

1 additional workload. I served on the Puget Power Consumer Advisory Panel in
2 1991-1992, advising on locating power plants. I was appointed to the Governor's
3 Mineral Lands Advisory committee to the Land Use Study Commission in 1997.
4 I served for two years as the Chair of the Whatcom County Natural Resources
5 Committee, and am presently serving as the Chair of the Whatcom County
6 Planning and Development Committee. I am still a member of the Natural
7 Resources Committee, and served as a member of the Planning and Development
8 Committee prior to my appointment as Chair, dealing with land use issues. I have
9 also served as a Board Member on the Opportunity Council for two years; on the
10 Drayton Harbor and Portage Bay Shellfish Advisory Committees for two years,
11 and am a current member of the Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee
12 serving under the Northwest Straits Commission created by the U.S. Congress. I
13 also serve as a Board Member of the Northwest Air Pollution Authority. Please
14 see Exhibit _____ (CH-1)

15 **Testimony**

16 **Q. Are you familiar with Darrell Jones and National Energy Systems Company**
17 **(NESCO)?**

18 **A.** Yes. I met Mr. Jones when their company proposed the first power plant in
19 Sumas, now referred to as SE1.

20 **Q. What can you tell us about the company's role in that process?**

21 **A.** On the night of the scheduled public hearing, so many people turned out that they
22 could not all fit in the hall. The company pulled their application.

1 There could not be a public hearing, and no comments could go on the public
2 record. (See Exhibit ____ (CH-2) They re-submitted their application the next
3 morning. The hearing was rescheduled, and when the date arrived, the town of
4 Sumas was flooded. The company insisted that the hearing be held anyway, even
5 though the public could not attend, and that was when their plant was approved.
6 They had to drive out and pick up the City Councilmembers from the streets,
7 where they were dealing with the floodwaters.

8 **Q. How did the company promote their project at that time?**

9 **A.** They promoted it on the basis of jobs, increased tax revenues, and power for
10 Whatcom County homes. Darrell Jones stated publicly that the plant would
11 supply 50 jobs (See Exhibit ____ (CH-2), and their flyer stated that it would
12 provide approximately 35 jobs. The flyer said “We believe most of those jobs
13 will be filled by people from the Sumas area.” According to the locals, there are
14 only two employees from the Sumas area employed at SE1. The company went
15 on to state in the flyer that “Natural gas is one way to generate power without the
16 *health dangers* of burning coal, *oil* or other fossil fuels.” [emphasis added] They
17 also stated that the project would not require additional high voltage lines because
18 existing lines are adequate to carry the power. However, new lines were run after
19 the plant was installed. I quote, “That’s one more reason why all across the
20 country, *small* co-generation facilities such as ours are viewed as the
21 *environmentally responsible* option *in comparison to large* utility plants.”
22 [Emphasis added] At the time, they were proposing a 67 megawatt facility. See
23 Exhibit ____ (CH-3) The new proposed facility, SE2, is 660MW.

1 **Q. What can you tell us about the role of the company in the current application**
2 **process?**

3 A. I have found the company to be less than forthcoming with the public in this
4 process, and appear to be deliberately disseminating misleading information and
5 engaging in scare tactics.

6 **Q. Can you give an example?**

7 A. Yes. There are many examples.

8 An advertisement in the June 25 local paper asked, “What if you flipped the
9 switch and the light didn’t come on? What if there wasn’t enough electricity to
10 run the local school?” See Exhibit ____ (CH-17) However, the Puget Sound
11 Energy grid that serves our schools and homes has 4 power plants in Whatcom
12 County capable of producing 675 MW, while the consumption in Whatcom
13 County is only 370 MW.

14 When questioned in a public meeting about the pollutants emitted from the plant,
15 the consultant for SE2 replied that although 3 tons sounds like a lot, there is a lot
16 of air in those emissions. It took further questioning to reveal that the three tons
17 pertain directly to the pollutants, and the measurement does not include air. See
18 Exhibit ____ (CH-4)

19 The Abbotsford News revealed that Bruce Thompson, a vice-president with SE2,
20 sent a letter to an engineer in Abbotsford, and requested him to put it on City of
21 Abbotsford letterhead, and then send it to EFSEC. See Exhibit ____ (CH-5)

22 In a June 22 news article, Chuck Martin of SE2 stated that I am misleading people
23 by mentioning particular toxics that will be emitted in “very trace amounts.” See

1 Exhibit ____ (CH-6) However, the toxins I have been mentioning in addition to
2 the criteria pollutants are lead (1/2 lb. per day when burning oil), ammonia (139
3 tons per year), mercury (9.6 lbs. per year), arsenic (6 lbs. per year), benzene (1.5
4 tons per year), and toluene (1.4 tons per year) See DEIS pp. 3.1-11, 3.1-12 and
5 Exhibit ____ (CH-7)

6 These are of great concern in any amount, and will be falling on the same area
7 day after day, year after year.

8 In a recent Question and Answer Fact Sheet distributed to government officials
9 and community groups requesting their endorsement (See Exhibit ____ (CH-8),
10 the company implies that this facility will protect our environment by replacing
11 other forms of power generation such as nuclear or coal. However, there are no
12 nuclear or coal plants in our airshed. In the same piece, they state that energy
13 shortages are predicted for our region by 2003, and refer to a Northwest Power
14 Planning Council (NWPPC) Study. However, at a town hall forum, the Director
15 of Planning for the NWPPC clearly stated that they are looking to conservation
16 and load management to increase reliability, and repeatedly emphasized that they
17 are not looking to new generating plants, mentioning that there are already a
18 number of plants sited in the region which were not included in the study. Chuck
19 Martin, vice-president for SE2 was present at the meeting, but continues to claim
20 that the NWPPC study indicates a need for their plant.

