

INVESTING IN RENEWABLE RESOURCES: Why Wind?

Radar Ridge Wind Project partners are making wise investments now to responsibly meet future renewable energy requirements. Grays Harbor Public Utility District, Pacific County PUD, Mason PUD 3, Clallam County PUD and Energy Northwest have teamed up to develop the Radar Ridge Wind Project in Pacific County. The wind project will help satisfy voter-approved mandates for renewable resources and provide clean-renewable energy for our customers.

Initiative 937:

In 2006 voters passed Initiative 937, a renewables portfolio standard for electrical power generation known as the Energy Independence Act. The act requires utilities with 25,000 or more customers to provide 15% of the energy needed to serve their customers from renewable resources by 2020. The mandate stair-steps into place:

- 2012 (3%)
- 2016 (9%)
- 2020 (15%)

Non-compliance with the act will result in a state-imposed penalty for each megawatt-hour of shortfall.

Qualifying Resources:

The act defines which renewable resources are considered eligible toward meeting the requirements.

Just because a resource is renewable doesn't mean it can be counted toward meeting the renewables portfolio standard. For example, most of the power that serves the customers of the four partner PUDs is hydropower. Hydropower is a clean, renewable resource that produces zero carbon emissions but is not considered an eligible renewable, and therefore cannot count toward meeting the state mandate. Eligible renewable resources include:

- Wind
- Solar
- Landfill gas
- Wave
- Ocean
- Tidal
- Gas from sewage treatment facilities (with limitations)
- Biomass (with limitations)

Utilities also meet the state mandate by purchasing renewable energy credits—tradable certificates representing a megawatt-hour of an eligible renewable resource.

In addition, the act only recognizes purchases of qualifying renewable energy generated within the Pacific Northwest, limiting the renewables available to qualifying utilities.

For more information:

Liz Anderson
Community and Government
Relations Director
Grays Harbor PUD
office: (360) 538-6232
cell: (360) 590-2800
Landerson@ghpud.org



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Working to Meet Tomorrow' Requirements Today:

The partners in the Radar Ridge Wind Project, along with other utilities, are planning now to ensure compliance with the Energy Independence Act. To meet requirements, the partners began exploring the opportunity to invest in a new wind energy generation project in western Washington that would also promote jobs and economic development in an area of historically high unemployment.

Among all the viable commercial wind resources documented in western Washington, project developer Energy Northwest identified Radar Ridge in Pacific County as having the lowest potential environmental impact. Other attributes that make it a viable site for a wind project are:

- The project site is geographically situated near the ratepayers that will use the power. This proximity reduces the loss of valuable power during transmission from the project to the participating utilities and bypasses growing congestion on the regional transmission grid.
- The electrical transmission interconnection is relatively close to the project site, requiring only a very small length of new overhead power lines and thereby minimizing additional risk to birds and bats.
- There is adequate capacity on the existing transmission system to accommodate the project.
- The project brings economic development to areas of the Washington State hard hit by economic decline in recent years.
- The project brings additional revenue to the state trust, primarily for the benefit of state capitol facilities and the university trust.
- The project site is "winter peaking," meaning it is expected to produce more power in winter than summer. Most utilities in the Northwest are winter-load-peaking utilities, including the four public utility district participants. This means that peak power production will occur when it is needed most.
- The site is already being used for industrial activity including logging, gravel quarry operation and commercial communications facilities. Roads to serve these operations have been developed and support regular vehicle traffic.



Clallum County PUD
Port Angeles, Wash.

Mason County PUD No.3
Shelton, Wash.

Energy Northwest
Richland, Wash.

Grays Harbor PUD
Aberdeen, Wash.

Pacific County PUD
Raymond, Wash.