

Business to Business

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The Business Newspaper for Lewis County and Southwest Washington

Continuing the county energy legacy Coyote Crest hopes to generate electricity by 2011

By Paula Collucci
Business to Business

Wind turbines are expected to generate electricity at the Coyote Crest Wind Energy Park in the fall of 2011, David McClain, of Coyote Crest, explained.

McClain serves as senior director of development for the \$230 million Coyote Crest project. EverPower, which owns the park, has wind power projects in seven states and is quickly becoming a leader in wind power development.

McClain said the environmental impact study was published in July and is now open for public comment.

"People can access the draft by going to the county Website," McClain said. "That process will take, public and review and the final decision by the county, (possibly until September). ... That all depends on how complicated the process is."

Once the Lewis County Commissioners approve the plan, Coyote Crest has a few more permits to obtain, McClain said.

Construction should begin, McClain estimated, by the spring of 2011.

"Hopefully, we can complete it by October 2011," McClain explained.

He also noted that unforeseen issues like weather can affect progress.

In the meantime, McClain will tackle the logistics of the complicated project.

"We are in the process of selecting a



Photo illustration courtesy of Coyote Crest

Simulated wind turbines generators blow in the wind in the Doty hills. The photo, a view looking northwest from the intersection of U.S. Highway 6 and Stevens Road, is a simulation of the Coyote Crest Wind Energy Park. Construction on the park should begin in the spring of 2011.

contractor for design and engineering," he said.

After a sizeable local response from interested subcontractors, McClain said he compiled a local resource guide.

"We are providing that list to the contractors so they can incorporate that into their construction approach," he explained.

And that cooperative approach is at the

heart of EverPower's model, McClain said. Working together has allowed EverPower to start projects like this in seven other states.

It's all about working together from a city to international level, McClain said. After all, it was the partnership between EverPower and Weyerhaeuser's McDonald Tree Farm to lease the 3,755 acres that gave the project a location.

Coyote Crest will be the result of several private and public entities, cities, counties, ports, states and even countries' efforts—all culminating to form this energy park right here in Lewis County.

To build each of the massive 47 wind turbine generators at Coyote Crest, parts

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will be transported, after an initial trip via rail or boat, from the Port of Longview in Cowlitz County and the Port of Vancouver in Clark County, along Interstate 5 to the park.

"We are talking up to five major suppliers internationally to deliver the equipment," McClain said.

McClain said EverPower chose the ports because of their capabilities.

"There are two terminals that are equipped to readily offload wind turbine equipment: the Ports of Vancouver and Longview," he explained. "Certain suppliers have agreements with the Port of Vancouver and some with Longview. Some of the parts could even come in from the Port of Tacoma."

The specific piece of the turbine being shipped determines the port. Some items manufactured in the Midwest ship with a trucking fleet.

"We could essentially have towers, the big steel tube towers, coming through Tacoma. The generators will be delivered through Longview. A lot of stuff will be coming by truck," he explained.

Then there are the electrical components and even manufacturing times frames to contend with, McClain said of the monumental project.

"Once we get (county) approval, there is about a four to six month process getting it all together and trying to create a critical path," McClain said of the organization.

Although some of the equipment may come from international suppliers, McClain said EverPower tries to utilize U.S. suppliers.

"They are all U.S. suppliers, generally, and many are here in the northwest," he

said.

To help understand the scope of the project, McClain used the main crane that will erect the wind turbines as an example.

"It takes a very big crane. ... In fact, it takes two cranes to build (the main crane)," he illustrated. "It has to be able to lift 52 tons. The level of sophistication for that—there are only a few companies that can do that."

As for the local response, EverPower held a Coyote Crest open house in June at the Pe Ell High School.

Residents, eager to hear about the economic benefits of the project and potential impacts, filled the schoolroom and quickly the event became standing room only.

"I was very appreciative of the turnout," McClain said. "We had people as far away as North Lewis County. I was very impressed and very appreciative."

Residents came armed with questions and McClain took the opportunity to answer those questions in a far less formal setting.

One resident, whose property borders the project, expressed concern over park construction.

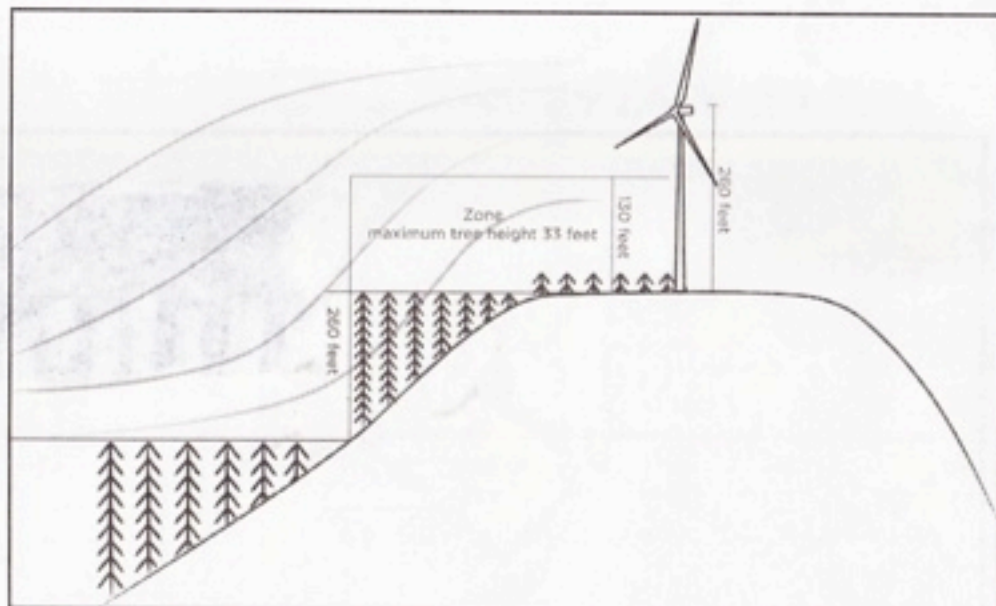
"I live on Coyote Crest. I'm still concerned about how they are going to put the road through," Ruby Grunenfelder, an Oakville resident, said.

Grunenfelder did say she appreciated being able to voice her concerns directly with Coyote Crest representatives. McClain assured her that Coyote Crest will help minimize the impact.

"A lot of questions got asked and were answered," he said. "It was a good way to keep the community informed. It's their backyard."

But what is really getting people of West Lewis County excited is the economic impact that Coyote Crest has promised:

•The project will employ nearly 100 construction workers and will create 10 long-term jobs.



Graphs courtesy of EverPower

•The tax revenues will inject more than \$2 million annually to local government, the fire district, schools and other public institutions.

•Local construction revenue should reach \$10.6 million by the end of construction.

•Officials estimate an additional \$8.5 million in annual payroll and local purchases will also be generated.

McClain said the project has been in the

planning phase for about three years now and credited the Lewis County Economic Development Council (EDC) and the Lewis County Planning Division for their efforts to help move this project into the draft approval phase.

"I'd like to compliment the EDC. It has been very helpful. They understand where to go, how to get things done, and who to contact," McClain emphasized.

