

West Butte Wind Energy Project

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VITALS

Location: Deschutes and Crook Counties, Oregon

Technology: 2.0 to 3.0 megawatt wind turbines

Electricity production capacity: 104 megawatts

Company: West Butte Wind Power LLC (WBWP)



THE BLM ACTION -- BLM's decision authorizes:

- ✓ An access road and transmission line that would cross approximately 4.5 miles of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Prineville District.
- ✓ The 115-kilovolt (kV) electrical transmission would be constructed using single wooden poles, 50 to 53 feet in height, spaced at 300 foot intervals

BY THE NUMBERS - the project is expected to:

- ✓ Consist of up to 52 turbines on private land
- ✓ Generate enough electricity to power approximately 36,400 homes
- ✓ Employ about 70 full-time workers during construction and development with another 345 workers providing supplies, material, support and offsite services.
- ✓ Generate an estimated one million dollars to Crook County in property taxes

A SMART, COLLABORATIVE PROCESS: In April of 2009 the BLM committed to helping the nation reach its clean energy future by guaranteeing coordinated, focused processing, full environmental analysis and public review for specific renewable energy projects where the companies involved had demonstrated they were ready to advance to the formal environmental review and public participation process.

A UNIQUE, INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP: In addition to the economic considerations, the West Butte project is a successful example of inter-agency cooperation. The BLM worked closely with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), nearby tribal governments, the

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to address a range of resource issues including wildlife, ground water, and cultural resources. Crook County's Planning Department was a valuable partner as well, convening a Technical Advisory Committee of biologists to assist in identifying opportunities for wildlife mitigation.

STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND MITIGATION: The BLM worked closely with federal, state and local partners, members of the environmental and conservation community and interested stakeholders to advance environmentally sound projects.

- ✓ BLM is working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on addressing compliance requirements with the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act to facilitate opportunities for wind energy projects.
- ✓ Through this process, the BLM initiates early coordination with other agencies to enhance the protection of bald eagle habitat that could be impacted by wind and solar projects on federal lands. This coordination is initiated prior to BLM's acceptance of a right-of-way application and before significant resources are committed to the processing of an application.
- ✓ WBWP will mitigate 9,000 acres of sage grouse habitat by providing funding for the restoration and enhancement of a similar amount and type of habitat on public lands administered by the BLM
- ✓ WBWP will also provide funds through Crook County to purchase conservation easements for sage grouse management
- ✓ WBWP also worked with USFWS to develop an Avian (golden eagle) and Bat Protection Plan and prepared a Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for Crook County

THE BIG PICTURE: The West Butte Wind Project is one of the projects that will help achieve the Administration and Interior initiative to make a rapid and responsible move to large-scale production of renewable energy.