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Independent Board of Directors Elected for Northwest Regional Transmission Entity

ColumbiaGrid, a non-profit regional transmission entity, elected ColumbiaGrid's first board of directors Tuesday in Seattle. The newly named directors are Lloyd Meyers, Shelly Richardson, and Ed Sienkiewicz. The board's term begins on August 17, 2006.

ColumbiaGrid is the first regional transmission entity in the Northwest to elect an independent Board. While each of the directors has an extensive utility background, none is currently affiliated with any market interest. Lloyd Meyers is a retired utility executive who started and led a number of business ventures for Avista Corporation. Shelly Richardson is an energy lawyer who has represented a number of public power entities on transmission issues. Ed Sienkiewicz is a retired federal executive whose career included 29 years at the Bonneville Power Administration.

"This is a significant milestone in realizing the vision of a coordinated approach to planning and operating Northwest transmission to achieve greater reliability and more efficient operation," said Steve Wright, the administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration. "I am pleased that a group of such highly qualified and principled individuals will oversee the integration of the use and expansion of the Northwest transmission system. I am confident that they have the experience and skills to move us forward in our vision."

Said Richardson, “[a]s directors, we are pleased to be part of a new beginning for regional transmission efforts in the Pacific Northwest. We view ColumbiaGrid as a viable platform to achieve integrated, inclusive, and accessible transmission operations and planning in the region.”

ColumbiaGrid was formed to improve the operational efficiency, reliability, and planned expansion of the transmission grid. Its members include Avista Corporation, Bonneville Power Administration, Chelan County PUD, Grant County PUD, Puget Sound Energy, Seattle City Light, and Tacoma Power. ColumbiaGrid plans to provide services to participating entities later this year.