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NEWS RELEASE

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Berkshire Wind Power Cooperative dedicates largest Massachusetts wind farm *Project ‘a beacon of our clean energy future’ – Governor Deval Patrick*

HANCOCK, Mass. – May 5, 2011 – It’s “greener” today atop Brodie Mountain, one of the windiest places in Massachusetts, where the wind turbines of the Berkshire Wind Power Project are starting to add clean, renewable energy to the state’s electric power supply.

Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick joined members of the Berkshire Wind Power Cooperative Corporation (BWPC) and other public officials today in dedicating the 10-turbine, 15-megawatt project, the state’s largest wind farm to date. Governor Patrick said the BWPC, comprised of 14 Massachusetts municipal utilities and the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), exemplifies the innovation and initiative required to be successful in developing the Commonwealth’s renewable energy resources.

“This project marks a new era of renewable energy development in Massachusetts today,” Governor Patrick said. “Creating scores of jobs in its construction, helping to create relief from the price volatility and pollution of imported fossil fuels, and advancing Massachusetts’ nation-leading goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the use of renewable energy, Berkshire Wind is a beacon of our clean energy future,” he said.

Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., also noted the significance of bringing Berkshire Wind into operation.

“Congratulations to Berkshire Wind, which makes history today by officially becoming the Commonwealth’s first onshore wind farm,” Secretary Sullivan said. “Through this project – and numerous other smaller wind projects across the state – we are making steady progress toward Governor Patrick’s goal to install 2,000 megawatts of wind power in Massachusetts by 2020.”

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The municipal utilities and MMWEC created the BWPCC in 2008 to purchase the wind project assets from a private developer, who over the previous 10 years had completed preliminary engineering work and acquired many of the permits and easements needed for the project. In 2008, the only visible evidence of the project was an access road and minimal turbine site excavation. The BWPCC is the entity that purchased the wind generating equipment and completed construction of the \$64.7 million project over the past 2.5 years.

"Members of the cooperative are all non-profit, public power entities that have made a strong and clear commitment to renewable energy without any mandate to do so," said BWPCC President H. Bradford White. "We responded to the call of our customers for renewable energy and developed this project in a manner that makes both energy and economic sense for the people we serve," he said.

Through contracts with BWPCC and MMWEC, the municipal utilities will receive their respective shares of project output, based upon the energy requirements of each community.

"This project will help to diversify our power supplies and stabilize costs over the long term by reducing reliance of fossil fuels. It also embodies the broader environmental and economic benefits of renewable energy development, consistent with the clean energy goals of the Commonwealth," White said.

MMWEC Chief Executive Officer Ronald C. DeCurzio credited the BWPCC municipal utilities for sticking with the project despite a number of challenges. "There were several unexpected hurdles on the road to completion, and I applaud the determination and dedication of these utilities in bringing this project to life," DeCurzio said. Under a series of agreements with BWPCC, MMWEC acts as the cooperative's agent in performing tasks associated with project acquisition, development, financing, construction and operation.

The Berkshire Wind Power Project gives Massachusetts approximately 38 megawatts of wind power resources, which include 25 comparatively small projects ranging in size from 100 kilowatts to 3.3 megawatts. Approximately 58 percent of the state total, or 22.1 megawatts, comes from projects developed by Massachusetts municipal utilities.

"Completion of the Berkshire Wind Project is one of many steps along the path to a clean energy economy," said State Senator Benjamin B. Downing (D- Pittsfield). "Whether we are promoting and practicing energy efficiency and conservation or investing in solar and wind, each step creates jobs, makes Massachusetts more energy independent and protects our environment. I applaud these municipal utilities and the Patrick Administration for their commitment to this project, and their ongoing support of clean energy and energy efficiency and pledge, as Senate Chairman of the Energy Committee, that the Legislature's support of these efforts will remain steadfast."

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State Representative John Keenan, House Chairman of the Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy, said, "This is an exciting project for the Berkshires and for the future of the Commonwealth. The Berkshire Wind Power Project is a development that helps move the Commonwealth closer to its goals of reliable, affordable clean/renewable energy," Keenan said.

U.S. Congressman John W. Olver, who worked on behalf of the project at the national level, cited the promise and benefits of wind power technology. "Wind technology holds great promise as a local, renewable form of energy," Congressman Olver said. "The Berkshire Wind Power Project is moving Massachusetts in the right direction toward reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, increasing national security and encouraging economic development," he said.

Wind speeds atop Brodie Mountain, one of the best inland wind sites in Massachusetts, average about 8 meters/second, making it a Class 6 wind resource on an American Wind Energy Association scale of 1 to 7. The BWPCC project is expected to operate at a capacity factor of approximately 40 percent and produce more than 52,500 megawatt hours of electricity a year, enough to power approximately 6,000 homes.

The equivalent of approximately 50 full-time jobs were created during the construction period, including work for a number of Western Massachusetts construction, engineering and manufacturing firms. In addition, the project will offset the production of nearly 612,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide and the use of 1.7 million barrels of oil.

The municipal utility members of the BWPCC are based in the Massachusetts communities of Ashburnham, Boylston, Groton, Holden, Hull, Ipswich, Marblehead, Paxton, Peabody, Shrewsbury, Sterling, Templeton, Wakefield and West Boylston. MMWEC is a non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides a wide range of power supply, financial, risk management and other services to municipal utilities.