

For Electric Source Bush Windmill Power Eyed

The Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska has received a grant for \$118,000 from the National Science Foundation for a study of the potential of generating electric power by windmills installed in suitable areas of Alaska.

The formal title of the project is "Study of Alaskan Wind Power and Its Possible Appli-

cations." Work will begin this summer in the Aleutians and Alaskan Peninsula, according to Dr. Tunis Wentink, Jr., the Principal Investigator for the project.

Dr. Wentink, Professor of Physics at the University, states this will involve mostly wind measurements and choice of the best locations for possible future

construction of large windmills.

However, a small windmill having an output capability of 6 kilowatts will be installed this year, as a test of feasibility, at a site yet to be selected. Power production presently is not an objective in this test.

Dr. Wentink also mentioned an interesting problem related

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Windmill..

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to his quest for financial support of a separate program to install a pair of windmills in each of two Alaskan villages (see Tundra Times, P. 10, December 26, 1973) to make a feasibility demonstration of wind power.

This proposed program would provide power for actual use by villagers. The situation leading to the problem is that he found interested sponsors for half of the installation costs, provided someone else furnished the windmills.

With this promised support, a private foundation agreed to furnish the windmills, provided the earlier sponsors did indeed support their share.

The problem now is that the original cost-sharers have withdrawn their promised backing. Thus, the \$50,000 donation for the four windmills and associated equipment probably will be lost to rural Alaska.

It is hoped that the feasibility sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the continued efforts of the University to obtain financial support for demonstration plants will eventually result in the installation of windmills in interested and suitable Alaskan rural communities, thereby generating low-cost (in the long run) power from locally available free fuel (the wind).