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Maine Wind Industry Initiative delegation tours DSTN-DSME Wind Tower Manufacturing plant in Nova Scotia

December 22, 2011 - Green Buildings

TRENTON, NOVA SCOTIA A delegation of Maine businesses and organizations recently toured the new DSTN-DSME Wind Tower Manufacturing plant. Organized and led by the Maine Wind Industry Initiative (MWII) to evaluate opportunities for Maine companies to be part of the supply chain network for DSTN, the delegation also explored future tower production capabilities in Maine.

DSTN-DSME Trenton, a partnership between Daewoo shipbuilding and the Province of Nova Scotia, manufactures wind towers and blades. Tower production began this year, and blade production is expected to begin in 2012.

The delegation that included representatives from MWII, Cianbro, Bath Iron Works, Newport Industrial Fabrication, and the Maine International Trade center were given a full tour the facility that was converted from train car manufacturing to tower manufacturing. The full process of receiving raw materials, steel rolling, assembly and finish was demonstrated. DSTN pointed out specific component and process opportunities that Maine companies may be able to fulfill.

Tower manufacturing may represent an opportunity for local large scale wind product manufacturing in Maine. Tower designs and technologies are not as technically complicated as wind turbine and blade work. In addition, Maine has a strong steel fabrication sector that includes many companies with the necessary skill sets. However, the initial capital investment in the equipment and buildings to roll, assemble and finish the huge tower sections (some as large at 14 feet in diameter) would need to be very large. Any local effort to establish such work would require a mature market to sell into. This market may form as continued onshore wind development is augmented by the development of offshore wind projects along the Atlantic coast.

The visit to DSTN-DSME follows a visit by a DSTN/Daewoo delegation to Maine in September to see supply chain resources and market opportunities in Maine. MWII coordinated meetings with the University of Maine, steel and composite manufacturing companies, groups representing wind energy development, and workforce skill development entities.

As a result of both delegation visits, parties agreed that the location and resources found in Maine and Nova Scotia have strong partnership possibilities that will be further developed in the coming months.

Shown (from left) are: Brad Murray, DSTN; Matt Proctor, Cianbro; Bill Follett, Cianbro; Dan Gerry, Newport Industrial Fab.; Lisa Read, Bath Iron Works; Jennifer Henderson, DSTN; Daniel Kim; DSTN, Paul Williamson, MWII.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540