



# North Steens 230-kV Transmission Line Project

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2010-0035-EIS

Bureau of Land Management  
Burns District Office  
28910 Hwy 20 West  
Hines, OR 97738



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

## **U.S. Bureau of Land Management**

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### ***Privacy***

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be retained on file in the Burns District Office as part of the public record for this planning effort. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public inspection, or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations of businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
OREGON  
BURNS DISTRICT OFFICE**

**EIS #:** DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2010-0035-EIS

**Project Name:** North Steens 230-kV Transmission Line Project  
Harney County, Oregon  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**Lead Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Burns District Office, Oregon

**Cooperating Agencies:** U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Malheur National Wildlife Refuge  
Burns Paiute Tribe  
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Bonneville Power Administration  
Harney County Court, Oregon  
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

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**Abstract:**

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) considers the Proposed Action of authorizing a right-of-way across lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the construction and operation of a transmission line and access roads associated with the Echanis Wind Energy Project. This Draft EIS considers three alternatives: Alternative A, the No Action Alternative; Alternative B, the Proposed Action of granting a ROW for construction and operation of an access road and transmission line across lands administered by the BLM and USFWS, and considering the Connected Action of Columbia Energy Partners constructing and operating a wind farm and associated facilities (e.g., access road, transmission line, substation, operations and maintenance [O&M] building) on privately held land; and Alternative C, wherein a northern transmission line route is considered as part of the Connected Action, rather than a transmission line through USFWS-managed lands. The following issues were identified for analysis in the Draft EIS: potential project impacts on vegetation and the spread of noxious weeds; potential project impacts on migratory birds and bats, sage grouse and their habitat, and raptors and their nests; potential project impacts on general wildlife habitat, big game habitat; potential noise impacts on wildlife; potential effects on recreation; potential visual/aesthetic impacts, including glare/light pollution from turbine lighting; potential project impacts on sensitive archaeological resources and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places; potential project impacts on areas valuable to Native Americans; potential economic effects of project to rural communities and landowners (jobs, tax revenues); and potential project impacts to wilderness values.

Comments on the Draft EIS must be received within 45 days of EPA's publication of the Notice of Availability.

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