WELD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HOST GOVERNOR ON TOUR OF NIOBRARA DATA CENTER ENERGY PARK

WELD COUNTY, CO – Weld County Commissioners welcomed Governor John Hickenlooper Wednesday afternoon, February 8, 2012, when he arrived for a tour of the Niobrara Data Center Energy Park. The energy park, located in northern Weld County near Carr, Colorado, is designed to be the future home of a mega data center complete with multiple energy sources including a solar, geothermal and natural gas.

Project developer Craig Harrison, purchased the 640 acres in 2010 and brought the idea for an energy park to the Weld County Commissioners. As a result, the Weld County site is the first county-initiated industrial PUD (planned unit development) site in the state. “It’s designed for alternative energies that can directly power a data center and act in what is called a micro grid,” said Harrison. “It is also zoned for energy storage and energy creation from solar and natural gas.”

At a press conference held after the site tour, Governor Hickenlooper spoke favorably about the site. “Technology is so dependent upon energy, and you have all of these different fiber optic technology corridors going north and south and east and west that intersect right here,” said Hickenlooper. “While simultaneously, you also have not just natural gas…but wind energy and solar energy. Again, you have a confluence of multiple energy sources. It really is a unique opportunity for redundant energy to make sure that a strategically important data center is never at risk.”

The Commissioners agreed saying the plans for this site elevate Weld County to a national and international level when competing for data center business.
Craig Harrison (right), founder of the Niobrara Data Center Energy Project explained the details of the energy park to Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper before the Governor took a tour of the site. From left: Weld County Commissioner Sean Conway, the Governor's Policy Advisor Mary Ellen "M.E." Smith, Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer, Weld County Commissioner David Long, Governor John Hickenlooper and project developer Craig Harrison.

Commissioner David Long commented on how “out-of the-box” thinking lead to the formation of the energy park. The Commissioners worked with Harrison to create the first county-initiated industrial PUD (planned unit development) site in the state.

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