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ENERGY FACILITY SITE
EVALUATION COUNCIL

Letter 154

May 12, 2000

Allen Fiksdal

I am forwarding comments regarding the Sumas Energy 2 Generation Facility Draft EIS.

As an ordinary person with a limited amount of time to devote to these matters of public concern, it is a disappointment to receive a document that is so cumbersome to review. I have had difficulty locating within the document useful information. Is this because the authors Jones & Stokes are hired proponents of the proposal?

One of my concerns is the huge amount of toxic material that would be emitted by this facility. The heavy metals and oxides will affect all living things, from Vaux's swift to aging human asthmatics at home. To deny this would be irresponsible. 1

Removal of habitat (3.5-22 A-56 + A5-15) will impact quality of what remains of our County's natural land & water forms. As a commercial fisherman indigenous to Whatcom County, I am concerned with turning the tide on our sorry state of the Salmon resource. How will any of this project help? I understand that the proposed facility will cause acid rain, remove trees in riparian areas, take huge amounts 2

of gravel and promote the "it's just a ditch - we don't want salmon there" mentality. Answer if this true or false in your response to my comments.

Then there is the issue of water. As a community member I do not want to cede to a for profit business ultimate billions of gallons of water over the life expectancy of this unneccesary proposal. That would be a ridiculous commitment of precious public resource. What is going to be the best use of available water resources in twenty years with relevancy toward the salmon resource? Do salmon have a right to water or are "water rights" only held by human entities? Why should our community sign off on water I guarantee we will need for power we do not need in the same community? 3

The gigantic oil storage reservoir and it's associated problems are another reason to reject this proposal. Impacts from the tanker traffic alone will cause an array of pollution (leaks, collisions, black truck engine exhaust, brake dust etc.). Will this be good for citizens? Is the 4

smoke belching tanker traffic a good thing for the bicyclist or pedestrian walking the same route?

Will the gravel trucks sprinkle the roads with their load as is otta the case? Who will pay for cracked windshields resulting from this? I note that the Jones + Stokes outfit has determined no "measurable increase" in vehicle accidents will result from the proposal, although the previous sentence states that the more traffic the more frequent the accident rate. How can that conclusion be drawn? (See 3.10-6 Safety) and answer if this is a form of whitewash by Jones + Stokes. 5

What of the hazards pertinent to construction + operation of the gas supply line? I remember a few years ago the huge flame lighting up the valley when a pipe burst north of Deming. How otta will that level of mishap occur? We know that the office of Pipeline Safety has a poor history of doing their job. Is this a good thing? Who will ensure the safety we demand as citizens? Is an inept bureau 6

facilitating the advent of this project to ensure the growth of their empire?

Along that same line of thinking I would like to inquire about the Site Evaluation Council to whom I write. How many sites have come before the council? How many have been approved/disapproved? Is the council a rubber stamping machine of the for profit utility industry? What proof is there of an allegance to the public's best interest? 7

I would also like to ask about the Jones + Stokes outfit. How many projects have they written an EIS for? How many were approved/disapproved? Do they present impartial data + conclusions? I do not think they do. They are proponents of projects and have produced a biased document. 8

To close I ~~would~~ will present several questions.

Are the emissions from a plant as proposed good for the health of people and animals? I understand that lead, mercury, arsenic, ammonia and SO2 are toxic - is this correct? 9

Will all the gravel used to jack up the site elevation affect Whatcom County's natural landform. Will 10

any gravel be removed from the river where it may well be needed by salmon centuries from now? Will it elevate the local price of gravel affecting small consumers? Will mineral resource lands suffer depletion as a result and more ag land ~~will~~ be converted to fulfill the mandate of GMA regarding those mineral resource lands? 11 12 13

Why do we want to create unnatural noise for neighbors of the project? Who cares about this? Were those people asked? 14

If newer/bigger power lines are installed to disburse the electricity how many people will be negatively affected? By exposure to increased EMF? By lessened property values? By the ugly imagery? Will raptors die as a result of lighting upon the lines? Will local homeowners benefit by living under or around power transmission lines that send the electricity far away? 15 16 17

Who will pay to repair the road damage from heavy truck traffic due to construction of the proposed plant? Who will be impacted by the fuel oil tanker traffic? Will canadian truck traffic have much the same driving etiquette as is evidenced throughout Whatcom 18 19 20

County today. I often see Canadian Commercial truck traffic breaking our laws regarding speeding, tailgating and recklessness. Why should we encourage a significant increase (fuel supply trucks) of this traffic? It will not benefit anyone when there are vehicular accidents resulting from their frequently dangerous operation. Have the environmental impacts of thousands of tanker trips been declared "not adverse" by this Jones & Stokes outfit? 20

Regarding the huge tax windfall... The city of Blaine was sold a bill of goods with the Co Gen plant by G.P. Now it appears $800,000 in annual sales tax is lacking because of corporate scheming with a capitalist spirit. How can there be any assurance of continued contribution over time with regard to sales tax? What about the tax breaks sought now? 21 22

It appears to me that poor little economically deprived Sumas has been preyed upon by such grand promises of revenue, witness 3.8.8, because there are "no concentrations of low income or minority people near the site", there is no infringement of environmental justice rights. Does this mean that because the residents nearby aren't really that economically deprived 23

that they can be poisoned in good faith?

I apologize for the handwritten form in which I am sending this. I have been writing it as I travel from B'ham to Alaska.

Thank you for accepting my comments

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