

Wild Horse Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Wild Horse Wind Power Project?

The Wild Horse Wind Power Project proposes an array of approximately 130 large-scale, utility-grade wind turbines. The project will develop 165 acres within an 8,600-acre parcel located 13 miles east of Ellensburg, Washington.

Who will own the Wild Horse Project?

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has signed a letter of intent with the developer and is in negotiations for 100 percent ownership of the Wild Horse Project and the power it will generate.

Why is PSE interested in the Wild Horse Project?

PSE is executing a strategic plan to secure low-cost diverse resources for its customers' growing energy needs. As part of its resource strategy, PSE is committed to having renewable energy, such as wind power, make up a significant component of its supply portfolio. The utility's target is to have at least five percent of its customers' total electricity supplied from renewable resources by 2013.

The decision to pursue the Wild Horse proposal followed an extensive review process that started when PSE issued an "all-source" request for proposals. Based on extensive analysis, the Wild Horse Project would help PSE secure energy for its customers at stable, predictable prices. The project featured the economic, operational, and environmental characteristics PSE looked for in a wind project.

How much energy will the Wild Horse Project generate?

Wild Horse will have the capacity to generate about 230 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy, enough to serve approximately 70,000 homes. The final number of turbines and rated output will be finalized prior to construction.

Who will receive the energy generated by the project?

The energy from the Wild Horse Project will serve customers throughout PSE's entire service territory, including the approximately 11,000 PSE customers in Kittitas County.

Where is the Wild Horse Project located?

The 165 acres of developed land used in the Wild Horse Project is located on 8,600 acres of remote grazing land approximately 13 miles east of Ellensburg, Washington, near Whisky Dick Mountain. The project's eastern boundary will be approximately 8 miles west of Vantage.

How visible will the Wild Horse Project be?

The project is located in a remote area north and east of the most densely populated parts of Kittitas County. Most people residing in Kittitas County will view the project from at least 5 miles away, making the turbines relatively small features. Furthermore, independent experts have done visual simulations and analysis, concluding that the ridgeline of Whisky Dick Mountain will block many of the project turbines in the valley area to the west (the direction of Kittitas and Ellensburg) and the hilly areas south of the project site (along I-90), so that only a portion of the turbines will be visible from the west (the direction of Kittitas and Ellensburg) or south (I-90).

How many wind turbines will be built?

Wild Horse will consist of approximately 130 wind turbines. The final number of turbines and rated output will be finalized during the public permitting process.

How big are the wind turbines?

The wind turbines will be approximately 350 feet tall from base to tip.

How much land will be impacted by the Wild Horse Project?

The project's footprint is approximately 165 acres spread across the 8,600-acre site.

What economic benefits will the Wild Horse Project bring to Kittitas County?

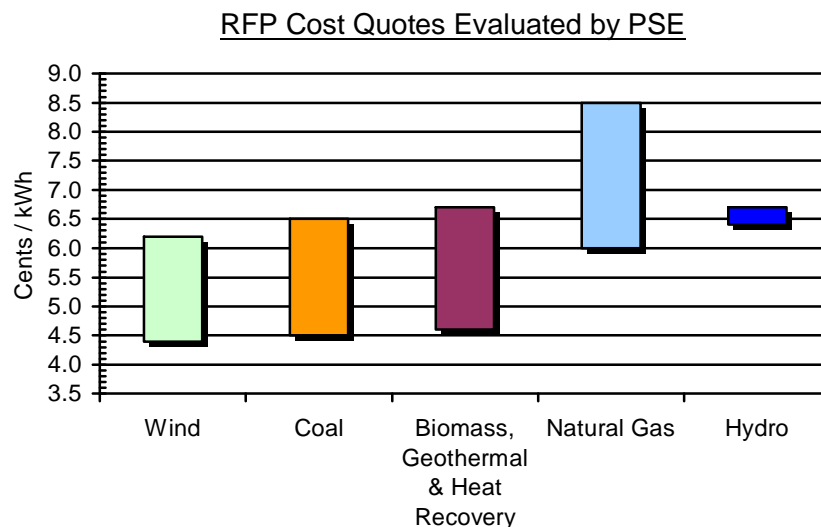
Wild Horse Wind Power Project will provide several direct and indirect economic benefits to the local community. Initially, the project will generate more than \$4.7 million in revenue during the construction phase. Its operations will contribute \$1.4 million annually to the local economy. The property-tax revenues are estimated at approximately \$2 million per year.

How many new jobs will be created by the Wild Horse Project?

Construction of the Wild Horse Project will employ approximately 165 workers during the peak period, many of whom are expected to come from the local area. The wind farm will create approximately a dozen family-wage jobs at the facility during long-term operations, and also will generate indirect jobs through local spending on goods and services.

