

# SUNSHINE ARIZONA WIND ENERGY, LLC

## **Sunshine Wind Park - Arizona's leader in utility-scale wind energy generation**

For Immediate Release

Northern Arizona is poised to take a leadership role in achieving the Western Governors' Association goal for clean, secure and diversified energy. During a five-hour public hearing Tuesday evening, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported the 60-megawatt Sunshine Wind Park 35 miles east of Flagstaff. "Coconino County needs to be a leader in renewable energy," said Board Chair Elizabeth Archuleta. "This is an incredible opportunity for our County and the right thing to do." The Board deliberated on balancing scenic corridors with renewable energy, and ruled 3-2 to uphold the Planning & Zoning Commission's unanimous position to approve turbines on both the north and south sides of I-40. Supervisors Archuleta and Hill dissented, preferring to limit turbines for the wind park south of I-40.

Tuesday's hearing was in response to an appeal filed by Red Gap Ranch, in which they alleged that the wind park would reduce property values for a future master planned housing development. Roger Clark, Flagstaff, and Brad Andes, Meteor Crater Enterprises, each encouraged the Board to consider the greater good of the community and approve the wind park. "This project is directly in the Meteor Crater viewshed and we have weighed any impact on visitors and our business," said Andes, "but we need to look beyond selfish interests to the greater good of the community for better and more reliable power and clean skies."

"We are very pleased to have the broad support of Coconino County and the community to move forward with the wind park," said Warren Byrne, Managing Director of Sunshine Arizona Wind Energy. "Most significantly, we appreciate the opportunity to move forward with turbines north of I-40 so that Hopi participation in the project can be assured."

If wind turbines were limited to south of I-40, participation in the project by The Hopi Tribe would be jeopardized. Cedric Kuwaninvaya, Hopi Land Team Chair, spoke eloquently about Native Americans' relationship with nature, and how the wind park project is in line with their culture and tradition to share the wind. "In the Spring we await the soft winds to clean our lands and bring new growth. Using the winds to make electricity brings together new technology with our traditional values to grow something new and beneficial to our people and our neighbors," Kuwaninvaya said. "We are anxious to get into wind energy, it is a good influence." His comments were invited by Supervisor Yellowman who sought to ensure Hopi participation in the wind park project.

Northern Arizona University will also realize direct benefits from Sunshine Wind Park. The University will have first-in-nation university access to a utility-scale wind energy project for research and academic programs in addition to funding for scholarships and interdisciplinary studies.

The proposed Sunshine Wind Park will be Arizona's first utility-scale wind power facility. Forty state-of-the-art wind turbines will generate over 130 million kilowatts of clean energy per year, equivalent to two-thirds of Flagstaff's residential needs. The wind park will be located on private lands leased from the Bar-T-Bar Ranch, The Hopi Tribe and landowner Mitch Buckingham. Entitlements on State Trust Parcels are under consideration. Sunshine Wind Park will be approximately 35 miles east of Flagstaff along I-40 near the Meteor Crater exit.

Supervisor Hill emphasized that “we need to move renewable energy forward for the benefit of everyone on the planet.” Supervisors Ryan and Taylor complimented the County Planning and Zoning Commission for their unanimous recommendation of approval for the project, concurring that they could also make the findings which the Commission affirmed on January 25. They also stated that they did not see detrimental impact to property owners in the vicinity of the project. Representatives of Sunshine Wind Park cited data from two independent studies that found no evidence that wind parks harmed property values within a five-mile viewshed. This data included an independent analysis of over 24,000 property sales within a five-mile radius of 10 wind parks in seven states, and analysis of assessed values based on interviews with county assessors from 13 counties in eight states.

The Sunshine Wind Park location was selected after two years of study for its strong wind resource, close access to an APS transmission line, dry desert habitat and associated minimal impact to wildlife, and opportunities for mixed land use including grazing, agriculture and wind energy. Ecological, avian, archaeological, cultural, historical, noise, telecommunications and aviation studies have been conducted and additional field work is being done to finalize turbine siting.

In addition to providing pollution-free, cost-competitive and sustainable energy, the Sunshine Wind Park will offer numerous benefits throughout northern Arizona. These include preservation of traditional land uses, property tax revenues, and an opportunity for NAU to take a leading role in university-based wind energy research.

The project is being developed by Sunshine Arizona Wind Energy, LLC, a partnership of local Flagstaff investors and Foresight Wind Energy, LLC, a professional wind energy development company. Construction is anticipated to begin this summer and be completed in December 2005. Development of the wind park is timed to take advantage of a federal production tax credit, one of many factors important to project viability and making clean energy cost-competitive with fossil-fuel generation.

Wind energy is the fastest growing energy source in the world and offers significant environmental advantages over fossil fuels. Wind is a free and plentiful fuel. Unlike coal and gas-fired power plants, wind parks require minimal amounts of water and do not generate particulate emissions and toxic pollutants. Modern wind turbines are quiet and designed to minimize impacts to birds and other wildlife. The cost of wind power is stable over time and not subject to fuel price volatility.

Media Contact:

Amy LeGere  
928-600-1665  
amy.legere@netgenuitybiz.com  
[info@sunshinewind.com](mailto:info@sunshinewind.com)

Foresight Energy Company  
Warren Byrne, Managing Director  
415-522-1101  
wbyrne@foresightenergy.com