

## **Attachment G Socioeconomic Impact Assessment**

This socioeconomic impact statement is provided in accordance with Umatilla County Development Code 152.616 (HHH) (5) (j). It is meant to address the potential social, economic, public service, cultural, visual, and recreational impacts on affected communities during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the proposed Schumann Wind Energy Project (Schumann). For this statement, the affected communities referred to herein are considered to be the nearby incorporated communities of Athena, Helix, Milton-Freewater, Pendleton, Weston, and Umatilla County as a whole.

### **Social Impacts**

This section examines social impacts for which a potential change in the local population could occur. Wind energy projects create new short and long term jobs.

During the construction phase, Schumann is expected to employ approximately 40 people. These positions will be temporary due to the short-term nature of the construction phase of the Project. As much as possible, development and construction phase positions will be filled from the local labor/trade and materials suppliers' pool. Due to the need for a specialized skill set, however, several positions will require hiring from outside the community. Once the construction phase is complete, most of the temporary work force from outside the community is expected to leave.

During the operations phase of the Project, Schumann is expected to employ two to three full or part time staff. These are permanent positions for which experienced and appropriately trained personnel are needed. Every effort will be made to fill these positions from the local community.

Fewer individuals are expected to be hired during the decommissioning of the Project compared to the construction phase. These positions will be temporary due to the short-term nature of the decommissioning phase of the Project. It is expected that only some of the workforce will be hired from the local community because the decommissioning of this Project requires specialized personnel and equipment that may not be available in the immediate area. The temporary work force is expected to leave upon completion of the decommissioning phase.

### **Economic Impacts**

This section examines economic impacts for which a potential change in the local economy could occur. Wind energy projects create new short and long term jobs, all of which affect the local economy in positive ways.

During the construction phase, Schumann is expected to stimulate the local economy through its construction workforce. Any workforce personnel brought in from outside the immediate community will be purchasing local goods and services as well as paying for housing, food, meals, and other personal necessities. Local earth moving contractors and local building materials such as gravel and concrete may also be utilized in the construction of the facility. Secondary and tertiary economic benefits of wind projects are well documented and result from meals served in local establishments,

buying fuel and vehicle maintenance from local service stations, and supplies from local hardware and building supply stores.

During the operations phase, the Project is expected to add to the tax base of the county which in turn will stimulate the local economy. Permanent employees will have jobs that pay a living wage or greater. They will also be added to the local tax base which will increase county tax revenue. Because they will be living in the immediate community they will also be part of the local economy, purchasing local goods and services, as well as paying for housing. Secondary and tertiary economic benefits related to operations include meals served in local establishments, fuel and vehicle maintenance purchases from local service stations, and obtaining supplies from local hardware, building supply, and office supply stores.

During the decommissioning phase, Schumann is expected to stimulate the local economy through its decommissioning workforce. Any workforce brought in from outside the immediate community will be purchasing local goods and services as well as paying for temporary housing. Additionally, purchases from local vendors may be made for the decommissioning work, including meals, fuel, vehicle maintenance, and any necessary supplies. Local wrecking contractors may also be utilized in the decommissioning of the facility.

## **Public Services**

This section considers potential impacts on community public services during the construction, operations, and decommissioning phases.

Construction related traffic is short-term in nature and not expected to have an impact on normal traffic patterns or an emergency response crew's ability to provide service.

Temporary workers hired from outside the community are not expected to have an impact on emergency response crews since housing for these workers consists of existing buildings or RV facilities already covered by fire and emergency response plans. See the Emergency Response Plan (Attachment 3) for details on how the Project construction will interface with local emergency response crews in the event of an emergency.

During the operations phase, Schumann is not expected to hinder day-to-day operations of local emergency response services. Safety measures observed during operations will minimize any need for an emergency response to the Project site.

The decommissioning phase will employ fewer people than the construction phase and will similarly have a minimal impact on emergency response.

The construction, operation, and decommissioning of a wind Project may create the potential for criminal activity (theft, vandalism, trespassing). The Project will provide appropriate security measures to dissuade and mitigate such potential. Therefore, little to no criminal activity is expected to occur during or after the Project's construction. Wind projects do not attract criminal activity from outside the area.

The nearby health facilities in the area include St. Anthony's Hospital in Pendleton, Oregon and Providence St. Mary Medical Center and Walla Walla General Hospital in Walla Walla, Washington. All three facilities provide 24-hour emergency care and are expected to adequately deliver services to construction, operations, and decommissioning personnel if it is necessary. The temporary workforce is not large enough to be expected to add any increased strain on these community health facilities.

No significant impacts on local school systems are expected. The temporary work force is not expected to move their families to the area due to the short-term nature of a construction phase. Any permanent personnel hired from outside the community are expected to bring their family with them. If the average number of children per household is two that would mean four to six children at most would be added to the affected communities for the additional families moving to the area. These children spread across the affected communities would not add any additional strain on the local school systems. As in the construction phase, the decommissioning phase will have no impact on the local school system.

