

Montana Power Announces Agreement with Montana Wind Harness LLC

Development of state's largest wind-farm includes construction of assembly plant and operations facilities providing up to 65 new jobs.

Butte, Montana (December 4, 2001) — Montana Power announced today that it has signed a contract with Montana Wind Harness to purchase 150 total megawatts of wind power for default supply customers. The agreement also calls for the construction of a wind turbine assembly plant and operations and maintenance facility that will initially create as many as 65 new jobs in Montana.

"We're very pleased to reach this agreement which will provide our default supply customers with a source of clean, renewable energy at prices that are competitive with other sources of supply. This project will provide some of the lowest cost power in the default supply portfolio at \$31.65/MWh with no escalation over 20 years," said Bill Pascoe, Montana Power's vice president of energy supply. "We're also excited about the economic development opportunities that exist with this project."

Montana Wind Harness is a limited liability company comprising a group of Montana business people headed by Missoula businessman Jim Carkulis and Ameresco, Inc. of Framingham, Massachusetts. Ameresco provides comprehensive energy solutions through energy conservation and development of renewable and sustainable power generation.

"Montana Wind Harness will build the state's largest wind-farm with 115 wind turbines on a minimum of three geographically separate sites," said Carkulis. "While we haven't finalized all of the three locations yet, a number of these sites have state lands potential providing an additional economic benefit to the state."

"Being a developer and owner of supply-side and demand-side energy solutions, Ameresco is committed to helping its customers develop reliable, cost effective and environmentally sound sources of power," said George Sakellaris, president of Ameresco, Inc. "We are very excited to be a part of this project that harnesses a renewable energy source for the State of Montana and its electricity customers."

Montana Wind Harness has engaged Nordex USA's services as the engineering procurement and construction (EPC) contractor for the project. Nordex USA is the American subsidiary of Nordex AG based in Germany and Denmark. It is one of the world's leading manufacturers of large-scale wind turbines. One of the conditions of the contract, and contingent upon Nordex AG Board approval, calls for the wind turbine manufacturer to build an assembly plant in the state that will initially create 35 to 50 new full time jobs and an operations and maintenance center that will create an additional 10 to 15 new jobs.

"Montana Power will soon supply its customers with the benefits of clean energy generated from renewable wind resources at competitive rates," said Robert Paul, vice president of Nordex USA. "The economic potential is an added benefit for all."

"Montana Power has taken a leadership position in the development of renewable energy in the state through its commitment to including wind as a part of the default supply portfolio," added Carkulis. "The company should be recognized for its commitment to renewable energy as a viable and important source of electricity."

Due to wind energy's 30-35 percent availability rate, the purchase of 150 total megawatts is equal to about 50 average megawatts. Montana Wind Harness will choose the final site locations from a short list of approximately a dozen possibilities in Western, Central and Northern Montana. The project is scheduled to begin construction in 2002 with completion of all turbines scheduled for 2003.

About Ameresco: Ameresco, Inc. is a single-source provider of comprehensive energy solutions headquartered in Framingham, Massachusetts. By promoting demand-side and supply-side solutions, Ameresco works with its customers to reduce operating expenses, upgrade and maintain their facilities, improve occupancy comfort levels, increase energy reliability and enhance the environment. By providing two core business services of energy conservation and power generation, Ameresco affords its customers the chance to capitalize on energy opportunities and to focus on their organization's primary mission. Ameresco is committed to developing renewable and sustainable energy generation solutions worldwide.

About Nordex: Since April 2, 2001 Nordex AG has been listed on Neuer Markt segment of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (SCN 587 357). As one of the leading technological suppliers of megawatt machines, Nordex profits from the trend towards large turbines. The product range extends up to the largest series wind turbine in the world at the moment (N80/2500 kW) with more than 50 percent of output exported; Nordex AG also holds a strong position in the international growth regions. The company is represented with offices and subsidiaries in 17 countries worldwide.

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