

Newest Wind Power Purchase to be OPPD's Largest to Date

October 17, 2013

The Omaha Public Power District Board of Directors voted at its regular monthly meeting this morning to approve a long-term power purchase agreement to buy up to 400 megawatts (MW) of wind generated electricity from Grande Prairie Wind Farm.

That vote allows OPPD to strategically plan for the future and further its mission to provide affordable, reliable and environmentally sensitive energy services to its customers.

The wind farm is to be located northeast of O'Neill, Nebraska. The agreement has a term of 20 years. It becomes the largest wind power purchase to date for OPPD.

During discussions the board heard that prices for wind energy are the lowest the District has seen and represent a good deal for OPPD customers. Also, that acting now would allow the developer to take advantage of federal production tax credits. The agreement is contingent on the extension of those federal tax credits and on the project winning approval from the Nebraska Power Review Board.

The proposal will increase OPPD's renewable energy generation capacity to 817 MW of capacity, nearly doubling current amounts, and increasing to 30 percent the amount of retail generation that comes from renewable energy sources. The percentage surpasses all of the District's previous announced corporate goals. It will also help position OPPD as one of the top utilities in the region for percentage of retail sales.

The additional wind energy will supply enough electricity to serve more than 118,000 OPPD residential customers. The new wind farm is expected to be operational in the second half of 2015.

In addition to the new purchase agreement approved by the board, OPPD already has existing contracts with several other wind farms, all located within the state of Nebraska. This includes wind farms near Ainsworth, Bloomfield, Broken Bow, Crofton, Humboldt, Elgin and Petersburg.

In other action, the board also:

- ... approved amendments to the District's Retirement Plan and Supplemental Retirement Savings Plans to incorporate provisions agreed to through collective bargaining.

- ... received the president's monthly State of the Utility Report