

**WAC 197-11-965 Adoption notice
and SEPA Addendum for the
Hoctor Ridge Wind Farm**

Adoption for (check appropriate box) DNS EIS

Description of current proposal: The Hoctor Ridge Wind Farm (“Hoctor Ridge Project”) is a proposed wind energy generation facility consisting of up to 60 megawatts (mw) and will include installation of up to 30 turbines and associated infrastructure, including access roads, and transmission lines. The project has been reduced in size from that originally proposed and evaluated. If applications for additional turbines are re-submitted, these would be further evaluated, and additional SEPA review required, as necessary.

Proponent: Windtricity Ventures, LLC

Location of current proposal: The Hoctor Ridge Project site is in the Columbia Hills, southeast of Goldendale, Washington, in Klickitat County.

Title of documents being adopted:

- 1) *Joint NEPA/SEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement Washington WindPlant #1, DOE/EIS-0205, February 1995;*
- 2) *Joint SEPA/NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement, Washington Wind Plant #1 Project, DOE/EIS-0205, May 1995 (the Washington Wind Plant #1 draft and final EISs are referred to jointly as the “Kenetech FEIS”);*
- 3) *Columbia Wind Farm #1, Joint SEPA/NEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement, DOE/EIS-0206, March 1995;*
- 4) *Columbia Wind Farm #1, Joint SEPA/NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement, DOE/EIS-0206, September 1995 (the Columbia Wind Farm #1 draft and final EISs are referred to jointly as the “CARES FEIS”);*
- 5) *Klickitat County Energy Overlay Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Klickitat County, Aug. 2003); and*
- 6) *Klickitat County Energy Overlay Final Environmental Impact Statement (Klickitat County, Sept. 2004) (the draft and final Overlay EISs are referred to jointly as the “EOZ FEIS”).*

Title of Documents Being Incorporated by Reference

The following documents are incorporated by reference, and are on file with the County Planning Department:

- Windy Point Partners LLC, SEPA Checklist and Environmental Report, and Adoption Notice/SEPA Addendum (2006)
- Windtricity Ventures LLC SEPA Checklist and CUP Application, and MDNS (2003)

Agency that prepared documents being adopted: Klickitat County and the Bonneville Power Administration, a federal agency within the United States Department of Energy, jointly prepared the documents identified as numbers 1 – 4 above. Klickitat County prepared numbers 5 – 6.

Date adopted documents were prepared: Issue dates are provided above.

Description of documents (or portion) being adopted:

Kenetech and CARES FEISs. The Kenetech and CARES FEISs are final environmental impacts statements (including appendices) that analyzed wind energy generation facilities proposed for development in the Columbia Hills in 1995, but which were ultimately not developed. A portion of the Hoctor Ridge Project would fall within areas analyzed by the Kenetech and CARES FEISs.

EOZ FEIS. The EOZ FEIS is a programmatic environmental impact statement that was prepared to examine environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures for development of energy projects generally, including wind energy projects, at various locations within Klickitat County and under various permitting procedures. Based on the EOZ FEIS, Klickitat County adopted its Energy Overlay Zone ordinance, which designated areas of the County where wind energy projects could be permitted through an administrative process subject to specified development, use and construction standards. The Hoctor Ridge Project is located within the designated EOZ area.

The adopted documents are supplemented by an environmental checklist and supplemental application materials for the Hoctor Ridge Project, and the SEPA Checklist and CUP application for a Windtricity project near the project area, which was never constructed. As required by the County's EOZ ordinance, the expanded checklist includes technical reports addressing habitat and wildlife resources and cultural use resources. The information contained in the expanded checklist is discussed in the attached addendum.

If the documents being adopted have been challenged (WAC 197-11-630), please describe: Both the Kenetech FEIS and the CARES FEIS were appealed in 1995. The Klickitat County Board of County Commissioners heard the appeals and in each case upheld the adequacy of the EISs. Appellants appealed both decisions to Klickitat County Superior Court. After a trial, the Superior Court upheld the adequacy of the CARES FEIS, and no further appeals were taken.

Following a series of procedural rulings, the Kenetech project was cancelled before the Superior Court heard the appeal on the merits.

The adequacy of the EOZ FEIS was challenged in an appeal to the Klickitat County Board of County Commissioners. The County and the appellants reached a settlement before a decision on the merits, and the appellants withdrew their appeal.

The documents are available to be read at (place/time): Klickitat County Planning Department, 228 West Main Street, Goldendale, WA.

We have identified and adopted these documents as being appropriate for this proposal after independent review. The documents meet our environmental review needs for the current proposal and will accompany the proposal to the decision maker.

Name of agency adopting documents: Klickitat County Planning Department

Contact person, if other than responsible official

Phone

Responsible official: Curt Dreyer

Position/title: Klickitat County Planning Director

Phone: (509) 773-5703

Address: 228 West Main Street, Room 150, Goldendale, WA 98620-9597

Date

8/16/06

Signature



Any appeals of the decision should be filed under the County SEPA ordinance's provision for appeals of EISs. Any appeal is therefore due no later than twenty-one days from August 16 that is, on September 6, 2006. Appeals shall be in writing and filed with the County auditor. Appeals shall state with specificity the basis for the appeal and the errors to be asserted to the board. Appeals shall not be deemed complete without payment of a fee of \$175 payable to the Klickitat County Planning Department.

