Westar Energy breaks ground on Western Plains Wind Farm.

Topeka, Kan., April 12, 2016 – Westar Energy welcomed local leaders and landowners Monday to break ground and celebrate as construction begins on the 280 megawatt Western Plains Wind Farm near Spearville.

“We are committed to modernizing the power supply that serves our customers, and wind energy has an important role. We believe that using a variety of generation sources – traditional fossil fuel plants, nuclear, and renewable wind and solar – all working together is the best way to keep energy prices low, make sure electricity is there when our customers need it and care for the environment,” John Bridson, senior vice president, generation and marketing, told the crowd of about 75 people.

Westar in collaboration with Infinity Wind Power will develop Western Plains Wind Farm in Ford County, Kan., which will bring Westar’s renewable energy total to more than 1,700 megawatts when it’s online early next year. Westar selected turbines from Siemens, key components of which will be assembled in the Siemens facility in Hutchinson, Kan. Mortenson Construction will build the wind farm. Representatives from Infinity, Siemens and Mortenson, also welcomed the crowd.

The Western Plains Wind Farm will stimulate economic development in Ford County through land lease royalties paid to local landowners and payments to local and county government, expected to be about $75 million during the first 20 years of operation. Additionally, this project creates more than 200 construction jobs, followed by about three dozen permanent jobs, and involving $435 million capital investment.

Download Photo
Photo caption: From left, Tom Kristensen, construction executive, Mortensen Construction, John Bridson, senior vice president, generation and marketing, Westar Energy, Eli Bosco, vice president, project development, Infinity Wind Power, and Dave Lucas, regional vice president, Midwest field sales, Siemens Power Systems.

- 30 -

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is Kansas’ largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided Kansans the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes. Every day our team of professionals takes on projects to generate and deliver electricity, protect the environment and provide excellent service to our nearly 700,000 customers. Westar has 7,200 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by coal, uranium, natural gas, wind, sun and landfill gas. We are also a leader in electric transmission in Kansas. Our innovative customer service programs include mobile-enabled customer care, expanding use of smart meters and paving the way for electric vehicle adoption. Our employees live, volunteer and work in the communities we serve.

Westar Energy breaks ground on Western Plains wind farm.

Media Contact:
Gina Penzig
Media Relations Manager
Phone: 785-575-8089
Gina.Penzig@westarenergy.com
Media line: 888-613-0003