

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

**UMAPINE**

## Wind farms springing back to life

*Ribbon cutting starts new projects off Highway 11*

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Eurus's phase two of the Combine Hills Turbine Ranch has 63 one-megawatt turbines. The towers are 230 feet tall.

*Staff photo by Samantha Bates*

•Stateline III: 99 megawatts

•Helix Wind Power: 102 megawatts

Monday Umatilla County Commissioner Larry Givens told the crowd gathered on the cold hilltop at Combine Hills' ribbon cutting that wind could be another export for Umatilla County.

### New farms

Three new wind projects will generate 265 megawatts at peak capacity.

- Combine Hills II: 63 megawatts
- Stateline III: 99 megawatts
- Helix Wind Power: 102 megawatts

The northeast corner of Umatilla County is again alive with the construction of wind turbines.

Drivers along Highway 11 can see the stems of towers and some with finished blades rising at the third addition to the Stateline Wind Project. Monday, Eurus Energy held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its second addition to the Combine Hills Turbine Ranch. A new wind farm, Helix Wind Power, has been certified by the state but hasn't started construction.

The three additions will double the wind power being generated by wind farms already in operation. The new ones will add 265 megawatts to the county's existing wind farms, which generate a peak capacity of about 221 megawatts.

The new wind farms will generate at peak capacity:

- Combine Hills II: 63 megawatts

"As I looked around coming up here I look at the development and what's going on and I think about years before, as a young boy and looking at these foothills and realizing the products grown here - basically wheat - were shipped out to other destinations outside Umatilla County," Givens said. "Umatilla County, and the state of Oregon, is an ag state and ag county. We export those products we produce in this county to all other points from out of the county, out of the state, to world markets. When you look at this wind farm, we're still in the process of exporting."

The megawatts produced at the latest Combine Hills addition are being sold to Clark Public Utilities, an electric and water services company in Vancouver, Wash.

Jiddu Tapia, vice president of development at Eurus Energy America, said the power will be transferred on Bonneville Power Administration lines, for a fee, and taken to Clark Public Utilities.

Construction on Combine Hills' phase two started in July and included Rod Anderson Construction, from Umatilla County, which built roads for crews to access the turbines. After the wind farm begins operation in December there will be six to eight full-time jobs for a crew to manage the turbines, Tapia said.

The new Combine Hills farm sits adjacent to the first phase. Monday, the towers in phase one turned with the breeze over the hills. The phase two turbines, some still being built, did not yet turn. Combine Hills is in the same location as two other wind farms: Stateline and Vansycle.