

Cape Scott Wind Farm Tour – May 22-24, 2014

IESVic researchers were lucky to receive an invitation to visit the Cape Scott wind farm from Gordon Muir (one of the operators). On May 22nd, 15 graduate students left in two large trucks to drive up to Port Hardy from Victoria to see the wind farm. Early on Saturday morning we met Gordon Muir and his colleague David Cousins and drove out to the wind farm 70 km through rough logging roads.

Once we got to the site the operators gave a presentation on the development of the farm showing all the steps in the construction and explaining the many challenges they faced. This generated a lot of discussion. Later, the operators showed the electrical systems, how they manage the wind farm and finally took us to see several of the wind turbines up close.

After we had lunch we took a hike through a lovely park on the west coast of BC. This hike took us through old growth rain forest and some wetlands areas and ended at a large sandy beach on the ocean. There the discussions continued and many of the wind energy researchers learned about their projects to optimize the power production of the wind farm. Naturally this sparked a lot of interest in future collaborations.

Overall, everyone had a great time, one of the international researchers said this was the best time he had in Canada since he arrived. David and Gordon were very friendly, explained a lot and did very well at showing us a good time.

The Cape Scott wind farm located on Knob Hill near Port Hardy is a 99 MW wind farm with 55 Vestas wind turbines. This project was the first wind farm built on Vancouver Island, it was a joint project between Sea Breeze Power Corp and GDF Suez.

Reported by Mike McWilliam (PhD candidate)