

Information related to the ORION-Jordan Creek Windfarm

Please note that this section of the county webpage will be updated as pertinent information becomes available.

Why is Warren County interested in pursuing a wind project?

The first factor is that the proposed \$350M dollar investment will increase the assessed valuation for the county. The assessed value for a county multiplied by the state controlled tax rate equals how much money the county will bring in to provide for basic government services. An increase in assessed valuation means that your property taxes will either go down or at a minimum, increase at a slower pace than would normally happen.

Second, the payment of \$7.5M dollars to the county can fund improvements that would otherwise not be possible.

Wind Energy Timeline

2016-County approval process begins for a Warren County Jordan Creek Wind Farm

2014-Orion Renewables opens an office in Williamsport

2012-Warren County Area Plan Commission proposes wind energy ordinance

2008-Invenergy hosts first wind sign up meetings in Warren County

Zoning:

The Warren County Area Plan Commission proposed and the county commissioners adopted the county wind ordinance on September 16, 2012.

An amendment to the wind ordinance was adopted by the Warren County Commissioners on February 2, 2015. The purpose of this amendment was to make the setback requirement from roads and right of ways consistent with Benton County-1.1 times the height of a WECS(wind energy conversion system) with blade tip at its highest point.

An amendment to the wind ordinance was adopted by the Warren County Commissioners on August 4, 2016. Changes:

- Clarify noise standards
- Correct language relating to the zoning appeal process
- Establish construction permit fees

Note: copies of the wind ordinance, amendments, the special exception process, and other general information is available on the county website under "Zoning"

Three agreements define the relationship between Warren County and the wind developer.

- The Economic Development Agreement
- The Road and Drainage Agreement
- The Decommissioning Agreement

The Economic Development Agreement

- Summary of the county value of the agreement “link” and the EDA “link”
- If all three phases of the project are completed, Warren County will receive a total of \$7.5M dollars in cash payments over a 5-year period. Once the project starts, these payments are guaranteed by contract to the county.
- Warren County receives **\$11,406,182** in taxes and cash payments in the first ten years.
- County expenses for lawyers and accountants will total \$80,000. So long as the project moves forward, Orion pays this expense.

What is a tax abatement?

The county has a long track record of approving tax abatements to companies that desire to locate or expand in the county. A tax abatement provides for a discount in taxes paid over time as an incentive for the company to invest in the county. Without local investment, taxes generally go up and local services may not keep up with the needs of residents. In the case of Jordan Creek, the county is receiving cash payments (up to \$7.5M), in exchange for granting the tax abatements. An additional requirement to grant abatements is to preserve or increase local employment. The project will create 3-5 local permanent high skilled jobs.

The Road and Drainage Agreement

- Once approved by the county, this agreement will be posted to the website
- The road agreement dictates how all roads, bridges, culverts, and drainage (within the county right-of-ways) will be maintained.
- Roads used by the project will be upgraded/“beefed up” before the project starts. At the end of the project, roads will be put back as good as or better than before. A rigid set of specifications will dictate how the road work is done. Roads will be guaranteed for two years after the project is over.
- All road work is completely funded by Orion and just as with the Economic Development Agreement, funds are guaranteed to be in place during construction as well as during the post project guarantee period.
- Orion pays for a county selected professional engineer to be the inspector of all road work.

The Decommissioning Agreement

- Once approved by the county, this agreement will be posted to the website
- This agreement specifies that should the project cease to operate, funds will be available to tear the equipment down. These funds will be available to the county and held by a neutral third party financial firm