

Tri-State boosts its renewables with 67 megawatts of power

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association celebrated the completion of Colorado's newest renewable energy facility Thursday, Dec. 20 at the dedication of the Colorado Highlands Wind project in northeast Colorado.

Tri-State was joined at the event by the project's joint owners, Alliance Power, Inc. of Centennial and GE Energy Financial Services of Stamford, Conn., as well as several state, county and local elected officials.

Tri-State has a 20-year power purchase agreement to buy the electricity from the 67-megawatt wind farm, which is located on a 5,200-acre site in northeast Colorado's Logan County, within the service territory of Tri-State member co-op Highline Electric Association.

Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper voiced his support of the project and offered his congratulations. "Our state has long been a global leader in the area of wind, solar and other sources of renewable energy. This is because we have the fortune of attracting leaders such as Tri-State who work to increase the amount of renewable resources in our energy mix. We look forward to witnessing the positive impacts of the Colorado Highlands Wind project," Hickenlooper said.

"The Colorado Highlands Wind project presented a great opportunity for Tri-State and our member electric co-ops," said Tri-State senior vice president Brad Nebergall. "It increases the amount of renewable resources in our energy mix and further diversifies our overall generation portfolio—while also assisting our members to meet their obligations under state renewable portfolio standards."

"We're pleased that the project is located within Highline Electric's service territory," said Mark Farnsworth, manager of the local electric co-op. "We support Tri-State's continued efforts in securing reliable, affordable and responsible power on our behalf, and we also appreciate the economic development opportunities that the project provides in this part of the state."

Jim Michael, managing member for Colorado Highlands Wind, oversaw the six-month construction process. He said, "We are pleased that this project was successfully completed on

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time and will be providing cost-effective renewable energy to Tri-State and its members for the next 20 years. This project demonstrates the ability of utilities, private enterprise and government agencies to work together to meet growing energy demands with economical renewable technologies that will bring lasting benefits to society.”

Colorado Highlands Wind is the third utility-scale renewable energy facility from which Tri-State receives all of the electrical output and renewable energy credits. In 2010 the wholesale power supplier began purchasing the electricity generated at the 51-megawatt Kit Carson Windpower Project in eastern Colorado as well as the 30-megawatt Cimarron Solar Facility in northeastern New Mexico.

Based in the Denver suburb of Westminster, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association is a not-for-profit wholesale power supplier to 44 electric cooperatives and public power districts serving approximately 1.5 million consumers throughout a 200,000 square-mile service territory across Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico and Wyoming.

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