

# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Burns District Office  
28910 Hwy 20 West  
Hines, Oregon 97738

In Reply Refer to:  
2800 (ORB060/ORB050) P

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the North Steens 230-kV Transmission Line Project. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as lead preparer, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) prepared the DEIS to analyze the effects of granting, granting with conditions or denying Echanis, LLCs, a subsidiary of Columbia Energy Partners LLC (the Applicant) Right-of-Way (ROW) application to construct, operate, and maintain a 230-kV transmission line, associated access roads, and other ancillary facilities across Federal lands managed by BLM and the USFWS. The Applicant's related proposal to develop a wind generation facility on private land in Harney County, Oregon, is dependent upon Federal approval of the ROW grant for the transmission line on public lands. Harney County has already approved a Conditional Use Permit for the private land wind generation facility.

The Project Area is located near Diamond, Oregon, roughly 55 miles southeast of Burns. The proposed transmission line would extend from a proposed Echanis Wind Energy Project substation on private land near Diamond (Township 31 South, Range 34 East, Section 35) for about 29 miles to a new interconnection station adjacent to Harney Electric Cooperative's existing 115-kV transmission line near Diamond Junction, Oregon (Township 29 South, Range 31 East, Section 34).

The DEIS includes analysis of the proposed transmission line route, two deviations of the proposed route, a northern route, a 115-kV construction alternative, and a "No Action" alternative. Because the wind farm development and portions of the transmission line on private land are connected actions under National Environmental Policy Act, the DEIS also analyzes the effects of these proposed facilities.

The DEIS is available online at [www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns/plans/index.php](http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/burns/plans/index.php) and is available for review at the following locations during regular business hours:

- Harney County Library, 80 West "D" Street, Burns, Oregon 97720
- Bend Public Library, Reference Department, 601 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon 97701
- Multnomah County Library, Government Documents, 801 SW 10th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97205
- Bureau of Land Management, Burns District Office, 28910 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738

Additional compact disks containing the DEIS are available at the BLM Burns District Office at the address listed above. Printed copies of the document are limited in number so we ask that you utilize the methods listed above to review the DEIS before requesting an additional printed copy.

The BLM is soliciting written comments on the DEIS. To ensure comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the DEIS within 45 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The publication of Notice of Availability and the beginning of the comment period is scheduled to begin on July 16, 2010 and will end on August 30, 2010. Public meetings in Burns and Bend, Oregon, will be scheduled during the comment period. The BLM will announce these meetings and any other public involvement activities at least 15 days in advance through the BLM Web site, public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

You may submit comments related to the North Steens Transmission Line Project by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: [OR\\_Burns\\_NS\\_Transmission\\_Line\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:OR_Burns_NS_Transmission_Line_EIS@blm.gov)
- Mail: North Steens Transmission Line Project Lead, BLM Burns District Office, 28910 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738
- Fax: (541) 573-4411, Attention North Steens Transmission Line Project Lead
- Written comments may also be hand-delivered to the BLM Burns District Office at the address shown above between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

Comments on the DEIS should be as specific as possible. It also would be helpful if comments refer to line numbers, pages, and/or chapters of the DEIS. Comments may address the adequacy of specific analyses in the DEIS and the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the document (refer to Council on Environmental Quality regulations at 40 Code Federal Regulations 1503.3).

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

For further information contact the North Steens Transmission Line Project Lead, telephone (541) 573-4400; address 28910 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738 during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except Federal holidays; or e-mail [OR\\_Burns\\_NS\\_Transmission\\_Line\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:OR_Burns_NS_Transmission_Line_EIS@blm.gov).

Thank you for your interest in public land management. We look forward to receiving your comments on the DEIS.

Sincerely,

*/signature on file/*

Kenny McDaniel  
District Manager

Enclosure