SEPA Addendum Hoctor Ridge Wind Farm

As described in the attached notice of adoption, the SEPA Responsible official for Klickitat County is adopting three environmental impact statements (“EISs”) to evaluate the Hoctor Ridge Wind Farm (“Hoctor Ridge Project”), a proposed wind energy generation project located in the Columbia Hills southeast of Goldendale, Washington. This addendum (“Addendum”) is prepared under SEPA to add information to the adopted EISs relating them to the Hoctor Ridge Project.

The EISs being adopted are described in the attached notice. The Kenetech and CARES FEISs are project-level final EISs (including appendices) that analyzed wind energy generation facilities proposed for development in the same vicinity as the Hoctor Ridge Project in 1995, but which were ultimately not developed. The EOZ FEIS was issued by Klickitat County in 2004. It is a programmatic EIS that was prepared to examine environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures for development of energy projects, including wind energy projects, at various locations within Klickitat County and under various permitting procedures.

This Addendum includes Windtricity Ventures, LLC’s expanded checklist and environmental reports (referred to collectively as the “Expanded Checklist”). Those documents were printed separately and distributed earlier with Klickitat County’s Notice of Conditional, Complete Application (May 11, 2006) and at the Hoctor Ridge Project’s community meeting (March 13, 2006). They have since been updated to reflect changes to the project, and provide additional information requested by the County. The environmental review information considers a project larger than actually proposed, thus over-estimating project impacts in several areas. Please contact this office to request a copy of the Expanded Checklist.

CARES and Kenetech FEISs and Their Application to the Hoctor Ridge Project.

The scientists who prepared the Hoctor Ridge Expanded Checklist used the CARES and Kenetech FEISs as a starting point to analyze the Hoctor Ridge Project’s potential environmental impacts. New and additional field work was undertaken to confirm or update environmental information and resources in the project vicinity.

The CARES and Kenetech EISs cover a portion of the Hoctor Ridge Project site, (as well as the previously permitted Windy Point site, which consists of 97 turbines). If the Hoctor Ridge and Windy Point turbines are combined, for a total maximum of 127 turbines, they are still less than the 436 turbines originally planned. The differences between project areas generally result in fewer environmental impacts compared to those projected by the CARES and Kenetech FEISs. Hoctor Ridge consultants performed supplemental field investigations to assess any changes in the existing environment and for the purpose of confirming and/or assessing environmental information developed in prior projects and reviews. The natural and built environment in the area has experienced little change, although ongoing agricultural use (grazing) has further degraded wildlife habitat.

The impact analyses provided by the CARES and Kenetech FEISs also apply to the Hocter Ridge Project. The similarity of impacts relates to the similarity in the features between the projects. The projects involve construction and operation of wind turbine generators, access roads, underground and overhead conduit. The differences that do exist -- turbine technology, precise turbine placement and compliance with today's more stringent regulatory standards -- generally indicate a reduction of environmental impacts for the Hocter Ridge Project over the impacts projected in the CARES and Kenetech FEISs. Hocter Ridge's proposed turbine design is larger and more efficient with resulting reduction in number of turbines. The Hocter Ridge turbines also turn slower and reduce risk and impacts to the environment. Hocter Ridge will have approximately six (6) miles of overhead transmission lines and new roads will cover 4 miles for the Hocter Ridge Project.

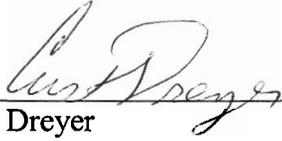
Not all differences would necessarily reduce impacts. Greater turbine height would affect the Project's appearance relative to the aesthetic impact projected by the CARES and Kenetech FEISs, but in light of the reduced number of Hocter Ridge turbines, these impacts would not be significant.

The Hocter Ridge proposal would incorporate mitigation measures from both the CARES and Kenetech FEISs. In some cases, regulatory requirements imposed since 1995 have addressed those measures. Examples of regulatory programs that were not in place or were less stringent in 1995 include the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wind Development Guidelines (2003), the Klickitat County Critical Areas Ordinance (2004), and the Klickitat County Energy Overlay Ordinance (2005)

EOZ FEIS. The 2004 EOZ FEIS addresses the impacts of energy facility siting within the County, including wind energy facilities, at a programmatic level. It evaluates impacts, alternatives and mitigation to be considered in the County's determination of where wind energy projects could be sited (alternative locations), what regulatory process to be used in making permit decisions, and the cumulative environmental impacts that could result from development of multiple wind energy projects.

Based on the EOZ FEIS, Klickitat County enacted the EOZ. The EOZ designates an area of the County within which wind energy development is a land use allowed outright, subject to other applicable laws and permit conditions tailored to address site-specific issues. The EOZ requires preparation of specified site-specific studies in addition to an expanded SEPA checklist, and it imposes standards applicable to development and operation of wind facilities.

The Hocter Ridge Project is within the designated overlay zone where such wind energy facilities are allowed outright. Its application includes the studies required by the EOZ. The cumulative impacts posed by the Project and other similar projects in the County are disclosed by the EOZ FEIS. This project-level environmental review under SEPA is focused on the appropriate conditions to address the Hocter Ridge Project's potential environmental impacts. In addition, this project level review is further informed by the 2003 Windtricity and 2006 Windy Point environmental review documents incorporated by reference by the adoption notice.



Curt Dreyer
Klickitat County Planning Director, SEPA Responsible Official

8/16/06
Date