellogg, president of Greenleaf Biofuels, which has gotten local zoning approval for a processing plant and storage facilities in the North Yard of the harbor, off Wheeler Street.

"I really believe we have the best proposal," Kellogg said, factoring in the site, his management team, which includes Yale professor Paul Anastas, and use of multiple feedstocks.

Greenleaf Biofuels is one of four companies awarded a total of \$2.2 million in state funds, expected to leverage at least \$6 million in private investment in biofuel production.

The state Tuesday announced the hiring of six top alternative energy researchers at the University of Connecticut under the Eminent Faculty Program, part of the 21st Century Jobs Act authored by state Sen. Donald Williams, D-Brooklyn.

"Quite frankly, our economy hangs in the balance," said Williams of the need for innovation and investment in cutting edge technology that down the road will create high paying jobs and boost the number of engineers trained in the state.

The primary market for biodiesel is the home heating market, as biodiesel can be used as a direct substitute for No. 2 heating oil. Currently, some 7.1 million households in the Northeast heat with oil, and 1 billion gallons a year of conventional diesel — heating oil and vehicle fuel — are used in Connecticut alone, Kellogg said.

Greenleaf will create biofuel by mixing methanol with vegetable oil; it can be mixed with diesel, typically in a 5 percent to 20 percent blend. Magellan Terminals in New Haven Harbor has the capacity to blend the product.

Kellogg, of Guilford, hopes to begin in spring, producing 1.7 million gallons per year of biofuel for heating and vehicle use, with a build out of 20 million gallons per year by 2013.

The \$1.3 million grant to Kellogg was the largest, with \$503,844 going to DBS Energy, a biodiesel-to-electricity facility in East Hartford, and \$83,566 to BioDiesel One Ltd., a production plant in Southington with estimated annual production capacity of 3 million gallons.

CT Biodiesel LLC, run by Wayne Moore of Tycon Energy, got \$350,000 for his proposed biodiesel production facility at New Haven Harbor, which he estimated could be up and running by mid-2010.

Moore hopes to locate on a site that could take advantage of the rail line on Waterfront Street. He hopes to have an output of up

to 52 million gallons a year and use the rail to bring in feedstock and to deliver his product.

The 21st Century Jobs Act created a public-private partnership, and UTC Power of South Windsor, Northeast Utilities Foundation and FuelCell Energy of Danbury, contributed \$2 million to the \$4 million state investment.

UConn President Michael Hogan said the six researchers are charged with bringing alternative energy technology, particularly fuel cells, to commercial startups.

“We were told we needed rock stars, and these are the rock stars,” said Sen. Joan Hartley, D-Waterbury, co-chairwoman of the legislature’s Higher Education Committee.

The new professors are: Prabhakar Singh, Hanchen Huang, George Rossetti Jr., Brian Willis, William Mustain and Tianfeng Lu.

The faculty investment was hailed by Gov. M. Jodi Rell as one way to help the state reach its goal of reducing fossil fuel consumption by 20 percent and replacing it with clean or renewable energy sources by 2020.

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