

UW Selected as Partner in U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center Consortium

Sept. 10, 2010 -- The University of Wyoming has added another major partnership to its emerging profile as a leader in energy research.

Bolstered by existing partnerships with the National Center for Atmospheric Research and GE Energy and UW's Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute, the university was selected among 13 partners this week in a consortium led by West Virginia University (WVU) that will develop and test new technologies for carbon capture and sequestration.

The consortium will receive \$12.5 million over the next five years under the U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center (CERC) -- which was formally announced and established last November by President Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao -- plus an additional \$12.5 in matching funds from U.S. partners.

"This partnership not only strengthens us nationally -- and internationally -- but draws attention to our state's insightful investment in energy, the state's energy resources and the research that's being conducted here at UW," Mark Northam, director of the university's School of Energy Resources, says. "We need to involve researchers from many places to justify the state's investment in us, and this project will undoubtedly be a huge benefit to marketing our assets.

"Additionally, our research in the CERC may serve as a vehicle for opening new markets in China, and possibly elsewhere, for Wyoming's coal and advanced technologies," he says. "And we expect collaborative relationships with academia and industry that would not have developed without the notoriety that this project will bring to the university."

Bill Gern, the university's vice president for research and economic development, touts UW's involvement in the consortium as "a prime example of our growing ability to compete" as an energy leader and as further proof that the state's investment in energy research is paying dividends.

"This really speaks to the strength of our growing energy acumen at the University of Wyoming," Gern says. "It is a great cooperative between academia, federal laboratories and industry, and we are delighted to be part of it and to work with the University of West Virginia and others to advance clean coal technologies around the world."

The WVU-led consortium also includes the University of Kentucky, Indiana University, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, National Energy Technology Laboratory, World Resources Institute, U.S.-China Clean Energy Forum, General Electric, Duke Energy, LP Amina, Babcock & Wilcox and American Electric Power,

A second CERC consortium -- fronted by the University of Michigan -- will also receive \$25 million in total funding to work on advancing technologies for clean vehicles.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will announce a third consortium, which will focus on building energy efficiency, later this fall.

"The U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center will help accelerate the development and deployment of clean vehicle and clean coal technologies here at home," U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu says. "This new partnership will also create new export opportunities for American companies, ensure the United States remains at the forefront of technology innovation and help to reduce global carbon pollution."

The \$25 million in U.S. government funding will be used to support work conducted by U.S. institutions, according to the DOE. China will contribute \$50 million in funding for its partners, which will be announced in the coming months by the country's government.