

7.3 INITIAL SITE RESTORATION PLAN

WAC 463-42-655 Physical Environment - Initial Site Restoration Plan. The applicant or certificate holder shall in the application, or within twelve months after the effective date of this section, whichever occurs later, provide an initial plan for site restoration at the conclusion of the plant's operating life. The plan shall parallel a decommissioning plan, if such a plan is prepared for the project. The initial site restoration plan shall be prepared in sufficient detail to identify, evaluate, and resolve all major environmental, and public health and safety issues presently anticipated. It shall describe the process used to evaluate the options and select the measures that will be taken to restore or preserve the site or otherwise protect all segments of the public against risks or danger resulting from the site. The plan shall include a discussion of economic factors regarding the costs and benefits of various restoration options versus the relative public risk and shall address provisions for funding or bonding arrangements to meet the site restoration or management costs. The plan shall be prepared in detail commensurate with the time until site restoration is to begin. The scope of the proposed monitoring shall be addressed in the plan.

7.3.1 Project Design Life

The Projects will be designed to meet utility grade standards as well as a number of other stringent codes and requirements. As a result, the design life of all of the major equipment such as the turbines, transformers, substation and supporting plant infrastructure is at least 20 years. Based on the site conditions, it is expected that the proposed turbine technology will continue to perform well into its third decade of operation.

The trend in the wind energy industry has been to replace or “repower” older wind energy projects by upgrading older equipment with more efficient turbines. A good portion of the value in the Project is in its proven wind resource, land agreements and in-place infrastructure. It is likely that after mechanical wear takes its toll, that the Project would be upgraded with more efficient equipment and, therefore, far beyond just the design life of 20 years.

7.3.2 Project Decommissioning

Prior to commencement of construction the Applicant will submit to and obtain approval from EFSEC, a detailed Initial Site Restoration Plan.

If the Project were to terminate operations, the Applicant would obtain the necessary authorization from the appropriate regulatory agencies to decommission the facilities. A Final Site Restoration plan would be developed and submitted to EFSEC for review and approval. Experience in other regions with older wind power projects indicates that a non-operating wind power project does not present any significant threats or risks to public health and safety or environmental contamination.

Decommissioning Economics and Financial Surety

Experience with older wind plants which have been decommissioned and/or repowered has shown that the scrap value of the materials and equipment contained in the Project infrastructure (steel towers, electric generators, steel, copper, etc.) would exceed the cost of dismantling the Project, based on historic and current scrap prices. The Applicant will provide adequate financial

assurances to cover all anticipated costs associated with decommissioning. In all cases, final financial responsibility for decommissioning will rest with the Applicant.

As described in the Applicant's agreements with Project landowners, all foundations would be removed to a depth of 3 feet below grade and unsalvageable material would be disposed at authorized sites. The soil surface would be restored as close as reasonably possible to its original condition. The Project substation is generally valuable and often times in older power projects, the substation would revert to the ownership of the utility (PSE or BPA). If the overhead power lines could not be used by the utility, all structures, conductors, and cables would be removed.

Reclamation procedures would be based on site-specific requirements and techniques commonly employed at the time the area is to be reclaimed, and would include regrading, adding topsoil, and revegetation of all disturbed areas. Revegetation would be done with appropriate seed mixes, based on native plant types in the Project area. Decommissioned roads would be reclaimed or left in place based on landowner preferences, and right of ways would be vacated and surrendered to the landowners.

Restoration plans and activities would meet the following standards and requirements:

- Any future use of the Project site will be consistent with the planned uses described in the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.
- Demolition or removal of equipment and facilities will occur, to the extent necessary, to meet environmental and health regulations, to salvage economically recoverable materials or to recycle the Project site for future uses.

7.3.3 Preparation of the Final Restoration Plan

Near the end of the useful operating life of the Project, the Applicant will review the Initial Site Restoration Plan and modify the plans to accommodate conditions, at that time, to meet both future needs for the Project site and site restoration laws and regulations then in force. To the extent then required by law or regulation, the Final Restoration Plan will be reviewed by appropriate regulatory agencies and any required permits obtained. Permits that may be required include demolition permits, special transportation permits and waste disposal permits.

Should the Project be suspended or terminated during construction, the Project will prepare and submit a Restoration Plan to EFSEC for review and approval. The Restoration Plan will include:

- Methods for securing the Project site for a specific period of time while attempts are made to obtain alternative financing or to seek an alternate owner.
- Methods for final restoration of the Project site should the Project terminate operations.

7.3.4 Hazardous Materials Survey

Although no hazardous materials will be used on the site, an audit will be performed of the relevant operation records and a Project site survey will be performed to determine if a release of any hazardous material has occurred. A review of all facilities will be performed to determine if any hazardous or dangerous materials (as then defined by regulation) are present as construction materials or materials utilized in the operation of any facility components such as cleaning and maintenance fluids, lubricating oils, and gases). An inspection of the Project site will be performed to determine and record the location, quantity and status of all identified materials.

Any solid waste generated during the facility shutdown or decommissioning will be disposed of, as necessary, to comply with the solid waste regulations then in place.