

DATE: May 10, 2010 13:49:29 PST

WWU Students Re-Approve 'Green Fee' to Keep University Powered by Renewable-Energy Sources

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BELLINGHAM – Western Washington University students have voted overwhelmingly to approve a new, expanded “green fee” which will continue to finance WWU’s purchase of renewable-energy certificates and keep the university running on sustainable sources of energy.

In February 2005, WWU’s initial green fee – the first student-imposed green fee in the nation – was approved by the University’s Board of Trustees. This spring, the WWU student body voted overwhelmingly – more than 80 percent in favor – to renew the Green Energy Fee.

In addition to funding the purchase of the renewable energy credits (RECs) – 100 percent of WWU’s power now comes from the Endeavor Wind Farm in Iowa – the new fee on students also finances student projects devoted to increasing energy efficiency, decreasing energy consumption, generating renewable energy, and reducing greenhouse-gas output on WWU’s campus, as well as allowing for the creation of a student position within WWU’s Associated Students that will be tasked with overseeing the fee’s programs.

Depending largely on the prevailing cost of the RECs, the student fee will cost each student no more than \$9 per academic quarter; the expanded fee is an increase in cost from the current fee of four dollars per academic quarter.

Matthew Moroney, vice president of WWU’s Students for Renewable Energy, said the recent vote and expiration of the 2005 fee was a chance to expand the fee’s role.

“The landslide approval indicates students are willing to pay an increased \$5 for expanded educational opportunities in a period of extreme budget cuts,” he said. “These opportunities come both directly for financing of their peers’ projects and for trickle-down dialogs and displays that will teach WWU about the impacts of energy production and viable alternative technologies to reduce our massive environmental footprint.”

Now that the proposed fee has been approved by the student body, and before it can go into effect, it will need to be approved by both the Associated Students Board of the Directors and the WWU Board of Trustees.

For more information on the passage of WWU’s new Green Energy Fee, contact the WWU Office of University Communications at (360) 650-3350.