

# MONTANA WIND POWER



## POLICY

The Renewable Energy Standard, passed in 2005, requires electric utilities to acquire 15% of their energy from new renewable resources by 2015.

Both of Montana's largest utilities, NorthWestern Energy and Montana Dakota Utilities, are already meeting the overall standard. NorthWestern Energy is primarily meeting the standard with energy from the Judith Gap Wind Farm and the new Spion Kop Wind Farm. The two projects are also the two lowest-cost, long-term, fixed-price, resources on NorthWestern Energy's system.

### Unit Prices of Selected Sources of NorthWestern's Electric Supply from January 2009 through June 2012



■ Non-Renewable Plant    ■ Renewable Plant

\* The Spion Kop unit price is a levelized estimate and does not reflect actual historic output.



Renewable Northwest Project

For additional information, contact Jeff L. Fox: [jeff@rnp.org](mailto:jeff@rnp.org) or (406) 599-2916

# BENEFITS

Since the Renewable Energy Standard was enacted, Montana has seen more than \$1.6 billion of capital investment in renewable energy, the creation of 1,500 high-paying construction jobs, 100 permanent jobs, and 650 megawatts of newly installed renewable energy.



Two-thirds of that new energy serves out of state customers, a Montana-made export attracted here because of our excellent wind resource and welcoming policies.

As of 2011, estimated annual lease payments and wind property taxes<sup>1</sup> in just three states—Montana, Colorado, and Kansas--added up to \$23.6 million. In the U.S. combined, annual lease payments and property taxes from wind farms totaled \$411 million.

Project	Capacity (MW)	Capital Investment (Million \$)	Construction Jobs	Permanent Jobs	Project Year
Judith Gap	135	\$203	200	12	2005
Horshoe Bend	9	\$15	20	1.5	2006
Martinsdale Colony	2.8	\$5	10	0.5	2006
Diamond Willow	30	\$45	100	4	2008
Glacier Wind Farm	210	\$550	486	40	2008
Gordon Butte	9.6	\$20	20	1	2012
Rim Rock Wind Park	189	\$400	300	20	2012
Spion Kop	40	\$86	100	4	2012
Musselshell 1 (Shawmut)	10	\$20	38	2	2012
Musselshell 2 (Shawmut)	10	\$20	37	1	2012
Various Other Projects	1.5	\$4	8	less than 1	Varies
<b>TOTAL EXISTING</b>	<b>646.9</b>	<b>\$1,368</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>86</b>	

A 2012 bipartisan public opinion survey shows that 75% of Montanans support increasing the state's renewable energy standard. 86% of Montana voters support the development of wind and solar energy.<sup>2</sup>

Montana's largest paper, the Billings Gazette, endorsed wind power in saying, "When businesses harness Montana's wind energy, private landowners, local and state governments and workers share the benefits<sup>3</sup>... More than a dozen wind farms scattered across Montana have a total electricity generating capacity of 647 megawatts. They represent \$1.3 billion in capital investment, creation of 1,319 construction jobs and 86 permanent jobs. Together, they paid \$5.4 million in taxes in 2010. By 2018, these same wind farms will be paying \$8.9 million in property taxes as abatements expire."

The Governors' Wind Energy Coalition<sup>4</sup>, a bipartisan group which includes the governors of Montana, Colorado, and Kansas, said adding wind power "reduce[s] total consumer energy costs over time, diminish[es] our dependence on foreign oil, decrease[s] the trade deficit, and lessen[s] carbon emissions."

# SUPPORT

- [http://www.awea.org/learnabout/publications/factsheets/upload/Rural-Development\\_AWEAFactsheet\\_11-2011.pdf](http://www.awea.org/learnabout/publications/factsheets/upload/Rural-Development_AWEAFactsheet_11-2011.pdf)
- <http://www.rmp.org/index.php?q=node/1399>
- [http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/editorial/gazette-opinion/gazette-opinion-keep-tax-credit-that-spurs-wind-energy-growth/article\\_de6ec163-7080-5dbb-a323-42e839996050.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/opinion/editorial/gazette-opinion/gazette-opinion-keep-tax-credit-that-spurs-wind-energy-growth/article_de6ec163-7080-5dbb-a323-42e839996050.html)
- [http://www.governorswindenergycoalition.org/?page\\_id=73](http://www.governorswindenergycoalition.org/?page_id=73)