



# US partner talks bring wind desal plant closer

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ADELAIDE wind desalination company Windesal is in ongoing talks with a large US-based utilities group for a potential venture partnership.

Windesal plans to build Australia's largest wind-powered desalination plant at Salisbury, with construction due to begin this year.

Windesal executive director Barrie Harrop said it was too early to name the international group, but the talks were positive.

Mr Harrop will head to the US next week for their fourth meeting, on January 19, and to take part in G'Day USA 2010's special water forum.

"We are actively looking for a venture partner in the US, and have met with this group three times now, twice at Copenhagen," he said.

"It's too early for more details, but we are positive."

Windesal's \$20 million plant will use Danish technology to turn sea water and brackish ground water into high-quality potable water.

The company is working with the

City of Salisbury to tap in to the region's large aquifers, which have been enhanced by the council's stormwater recycling program.

Mr Harrop said he was excited to be part of the G'Day USA water forum in Los Angeles next Thursday, saying it was an opportunity to showcase South Australia's expertise in water.

"We want to create a whole new green industry in South Australia," he said. "We have the most splendid, under-utilised aquifer in the world. It has tremendous potential."

"The Salisbury showcase will be a world showcase."

More than 30 water-industry experts from Australia and the US, including influential water authority Tim Brick, chairman of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, will take part in the Water Sustainability and Management Forum organised by the Australian Government.

It has been designed to encourage dialogue, collaboration and business

opportunities between Australia and the US in water sustainability.

In particular, it will look at how Australia is responding to reduced rainfall and prolonged drought, and how other countries – including the US – are using Australia as a model on how to manage water shortages.

Windesal is close to completing internal assessments and engineering studies for its Salisbury plant, where pre-feasibility studies are due to begin this month.

"Subject to ongoing talks with the Salisbury Council, the plant will be under construction before the end of this year," Mr Harrop said.

The plant will be located near the Greenfields wetlands and powered by one or more wind turbines.

Mr Harrop will also meet California's Department of Food and Agriculture secretary A.G. Kawamura and representatives of the US military and the US Agency for International Development.