# Wind Resource Map Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Where did the County get the data to produce the County's proposed Wind Resource Map?

   The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), which is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development.

2. What are the wind power classifications used on the Wind Resource Map?

| Resource Potential | Average Annual Wind Speed at 50m (mph) |
|---|---|
| Marginal | 12.5 -14.3 |
| Fair | 14.3 -15.7 |
| Good | 15.7 -16.8 |
| Excellent | 16.8 -17.9 |
| Outstanding Superb | 17.9 -19.7 |
| Superb | >19.7 |

3. Where does the NREL get data?

   NREL gathers data from many sources including the U.S Geological Survey, the National Climatic Data Center, and commercial sources. All new data sources are assessed for reliability prior to use.

4. When was the wind map data last updated?

   The wind map data was originally gathered from the field in 2003 by the federal government (NREL). Since 2003, the modeling tools used to analyze the data and produce the wind resource maps have been periodically updated. The County's proposed Wind Resource Map was created from the most current modeled NREL data as of March 2011, and not been update since.

5. How is the data analyzed?

   The NREL utilizes a Wind Resource Assessment Model that combines GIS data and meteorological inputs to analyze wind resource potential.

6. Why is there a need for meteorological testing facilities if this data is available?

   NREL wind resource data is considered the baseline for indentifying wind resource areas. Turbine applicants use this data to identify potential projects sites. MET towers are then utilized to gather site specific information and indentify the best turbine locations and height to maximize the available wind resource.