



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 491
Vancouver, Washington 98666-0491

TRANSMISSION BUSINESS LINE

November 30, 2004

In reply refer to: T-DITT-2

To: People Interested in the Hopkins Ridge Wind Interconnection Project

Bonneville Power Administration has been asked by RES America Developments (RES) to interconnect the proposed Hopkins Ridge Wind Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. As a Federal agency, BPA must consider the environmental impacts of its interconnection decision under the National Environmental Policy Act. This letter briefly describes the interconnection proposal, upcoming public hearing, environmental analysis, how to provide comments and the project schedule.

Interconnection Proposal

The proposed interconnection involves constructing a new 115-kilovolt switching station adjacent to an existing BPA transmission line near the Hopkins Ridge Wind Project (see enclosed map). The substation would be located on a five-acre parcel of land that is currently used for wheat farming. The project area is immediately east of the intersection of Hartsock Grade Road and Highland Road, approximately one mile from the Tucannon River.

BPA is not planning to purchase any of the power from this wind project. The interconnection would be the extent of BPA's involvement in this wind project.

Public Hearing

The Columbia County Community Development Department has performed an environmental review of the Hopkins Ridge Wind project and has issued a "Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance." RES has applied for a County Condition Use Permit (CUP) for this project. Columbia County Community Development Department will hold a public hearing to receive comments on the CUP. A BPA representative will be available to describe the interconnection proposal, answer questions and receive comments. The meeting is on:

Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2004

7 p.m.

Columbia County Fairground

Your Building 103

Dayton, Wash.

Environmental Analysis

BPA is conducting site visits and field studies at the proposed substation site. Field studies include a cultural resources survey, and biological studies for wetlands, fish and wildlife, and federally listed species. Because the site is an upland agricultural field, BPA does not anticipate significant adverse impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitat, native plant communities, federally listed species, wetlands or water quality. Based on site characteristics and location,

BPA anticipates no adverse impacts to protected areas and scenic values. There may be decreased recreational opportunities (hunting) in a small area due to the proposed substation. Farming activities could continue adjacent to the substation. Other studies are ongoing, including health and safety effects and cultural resources.

After assessing the potential environmental effects of the interconnection project, BPA will make a decision regarding interconnection. BPA will prepare a Tiered Record of Decision (Tiered ROD) to the existing Business Plan Environmental Impact Statement. The Tiered ROD will describe the existing environment and the effects on the environment from the construction activities and the ongoing operation and maintenance of the new switching substation. The Tiered ROD will briefly consider cumulative effects to the environment from the proposed interconnection activity.

How to Comment

Comments specifically on BPA's decision whether to interconnect the proposed Hopkins Ridge Wind Project by constructing a switching substation will be accepted through Dec. 17, 2004. There are a number of ways for you to comment. You can mail the enclosed comment form to BPA, Communications – DM-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428, fax them to 503-230-3285 or send an email to comment@bpa.gov. Please include the name of this project with your comments. There will also be an opportunity to provide comments at the Columbia County Conditional Use Permit Hearing.

Schedule

BPA will make a decision by winter 2005. Substation construction could start as early as spring 2005 with interconnection of the Hopkins Ridge Wind Project in the fall of 2005. RES would like to start construction in spring 2005 and begin commercial generation of power by the end of 2005. The wind project would likely operate for at least 20 years.

For More Information

If you need more information about the project, please call toll-free at 1-888-276-7790. You can also access project information on the Transmission Business Line Web site at <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/default.cfm?page=hopkins>. Thank you for your interest in the project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Johny Luiz, Nov. 30, 2004

Johny Luiz
Project Manager

Enclosure
Comment Form
Project Map