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EFSEC recommends the Governor approve the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project.

Yesterday, the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) approved an order that recommended Governor Gregoire approve the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project. The order and recommendation includes specific conditions to minimize visual impacts and protect the environment.

The Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project, located 12 miles northwest of Ellensburg, Washington is a wind-powered electrical generation facility consisting of approximately 65 wind turbines arrayed in several strings, associated electric transmission lines and other supporting infrastructure.

If approved by Governor Gregoire, the project will be able to construct and operate up to 65 wind turbines generating between 98-195 megawatts of wind power depending on the output of the turbine used. The project will connect with the nearby Bonneville Power Administration and/or Puget Sound Energy transmission systems. During construction, the project will produce \$5.8 million in direct income to Kittitas County. Once completed, the project will generate over \$1.5 million in property tax annually.

EFSEC Chair Jim Luce said “The Council has carefully considered potential visual impacts raised by residents in the affected area who are not participating in the development. Significant setbacks from those non-participating residence are required, and shadow flicker will not be allowed.”

Luce added “the project will provide clean non polluting energy at a reasonable cost.” He continued, “In addition to helping protect the environment, this project will produce needed jobs and tax revenue for Kittitas County and Washington State.”

Prior to making its recommendation on the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project proposal, EFSEC prepared an Environmental Impact Statement, conducted adjudicative proceedings, and held public meetings and hearings throughout its review.

On the issue of turbine setback, EFSEC found that the height of the turbines (330 to 410 feet) can produce a looming effect on some of the homes within a half mile of the project. In order to ensure that no individual turbine “looms” over any residence not having an agreement with the

applicant, EFSEC is requiring the minimum setback from residential structures shall be four times the maximum height of the turbines that are used.

EFSEC's recommendation includes a draft Site Certification Agreement that contains conditions the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project would have to meet prior to and during construction, as well as during operation of the facility including provisions to protect the wildlife, habitat, and vegetation of the project area. Also included are strict decommissioning requirements will ensure that at the end of the project's life, the turbines and towers will be removed.

Parties to the EFSEC adjudicative proceeding have 12 days to file petitions for reconsideration of EFSEC's recommendation. If such petitions are filed, EFSEC will review the petitions and determine if reconsideration of its recommendation is warranted. EFSEC will forward its recommendation to the Governor after completion of the reconsideration process.

Once Governor Gregoire officially receives EFSEC's recommendation, she has 60 days to approve or reject the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project proposal, or direct EFSEC to reconsider certain aspects of the Site Certification Agreement.

EFSEC is an independent state board responsible for reviewing applications for major energy facilities in Washington State. It is comprised of a Governor appointed Chair and representatives from state agencies. For each individual project a representative from local government augments EFSEC's membership for purposes of application review and recommendation to the Governor.

Information regarding EFSEC and the Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project recommendation can be found at www.efsec.wa.gov.