



- Butler County ■
- Communities of Beaumont and Latham ■
- Empire District Electric Company ■
- PPM Energy ■ GE Energy ■
- Augusta Chamber of Commerce/  
Convention and Tourism Bureau ■
- USD 205 (Bluestem/Haverhill)  
School District ■
- Friends of the Beaumont Water Tower ■

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 4, 2006

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**Elk River wind farm dedication to celebrate “Power on the Prairie”**  
*While gasoline and other fuel prices continue to rise, Kansas’s wind is harnessed to  
generate clean electricity*

**WHAT:** Public officials, environmental advocates and energy industry representatives join the Butler County community for a public dedication of the new Elk River wind power farm near Beaumont and Latham, Kansas

The Elk River Wind Power Project is located in rural Butler County and produces electricity for Empire District Electric Company customers. More than 400 Butler County school children who have been learning about wind energy in school will participate in the dedication. The Bluestem High School Madrigals and 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Honor Choir from Bluestem Elementary Leon will sing and present the colors. The event will include the presentation of funding for prairie chicken research from PPM Energy, owner of the Elk River Wind Power Project.

**WHEN:** **Thursday, May 11, 2006**  
**9:30 a.m. school children attend a fun-filled, scientific activity with Bubble Man**  
**10:30 a.m. Bluestem High School and Bluestem Elementary Leon choruses**  
**perform, school children tours begin**  
**10:45 a.m. speeches begin**  
**11:30 a.m. lunch begins, tours begin**

**WHERE:** Near Beaumont, an hour-and-a-half-hour drive east of Wichita. See directions on Logistics section below.

**WHY:** The Elk River wind farm is expected to produce enough clean, wind electricity to power about 42,000 homes each year. Power generated by Elk River is delivered under long-term agreements to Empire District Electric Company. The project is owned by PPM Energy and is operated by GE Energy.

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This project is one example of the power on the prairie producing many benefits for Kansas, such as:

- PPM Energy recently completed the Elk River wind farm near Beaumont and Latham to serve increasing demand for clean, renewable generation resources and to help customers cope with fuel price volatility.
- Jobs and economic activity have been created in the region.
- Area ranchers also get a boost through land lease payments to locate these projects on working ranchland – 98 percent of which remain productive ranchland after the projects are completed.
- Wind power, with no fuel costs, has already saved Empire District Electric Company ratepayers millions of dollars.

**WHO:** Community leaders and energy experts will speak at the dedication ceremony:  
William H. Johnson – Butler County Administrator, Master of Ceremonies  
Mike Wheeler – Butler County Commissioner, District 4  
Raimund Grube – PPM WindPower, Vice President  
Brad Beecher – Empire District Electric Company, Vice President-Energy Supply  
Brett L. Sandercock – Kansas State University, Assistant Professor, Biology  
Pete Ferrell – Beaumont-area landowner  
Joe Harkins – Governor’s Natural Resources Policy Office, Director  
Jeff Schlichting – HMM Energy Resources, Inc., President  
Matt Hantzmon – Greenlight Energy, Managing Director

**VISUALS:** A total of 100 white wind towers set on cattle grazing land

- Tours inside the wind tower and control rooms.
- Wind power artwork produced by Butler County school children, including the winner of a wind power art contest sponsored by Butler County.
- Performances by school choruses.
- Community breakfast and picnic lunch catered by the Latham Bar and Grill, the Beaumont Hotel and JR BBQ of Latham, Beaumont and El Dorado

**LOGISTICS:**

The Elk River wind farm is approximately one and one-half hours from downtown Wichita.

Directions from Wichita: Take Highway 400 East through Augusta, Pickrell Corner and Leon to Keighley. Turn right on Stony Creek towards Latham for 7.9 miles. Turn left on 190<sup>th</sup> for 5.2 miles to the site. 190<sup>th</sup> is a gravel road. Please drive carefully.

This is a rural site at a time of year when the weather can be unpredictable, so we encourage all attendees to dress properly and to wear shoes or boots with good traction.

**Photographers and other media may collect advance video and photography from 1:00-3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10. High resolution still photos will be available on CD.**

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