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Phoenix Group supports wind energy

ELLENSBURG, Wash. – At their Thursday, October 17th Board meeting the Phoenix Economic Development Group Board of Directors agreed to support the concept of wind operation facilities in Kittitas County because of the economic benefit they will likely provide the area. The Board further agreed that since wind energy developers have not filed permit applications with the county, this is not an endorsement of any particular project. The decision was not unanimous and followed a lengthy discussion lasting over an hour.

The decision to support wind energy was based on the findings of a report issued earlier this week by the Phoenix Group. The report found that views of wind turbines will not negatively impact property values, wind plant construction phase will have significant economic benefits, wind plant operation will provide annual economic benefits, property tax revenues will increase, and tax revenues to Kittitas County Government will also increase. Additionally, potential revenues to schools and to taxing authorities such as fire districts and hospital districts are significant. ECONorthwest created the report with funding from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development and the Energy Foundation.

“Our economic development organization did not recruit the wind energy companies to our area, however, the majority of our board views wind energy as a source of economic benefit to the region. We have carefully considered this issue and after months of review and debate came to today’s decision,” said Ellen Howe chair.

The Phoenix Group is Kittitas County’s associate development organization. The group’s mission is to provide leadership that stimulates business and promotes economic opportunities to support the needs of Kittitas County. The Phoenix Group focuses on business recruitment, retention and expansion.

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