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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BMCC to hold groundbreaking ceremony for Hermiston bond project

HERMISTON, Ore. – Blue Mountain Community College will break ground on the first of three major construction projects approved by voters in its May 2015 bond measure this Thursday, April 28. BMCC will host a groundbreaking ceremony at 2 p.m. Thursday for the Precision Irrigated Agriculture Center on the facility’s future site on property at the Oregon State University Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Hermiston. The public is invited to attend the groundbreaking ceremony.

BMCC President Cam Preus will be on hand, as will OSU HAREC Station Director Phil Hamm, several BMCC Board members and representatives from BMCC’s bond project management firm Frew Development Group and contractor for the project, Wellens-Farwell Construction.

The future Precision Irrigated Agriculture Center will house BMCC’s precision irrigation program, which trains students how to utilize the latest technologies – such as GPS, satellites, unmanned aerial systems and smartphones – to make agricultural irrigation more efficient. Precision agriculture is centered around the idea of site-specific farming – using only what you need (i.e., water, fertilizer, seeding rates, etc.) right when and where you need it.

The project is expected to be completed in winter 2017, with the College occupying the facility in spring 2017.

BMCC expects to break ground on its second major bond construction project in Boardman – the Workforce Training Center – in late May, and will begin construction on the rebuild of its agricultural center (Facility for Agricultural Resource Management, or FARM) in June. BMCC will also begin work on upgrades to electrical and HVAC systems, as well as natural gas line repairs, this summer.

Voters approved BMCC’s \$23 million capital construction bond in May 2015, which included all of these projects, as well as additional safety, security and technology improvements, as well as improvements to the Milton-Freewater Center.

The OSU HAREC is located at 2121 South 1st Street in Hermiston. The groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, April 28, begins at 2 p.m.

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