

## STAFF REPORT

<b>BOARD MEETING DATE:</b>	October 3, 2023
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**CATEGORY:** Board Matters 4

**SUBJECT:** Receive an update regarding the Fountain Wind Project and consider providing direction to staff to allocate funds towards community education (Sponsored by Supervisor Jones).

**DEPARTMENT:** Clerk of the Board

**SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #:** District 3

**DEPARTMENT CONTACT:** Stewart Buettell, Deputy County Executive Officer (530) 225-5550

**STAFF REPORT APPROVED BY:** David J. Rickert, County Executive Officer

<b><u>Vote Required?</u></b>	<b><u>General Fund Impact?</u></b>
Simple Majority Vote	Future General Fund Impact

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></b>
Receive an update regarding the Fountain Wind Project and consider providing direction to staff to allocate funds towards community education. (Sponsored by Supervisor Jones).

**DISCUSSION**

The Fountain Wind Project (Project) is a wind energy generation facility proposed by Fountain Wind, LLC., on approximately 4,500 acres of private, leased land in the unincorporated area of Shasta County.

On June 22, 2021, the Shasta County Planning Commission (PC) unanimously denied the application for the conditional use permit necessary to build the Project, citing testimony received regarding impacts to the local communities and private landowners, potential for increased fire danger, impediments to firefighting efforts, damage to wildlife, and damage to both cultural and tribal resources. In addition, the County further found that these impacts would be detrimental and injurious to the general welfare of people in the County and to County property.

The decision by the PC was appealed by Fountain Wind, LLC., to the Shasta County Board of Supervisors. Fountain Wind, LLC., including a modification and shrank the scope of the project from 72 turbines, to 48. On October 26, 2021 (pursuant to Shasta County Code section 17.92.030), that the Shasta County Board of Supervisors voted to uphold the Planning Commission's decision and deny the permit.

Between January 3 and January 11, 2023, Fountain Wind, LLC., re-filed the Project for approval with the California Energy Commission (CEC) under Assembly Bill (AB) 205. AB 205 was signed into law on June 30, 2022, giving the CEC extended siting authority over certain renewable energy facilities, including any "solar photovoltaic or terrestrial wind electrical generating power plant with a generating capacity of 50 megawatts or more and any facilities appurtenant thereto."

On March 14, 2023, and effective April 13, 2023, the Board of Supervisors adopted Shasta County Ordinance No. SCC 2023-01, which amends Shasta County Code Section 17.88.335, "Large wind energy systems," in its entirety to further clarify, define, and prohibit large wind energy systems "in all zone districts of the unincorporated area of the County of Shasta and no permit or approval of any type shall be issued therefor."

The Project is currently under review by the CEC, as part of the "opt-in" certification allowable pursuant to AB 205.

**ALTERNATIVES**

The Board could defer discussion of this item to a future date or provide alternate direction to staff.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

The County Administrative Office has reviewed this report.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no General Fund impact associated with discussing this item. Depending on how the Board directs staff, there may be additional General Fund impact from subsequent, associated activities.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1: Ordinance No. SCC 2023-01