Isn't wind power more expensive than traditional forms of power generation?

With rapid improvements in wind power technology, wind has become a cost-competitive resource. Wind energy in Washington costs approximately \$45 to \$65 per megawatt hour (MWh), which compares favorably with more traditional forms of power generation.

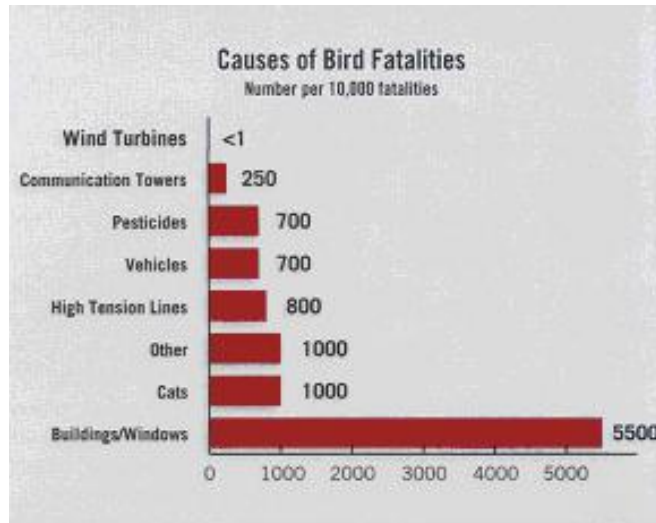


What are the environmental benefits of the Wild Horse Projects?

Wind farms are perhaps the most environmentally benign source of utility-scale power generation. This is because operating wind farms produce no air pollutants, such as nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, or carbon dioxide. Furthermore, wind farms do not consume cooling water. Wind farms do not interfere materially with the existing land use, whether it be grazing or open space, typically using under two percent of the land they occupy. As a result, wind farms tend to preserve open space and protect it from urbanization and other development.

What impact will the Wild Horse Project have on the bird and bat populations in the area?

Birds and bats occasionally collide with wind turbines, as they do with other tall structures, such as buildings and communications towers. (The graph below outlines the key causes of bird fatalities.) The draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) concluded that with the proposed mitigation measures in place, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts are anticipated for birds or other wildlife. Mitigation is achieved by careful selection of specific turbine sites to avoid areas of high bird concentrations. In addition, the project will purchase and protect land that will be permanent habitat for wildlife, consistent with the mitigation requirements defined in the WDFW Wind Power Guidelines.



Source: Erickson, et.al, 2002. Summary of Anthropogenic Causes of Bird Mortality

How much noise will Wild Horse generate for neighboring homes and businesses?

Noise has been largely eliminated from modern wind projects through improved engineering and appropriate use of setbacks from nearby residences. With the closest residence nearly two miles away, the estimated noise level generated by operational wind turbines would be less than average evening background levels.

Will this project pose a “shadow flicker” problem for local residents?

Shadow flicker, or strobe impacts, can occur only if the turbine is located close to a receptor (i.e., residence) and is in a position where the blades interfere with very low-angle sunlight. The distance of nearly two miles from the Wild Horse Project to the closest residence is well beyond the limits at which shadow flicker can cause impacts.

Will the Wild Horse Project pose an ice-throw hazard?

Ice can build up on wind-turbine blades, just as it does on other structures. In some cases, the ice may be shed from the blades when they begin to rotate. While such ice throws can occur, it is of little danger because the turbines are setback sufficient distance to protect people and structures. Furthermore, should ice loading cause an imbalance on the turbine structure, sensors will detect the presence of ice causing the turbine to shut down.

How much wind is needed to power a utility-scale wind farm?

For a utility-scale wind farm to be financially viable, a site would need annual wind speeds averaging 16 mph or greater. A modern wind turbine will begin generating power in winds of about 9 miles per hour (“cut-in wind speed”), will reach its full output in winds of about 30 miles

per hour (“rated wind speed” and “rated output”), and will shut down when winds exceed about 50 miles per hour (“cut-out wind speed”).

Does a wind turbine only run one-third of the time?

At the Wild Horse site, the wind turbines are expected to run and produce energy about 75 percent of the time. However, much of the time it will be generating at less than full capacity, making its annual average output approximately 33 percent of its rated capacity. By comparison, coal plants operate at 80-percent capacity factors and hydroelectric plants in the northwest operates at approximately 50-percent capacity factors.

When will the Wild Horse Project be operational?

The project could be operational in 2006 with a timely environmental and land-use review by the Kittitas County and the state’s Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council.