

NEWS RELEASE



Contact:
Mark Rossolo
503-274-4054

For Release July 30, 2009

BLM seeks comments on first Harney County wind project

Project receives strong endorsement from Bend Bulletin

The Burns District BLM office is seeking public comments on a proposed transmission line to connect a wind power project on private land in Harney County to the area's transmission grid. The project is located entirely on private land on the northeast slopes of Steens Mountain and has already received a land use permit from Harney County. However, the transmission lines must cross public land to reach the grid, which requires approval from the BLM.

The BLM held four public meetings last week to hear public comments on the project. Now, written comments will be accepted until August 26.

"Harney County residents strongly support this project," said Chris Crowley, President of Columbia Energy Partners, the company developing the project. "We were very pleased when the Bend Bulletin spoke out forcefully in favor of the project, too. We hope everyone in eastern Oregon will let the BLM know they support the project, support private landowners who are trying to hang on to private property and help Harney County become part of the renewable energy economy," Crowley said.

Named the Echanis ("ee-**chan**-is") project, the renewable energy generated by the wind farm will produce enough electricity to power 30,000 homes and offset about 223,200 tons of CO2 each year. In addition to strong local support for the project, *The Bend Bulletin* recently gave the project a strong endorsement. The Bend Bulletin editorial said in part:

*"The Echanis project would exploit an exceptional wind resource in a remote corner of the state, in the process bringing jobs and revenue to a severely depressed county. **If this isn't a project worth supporting, then what is?**"*

- The Bend Bulletin editorial, July 25, 2009

Please submit written comments to:

North Steens Transmission Line Project Lead,
BLM Burns District Office,
28910 Highway 20 West,
Hines, Oregon 97738

Or, by e-mail: OR_Burns_NS_Transmission_Line_EIS@blm.gov.

Please include your name, return address, and the caption: "Public Scoping Comments, North Steens Transmission Line Project," on the first page of your written comments.

Columbia Energy Partners was founded in 2001 and is based in Vancouver, WA. CEP uses a partnership-based approach to wind project development and has a number of projects underway that will help diversify the energy portfolio in the Pacific Northwest. For more information, please visit www.columbiaenergypartners.com.