

DOE TO FUND LARGE-SCALE RENEWABLES TRANSMISSION IN MONTANA

Businesses in Western states should find it easier to purchase renewable energy in the future. The U.S. Department of Energy ([DOE](#)) is [financing](#) a large-scale transmission project between Great Falls, Montana, and Lethbridge, Alberta, with the goal of bringing new jobs and expanding renewable energy production to the western region of the country.

The [Western Area Power Administration](#) will use its borrowing authority under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help build the \$213 million Montana-Alberta Tie Limited (MATL) transmission project. Almost two-thirds of the 214-mile transmission line will be located on U.S. soil.

Construction is expected to start by fall 2009 following the signing of agreements between Western and Tonbridge Power. Project construction will be completed by a Montana contractor.

The project is also expected to create hundreds of additional jobs for workers to build wind farms near Cut Bank, Montana, and across the region. Once energized, as early as 2010, the 230-kilovolt transmission project will be capable of delivering 300 to 600 megawatts of renewable wind energy, which is enough to power 150,000 to 300,000 homes, according to the DOE.

The MATL project will be funded through a public-private partnership between the Western Area Power Administration and Tonbridge Power Inc. with up to \$161 million of the total project costs funded through Western's Recovery Act borrowing authority.