



News Release—May 1, 2019
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NM RETA Approves PNM Plan to Purchase Western Spirit Transmission Project

The New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority today approved a Public Service Company of New Mexico plan to purchase the Western Spirit Transmission Project now under development in central New Mexico.

The Western Spirit line is intended to be an important new link in the state's high-voltage transmission network. PNM's plan to acquire it when finished will enable up to 800 megawatts of New Mexico wind energy to flow into the existing grid.

"This is the first major step envisioned in NM RETA's forward-looking mandate and is now supported by our new Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham," said Robert Busch, NM RETA's Chairperson.

NM RETA has been working on the Western Spirit project with Pattern Energy Group 2 LP ("Pattern Development"), an independent renewable power company. The development of high-voltage transmission is a long process requiring multiple regulatory approvals and careful geographic routing. Without it, New Mexico's abundant clean energy resources are effectively landlocked. Throughout the development process during the last decade, NM RETA has looked out for the interests of New Mexico, its environment, and its landowners, balancing substantial economic benefits with concerns of local communities and Pueblo Councils.

Many of the necessary legal and regulatory approvals have been achieved, and Busch said NM RETA looks forward to working closely with the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission and Pattern Development to bring this first critical transmission project to completion.

Unrelated to the Western Spirit Project, NM RETA has received an appropriation to conduct a comprehensive New Mexico transmission study. It will begin work on that study within the next few months in support of the Energy Transition Act.

NM RETA is an agency created in 2007 by the state legislature and governed by a seven-member volunteer board of directors, holding regular public meetings and hearings. Its mission is to develop transmission and storage capacity for New Mexico's valuable renewable resources.
