



BPA solicits new wind power projects

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Bonneville Power Administration

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PORTLAND, Ore. – The Bonneville Power Administration is looking for upwards of 1,000 megawatts of new renewable wind power, and it wants the power fast.

On Feb. 22, the agency began soliciting proposals for new large-scale wind power projects. "We want as much power as fast as we can get it to help alleviate the energy shortage," said George Darr, BPA's renewable resource program manager.

The request for proposals set a minimum of 15 average megawatts (about 40 to 60 megawatts of nameplate capacity) for a project. But, said Darr, "We strongly prefer larger projects with the potential for expansion."

Rep. Greg Walden (R-Ore.), co-chair of the House Renewable Energy Caucus and the sole Northwest member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, strongly supports increasing renewable energy generation. "With rising prices hitting families hard this winter, it is clear that we need to increase power generation in the Northwest," Walden said. "Clean, renewable energy sources, such as wind, are particularly attractive options because they provide additional energy with minimal environmental impact."

The RFP calls for "competitive" pricing for the new power. Darr expects that power from the new wind projects should come in well below the average price the state of California saw in its recent auction for power supplies.

Wind projects are particularly attractive because they can come online in a relatively short time (24 to 30 months), offer power that is competitively priced with other sources such as combustion turbines, are relatively easy to site and expand, have low environmental impacts (including no carbon emissions) and are highly desirable to buyers of "green" power.

BPA is one of the largest supporters of wind generation in the Northwest. The agency is buying or has under consideration nearly 300 megawatts of power from three existing wind projects in Wyoming and four projects under development in Oregon, Washington and Montana. The 1,000 megawatts BPA is soliciting would supply the needs of about 150,000 households.

For more information about the request for proposals, call George Darr at the Bonneville Power

Administration at (503) 230-4386.

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