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Second wind project gets funding

Kittitas Valley excavation begins this week

By DAILY RECORD STAFF

The second community wind project in the Kittitas Valley has gained additional funding, and excavation of its tower foundation northwest of Ellensburg is set to begin today.

Bellingham-based Cascade Community Wind Company LLC recently announced it has received a grant of \$85,500 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), for the construction of a 120 kW community wind turbine in the Thorp Prairie area on land owned by farmer Frank Gregerich.

The project is the second community wind turbine in the valley; the first is on property owned by Del Knudson off Joe Watt Canyon Road.

The turbine is a Vestas V20 which has a 60-foot diameter rotor, is on an 80-foot monopole tower and will produce enough power for about 55 energy efficient homes (around 250,000 kWh a year), according to Terry Meyer, manager of Cascade Community Wind Company.

The turbine is expected to cost \$300,000 to install.

Digging has started

Excavation of the tower foundation at the Knudson site began Wednesday, and the Gregerich foundation is expected to be dug beginning today with completion of the Three Bar G No. 3 project later this fall this year.

"This is our second REAP award for the installation of a community wind turbine," said Meyer. "The award of this very competitive grant shows that community renewable energy projects to generate clean energy, reduce



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This is the type of Vestas turbine and tower that's going up now at two rural locations northwest of Ellensburg. This turbine is at the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland. The turbines in the Joe Watt Canyon Road and Thorp Prairie area will have blades 20 feet longer.

dependence on fossil fuels, and benefit the communities in which they are built are supported by USDA Rural Development."

A subscription to 1 percent of the output of the Three Bar G No. 3 wind turbine costs \$3,000 and is projected to save the subscriber approximately \$6,000 on power bills over the 20-year life of the project, according to Meyer.

Using the guidelines for determining community economic impact found in the Washington State Wind Energy Guidebook, Meyer said an estimated \$100,000 per year will be added to the regional economy, along with one job, and \$10,000 in tax revenue every year for the next 20 years as a result of one of the turbine projects.