

RNP Members

June 21, 2011



Renewable
Northwest
Project

Washington Wind Farms:

\$40 Million in Property Taxes Benefitting Rural & Urban Communities

As of the end of the 2010 tax year, wind farms across Washington have contributed over \$40 million in property tax payments to the counties in which they operate and to the state's general fund.ⁱ Renewable energy projects are not only providing clean energy that protects our environment, but they have also become important sources of revenue that boost rural and urban economies. Wind farm property tax payments directly benefit local tax districts and public services by contributing support to public schools, fire services, rural hospitals, waste water treatment plants and road maintenance departments. Additionally, because increased revenues can lower the assessed tax rate (per \$1,000 value) for residents and businesses, county communities pay less but receive more.

As Washington tackles budgetary challenges that impact communities statewide, counties that receive wind facility tax revenues enjoy fiscal support and stability that permeates a variety of social services and business sectors. The Maryhill Museum of Art, a leading museum in the region and a unique cultural resource, is one of the beneficiaries of renewable wind energy development. The museum received a \$500,000 donation toward its expansion from Cannon Powerⁱⁱ and is guaranteed at least \$100,000 per year for leasing land for fifteen wind turbines.ⁱⁱⁱ Through its partnership with clean energy development, Maryhill Museum is providing both cultural and environmental sustainability for its community, harnessing natural resources to support arts performances, educational programs, hiking trails and the conservation of native plants.ⁱⁱ

Property tax payments from Washington's renewable energy projects are building more resilient rural and statewide economies and have helped renewable resource rich counties weather the economic downturn. These data case studies prove that renewable energy is stimulating economic development as Washington residents are realizing myriad social and environmental benefits.

3Degrees
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CH2M Hill
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Climate Solutions
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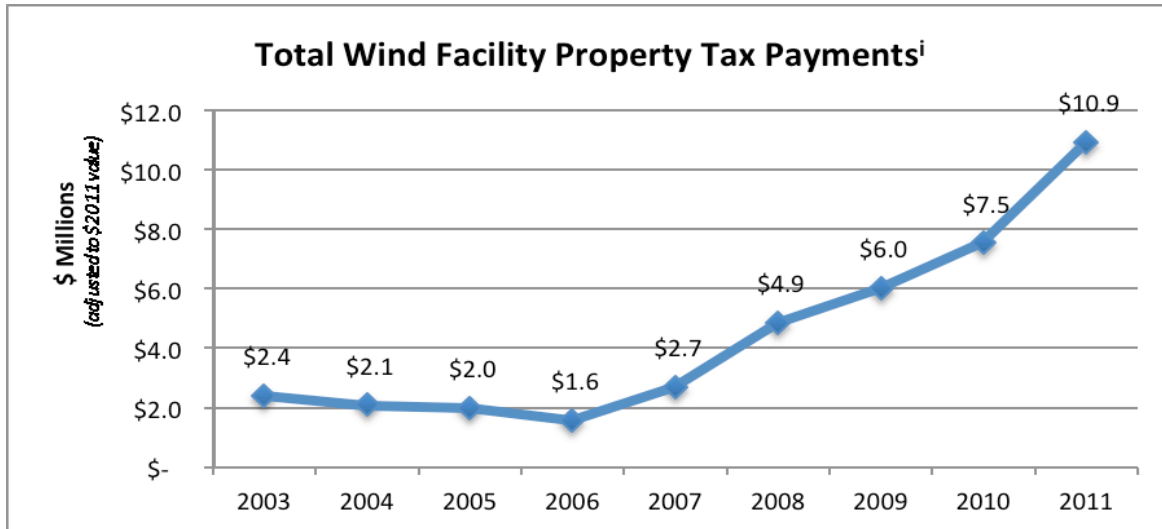


Figure 1. Total Yearly Property Tax Payments by Washington Wind Facilities in 2011 value.ⁱ

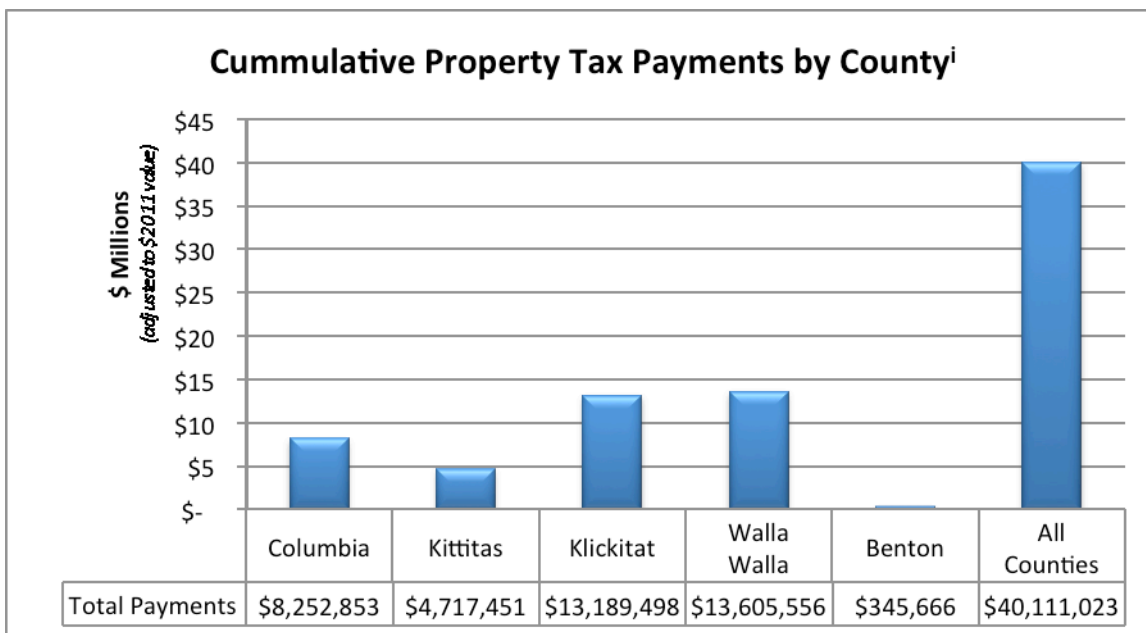


Figure 2. Cummulative Wind Facility Property Tax Payments by County in 2011 value.ⁱ

ⁱ Property taxes are levied on both real and personal property with turbines classified as personal property. Property tax data was obtained from County Assessors and Treasurers. This data includes the PUD Privilege Tax paid by Energy Northwest for the Nine Canyons wind facility in Benton County. Public Utility Districts (PUDs) pay an in lieu “PUD Privilege Tax” levied by the state and shared with local taxing districts. The total value of all payments are adjusted for inflation to \$2011 using the Consumer Price Index at: <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>.

ⁱⁱ Originally published by Mary Hopkin at Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business. Downloaded from <http://www.cannonpowergroup.com/media/news-articles/maryhill-museum-of-art-plans-expansion/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Originally published by Rebecca Lacy at OregonLive.com July 8th, 2009. Downloaded from: <http://www.cannonpowergroup.com/media/in-the-media/maryhill-museum-leases-land-to-wind-farm/>