



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

April 17, 2009

In reply refer to: KEC-4

### **To: People Interested in the Whistling Ridge Energy Project**

Bonneville Power Administration has been asked by SDS Lumber Company to interconnect its proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project in Skamania County, Washington, to the Federal Columbia River Transmission System (FCRTS). To inform its decision on whether to allow the proposed interconnection, BPA will be preparing a joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the State of Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC). This letter describes the proposed project, each agency's role, and the environmental process, explains how to comment on the proposal, and invites you to a public meeting about the project and the scope of the EIS.

### **Proposal**

In June 2002, SDS Lumber Company submitted a generation interconnection request for 70-MW on the North Bonneville-Midway 230-kV transmission line approximately five miles West of BPA's Underwood Substation. Subsequently, SDS Lumber Company created a new limited liability company called Whistling Ridge Energy LLC (WRE), which submitted an application with WA EFSEC for site certification for the wind project. WRE would finance, develop, own and operate the proposed wind project. The proposed wind facility would consist of up to approximately 50, 1.2- to 2.5-MW wind turbines up to 426 feet tall, as well as infrastructure such as newly-constructed and improved roads, transformers, underground collector lines, a substation, and an operations and maintenance (O&M) facility.

Washington EFSEC must decide whether to grant necessary permits and approvals for siting WRE's proposed wind project, and BPA must decide whether to allow the interconnection of WRE's proposed project to the FCRTS.

### **Environmental process and schedule**

As indicated above, BPA and Washington EFSEC will be preparing a joint National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) EIS for consideration of WRE's proposed wind project. On April 6, 2009, Washington EFSEC issued a scoping notice for the SEPA EIS that described the proposal and the scoping process. BPA is publishing a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the EIS in the *Federal Register*, which initiates the NEPA public scoping process.

BPA and Washington EFSEC will use information collected during the scoping period and at the public scoping meeting to help identify potential environmental impacts to be addressed in the joint EIS. BPA and Washington EFSEC then will prepare a Draft EIS for the proposed project, which will be circulated for public review and comment. BPA and Washington EFSEC currently expect to issue the Draft EIS in spring or summer 2010, and will hold at least one public meeting to hear comments on the Draft EIS at that time. BPA and Washington EFSEC then will consider and respond to comments received on the Draft EIS in a Final EIS, which is currently expected to be published in

winter 2010-11. BPA's decision concerning the proposed interconnection will be documented in a Record of Decision that will follow the Final EIS.

### **Comment opportunities**

BPA is accepting comments through **May 18, 2009** on the scope of the EIS for the proposed project, including potential impacts to consider while drafting the EIS. Washington EFSEC also is accepting scoping comments; for information on how to submit comments to Washington EFSEC, please call (360) 956-2121 or visit <http://www.efsec.wa.gov/whistling%20ridge.shtml>. Please note that you need only submit one set of scoping comments to either BPA or Washington EFSEC to have them considered by both agencies.

You may submit comments to BPA online at: [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), return the enclosed comment form via mail to: Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Office - DKE-7, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR, 97293-4428, or by fax to (503) 230-3285. You also may call us with your comment toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please reference "Whistling Ridge Energy Project" with your comments. BPA will post all comments it receives in their entirety on its Web site at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment).

BPA and Washington EFSEC will hold a joint public scoping meeting to receive comments on the scope of the EIS for the proposed project. This scoping process may help identify other issues and alternatives suitable for consideration in the draft EIS. The meeting will be held on:

**Wednesday, May 6, 2009**  
**6:00 to 9:00 p.m.**  
Rock Creek Center  
Skamania County Fairgrounds  
710 SW Rock Creek Drive  
Stevenson, Washington 98649

### **For more information**

If you need more information or have any questions, please call BPA toll free at (800) 622-4519, or e-mail me at [ammontano@bpa.gov](mailto:ammontano@bpa.gov). Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely

*/s/ Andrew M. Montañó*  
Andrew M. Montañó  
Environmental Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Project Map  
Comment Form