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EFSEC recommends Governor approve Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project.

Today, the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC or the Council) adopted an order recommending that Governor Gregoire approve a modified Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project located near Ellensburg, Washington.

The Council's recommendation responds to a June 22, 2007, letter from the Governor directing the Council to reconsider the setback criteria previously recommended by the Council "to determinewhether additional setbacks beyond the four times height (4xh) requirement for non-participating landowners are achievable while allowing the Project to remain economically viable."

On July 17, 2007, EFSEC held two public meetings in Ellensburg and heard from over 40 persons and received about 90 written comments on this issue. The Council considered these comments and concluded that while reopening formal hearings was not necessary additional mitigation may be provided.

The Council's Order recommends modification of the proposed Kittitas Valley proposed permit to include a provision that may further minimize visual impact on the non-participating landowners residences affected by the Governor's directive.

The permit modification provides that in the final siting of turbines within 2,500 feet of a non-participating landowner's existing residence, the project developer shall give "highest priority" to increasing the distance of the turbine from that non-participating landowner's residence, even beyond the minimum four times height setback. This requirement could increase the distance of turbines from non participating landowners' residences.

The proposed permit modification purpose is to further mitigate and minimize visual impacts on a non-participating landowner's residence. EFSEC retains final approval authority of the final turbine siting and will review the placement of each turbine against this "minimum visual impact" requirement.

EFSEC Chair Jim Luce said "The Council heard the Governor loud and clear and has taken additional steps to help minimize potential visual impacts raised by some non-participating landowners in the affected area."

Once Governor Gregoire officially receives EFSEC's recommendation, she has 60 days to approve or reject the revised Kittitas Valley Wind Power Project proposal.

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

If finally approved by Governor Gregoire, the project will be able to construct and operate 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 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.