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Renewable Energy Powers CU-Boulder

Student Run Buildings are now 100% powered by wind!

Boulder, CO. Students at C.U. Boulder are now purchasing 8.8 million kWh of wind, offsetting 100% of the electricity needs of the 3 student run University of Colorado buildings. In the spring of 2004, the student government voted to extend and expand the University wind power purchase, and this clean, renewable source of energy will lower campus emissions of carbon dioxide by roughly 12 million pounds every year!

“There continues to be amazing support for renewable energy on this campus and on campuses around the nation. We are proud that CU students are continuing to lead the way towards a more sustainable future.” Ghita Carroll, Energy Program Manager for the CU Environmental Center.

The school is purchasing green tags from Community Energy Inc. to fulfill the purchase. Half of the wind the students are buying is from a wind farm located in southeast Colorado owned by the Lamar Utilities Board and the Arkansas River Power Authority, both municipally owned utilities. The other 50% is from the upper Midwest. “Buying locally produced wind from a Colorado municipality supports new wind in Colorado and rural communities”, states Eric Blank, Executive Vice President of Community Energy, Inc.

According to Jim Henderson of the Arkansas River Power Authority, “purchases like this give a significant boost to our wind farm and can help encourage additional wind energy development in rural Colorado”.

Also this year the students and the CU Environmental Center installed a 7.5 kW solar system on the UMC northeast roof this fall. The solar array produces nearly 13,000 kilowatt-hours each year, which eliminates almost 17,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from being emitted into the atmosphere. This is the first solar system on campus.

A kiosk in the University Memorial Center displays real time energy output of the solar panels, and provides information about how solar power works, the benefits of renewable energy, and other renewable energy purchases on campus.

“I think it is exciting and important that CU takes the lead in solar energy. CO has a great solar resource, and we should take advantage of it. Solar panels on campus can serve as a

living laboratory helping students and the campus community to learn about solar power.” Ric O’Connell Environmental Center Board Member and Graduate Student.

In the spring of 2000, in the largest student voter turnout in University of Colorado history, students voted by a 5 to 1 margin to increase student fees by \$1 per semester for 4 years to purchase 2 million kWh of wind power. CU was the first school in the nation to raise student fee to purchase wind power, and has since been used as a model by many other Universities as a way to support renewable energy.

“Since CU first passed this initiative there are dozens of schools around the country that have followed their remarkable lead”, commented Susan Innis, Green Marketing Director for Western Resource Advocates.

CU is also a founding member of the U.S. EPA Green Power Partnership, a program that promotes the voluntary purchasing of renewable energy. The Partnership now includes more than 30 other higher education institutions. “CU should be applauded for their continued commitment,” stated Matt Clouse, Director, U.S. EPA Green Power Partnership. “Green power purchases by CU and other organizations are making a real environmental difference.”

For more information about Renewable Energy at CU and pictures, go to www.colorado.edu/ecenter or contact Ghita Carroll at Ghita.carroll@colorado.edu.

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For more information about the U.S. EPA Green Power Partnership, visit <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower>.