The temporary work force that is expected to be hired from outside the immediate community will need adequate temporary housing during construction and decommissioning. The temporary work force will presumably find housing in rental houses, rental apartments, hotel rooms, and RV camp sites. A Google search reveals sufficient hotels and motels in the Walla Walla Valley area. There are numerous RV parks in the immediate region as well. This abundance of rental, hotel, and camping options provides for adequate temporary housing for the construction workforce. Additionally, the temporary housing obtained by the workforce will result in increased profits to local housing providers.

During the 20-plus year operation phase, the permanent workforce who may be hired from outside local communities, will need adequate permanent housing. The permanent work force will presumably find permanent housing through either rental properties or home ownership, although the latter is more likely because these permanent positions will provide a wage substantial enough to fund a mortgage. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau there is a home vacancy rate of 9.4% in Umatilla County. This rate is similar for the towns of Pendleton, Milton-Freewater, and Athena and even greater for the town of Helix. This abundance of vacant housing units will provide adequate housing for the permanent workforce. Additionally, the new permanent home owners will provide local economic stimulus as well as a slight increase in county revenues due to these new property tax payers.

There will be a minimal impact on local sewage and water services. All sewage generated on site during construction and decommissioning will be collected in portable toilets and disposed of on a regular basis by a local contractor. This is not expected to add any strain on local sewage systems. All drinking water is expected to be brought onto the site by a local bottled water provider. This will not affect local water treatment or delivery systems.

The operations and maintenance building will generate sewage waste at a rate expected for a work area of two to three people. Sewage will be disposed of through either a septic system or the local sewer system, depending on location in town, which will not cause any strain on the existing sewage systems. The building will be hooked up to the local water system and will have no impact on that system.

During the construction period, there is expected to be a short-term increase in local traffic due, primarily affecting the town of Athena, to the delivery of the Project components and the construction crew commuting to and from the Project site. During this period, the number of trucks per day is estimated to be from 20 to 30. Similarly, there will be a slight increase in traffic during the decommissioning phase due to the transportation of outgoing components. Day to day operations of

the Schumann Wind Project may involve multiple trips by the permanent workforce between the operations and maintenance building and the wind turbines. These trips utilize standard pickup truck vehicles (no heavy or large trucks) and are not expected to add a significant increase in or disrupt local traffic flows. See the Transportation Plan (Attachment 1) for a more detailed explanation on how local transportation systems will be utilized.

All solid waste generated on site during construction and decommissioning will be properly disposed of in trash receptacles to be routinely collected by a local solid waste management firm. The amount of solid waste is not expected to adversely impact solid waste disposal services and will provide additional revenue to the local disposal service. The operations and maintenance building will contract all solid waste removal with a local waste removal service.

### **Cultural Impacts**

The history and culture of the area is strongly tied to agriculture including wheat farming, sheep and cattle ranching along with several other livestock products, timber harvesting and more recently a transition to wine making. Like power generation, most of these products are exported outside the community.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have been contracted to perform archaeological and cultural surveys of the project area and transmission route. Once the results are in and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office have occurred, the final project design will be microsituated to ensure all recommended setbacks to any sensitive historic sites are observed.

Recently there has been a transformation in other sectors of the local economy such as traditional farm land turning into wine production and the growth of wind farming, as well as IT companies in the area due to technological advancements and changing demands in the economy. The Schumann Wind Project will allow local land owners to diversify and expand how they use their land to provide products the economy demands.

There has already been a precedent in the county that wind farms are compatible with farming practices and community values with the Eurus Combine Hills or NextEra's Stateline wind energy facilities. The Schumann Project will not be in any conflict with other wind Projects in Umatilla county or traditional energy producers such as the Boardman Coal Fire plant, which may be scheduled for closure or conversion.

### **Recreational Activities Impacts**

Common recreational activities associated with Umatilla County include hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, off road vehicle riding, horseback riding, mountain biking, and bird watching. There is no history of these activities taking place within the Project area due to its agricultural usage. The Project property has not been licensed in the past for the ODFW hunting program. All of the Project's property is Existing Farm Use (EFU) land, making it off limits to camping, hiking, ORV riding, horseback riding, and mountain biking activities. Due to intensive agricultural usage, it is not particularly suitable location for bird watching. Due to the lack of recreational activities in the Project area the Schumann Wind Project is not expected to have any significant impacts on recreational activities.

## **Visual, Noise and Other Impacts**

This section is intended to address the visual impacts of the Schumann Wind Project during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. As currently reconfigured and sited, the Project's overall impact is limited. Milton Freewater, the nearest town is over four miles away.

Unavoidable impacts during the short construction phase will consist primarily of truck noise, road dust (mitigated through dust control measures), and occasional traffic congestion. Once the Project is fully assembled, it will impart a visual impact in specific locations however this will be limited due to the location and only 4 to 5 turbines. FAA warning lights may be visible from certain locations at night. It should also be noted that the Schumann Wind Project sits outside the proposed "Goal 5 Amendment Area" east of State Highway 11.

Through careful siting and appropriate setbacks visual impacts during operations of the Project will be kept to a minimum.

During the decommissioning phase, there will be minimal additional visual impact while large equipment and decommissioning crews work to dismantle the facility. As a result of the decommissioning process, the visual impact of the Project will be eliminated. Project components, including turbines, transmission lines, and substation will be dismantled, salvaged locally, or removed from the area. The Project footprint will be reasonably restored to its original condition.