21 SE2 also states that “In order to have enough electricity for local homes, schools,
22 businesses, and industry, power is currently imported into Whatcom County.”

23 However, they are fully aware that power is both imported and exported from

1 Whatcom County. The power that is imported is on the BPA grid to serve the
2 aluminum smelter in Ferndale. The power that is exported is on the Puget Sound
3 Energy Grid, where there are 4 power plants capable of producing 675 MW,
4 while consumption is only 390 MW. (370 PSE, 20 PUD#1)

5 They also state that there will be a “two year construction period”, even though
6 the DEIS states it will be only 12-18 months, and Darrell Jones stated publicly
7 that they expected to complete construction within 12 months. Proponents in the
8 legislature continue to cite a “three year construction period.” See Exhibit
9 ____(CH-9)

10 They state in the same piece that a poll conducted this spring showed 73% of
11 county voters favored the plant. However, citizens who spoke about the poll
12 indicated that the questions favored the plant, and that they were polling people
13 who knew nothing about the plant. See Exhibit ____ (CH-10) All of the
14 misinformation in the piece appears to be directed at gaining endorsements for the
15 plant to use in the EFSEC process. See p. 6 of Exhibit ____ (CH-8)

16 In a letter that the company sent to citizens along the proposed route of the power
17 lines, they stated that the poles would be “slightly taller.” However, the majority
18 of the current poles are 34 feet tall; the proposed poles would be 70 to 90 feet tall.
19 They also stated the power would be transported on “existing 115kv lines.”
20 However, there are no 115kv lines on the majority of the proposed routes. See
21 Exhibit ____ (CH-11).

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1 Noise

2 **Q. Is the proposed power plant being located in an area which has a long history**
3 **of industrial use?**

4 **A.** No. The area has historically been rural farmland. A couple of light industries
5 began to locate there approximately 15 years ago. SE1 located there about 8
6 years ago, and the IKO shingle plant located there in the fall of 1998. There are
7 residential neighbors who have lived for generations near the site that are now
8 being exposed to heavy industrial impacts. Historically, it was a quiet agricultural
9 area.

10 **Q. Are you personally aware of any problems associated with the industries in**
11 **that location?**

12 **A.** Yes. The SE1 plant is noisy. When the plant was going through the permitting
13 process, the owner, Darrell Jones told me personally that he was certain I would
14 not hear the plant from my house, even though a University of Washington
15 professor (Dr. Peter Breysse) had explained that I would. Mr. Jones stated he was
16 so sure I would not hear it, that he would buy my house from me if I did. I hear
17 the plant every morning and every night when it is running, but I have not had any
18 offers from Mr. Jones.

19 In the fall of 1998 the shingle plant went into operation, and added to the noise.
20 When IKO was proposed, I had called the city of Sumas on behalf of a constituent
21 who was concerned about the possible impacts of the plant, and was assured by
22 Mr. Davidson that we wouldn't even know it was there, because it was so quiet
23 and clean. On his advice, I called Jamie Randles at the Northwest Air Pollution

1 Authority (NWAPA). I was told that the plant was very clean, and would not be a
2 problem at all. Since the plant (IKO) has come on line, I have received repeated
3 complaints about noise and odors, and understand that this plant has created more
4 complaints for NWAPA than any other plant in their history. Due to these
5 experiences, I am understandably skeptical of assurances from the City of Sumas
6 and regulatory agencies.

7 **Q. Could you describe the sound you hear at your house?**

8 **A.** The sound I hear is a low rumbling, vibrating sound that goes through walls and
9 closed windows. I hear it each night when I go to bed, and each morning when I
10 wake up. I also hear it when I awaken at times in the night.

11 **Q. How do you know that it is the power plant that you are hearing?**

12 **A.** The noise started when the plant went into operation and decreases noticeably
13 during the times that it is being shut down. Before the IKO plant came on line,
14 the noise would be completely gone during shutdowns. When it is not running,
15 we can hear the cows clank against their stanchions at the neighbor's farm. When
16 it is running, we can't, there is just the low hum. When it is shut down, we sleep
17 very well, and awaken refreshed.

18 **Q. Could you be hearing any other noise in addition to the plant?**

19 **A.** Yes. When IKO came on line, the noise got worse.

20 **Q. Do you have any concerns about noise from the proposed plant?**

21 **A.** Yes. Because the new plant will be five times larger, I am concerned about the
22 amount of sound I and the community will be exposed to. The Draft
23 Environmental Statement does not address the low frequency sound that travels

1 great distances from the smokestack. It also does not include the IKO plant in the
2 sound measurements in Appendix B of the DEIS. Even without the IKO plant, it
3 shows that nighttime sound levels in residential neighborhoods are above the
4 levels stated in the state and city ordinances and above EPA guidelines. If you
5 add this plant to it, the DEIS shows that you will get even greater levels, yet the
6 City of Sumas states in their errata sheet that they nevertheless feel this will be
7 legally permissible. See Exhibit _____ (CH-12). I am very concerned that the
8 City of Sumas is not protecting its citizens, or the neighboring community,
9 including my family and myself, and our neighbors north of the border. This
10 sentiment was also expressed by a constituent, who requested that I intervene on
11 his behalf. See Exhibit _____ (CH-13) (Original on file with EFSEC as
12 Attachment F to Constance Hoag's Response to Objections to Intervention)

13 **Flooding**

14 **Q. Do you have concerns about flooding related to the proposed SE2 facility?**

15 **A.** Yes. The area is in the floodplain, and that entire area was under water in the
16 1990 flood. The neighbors just upstream from the plant (the De Vries dairy)
17 stated publicly that last time the floodwaters were within inches of their barn, and
18 the modeling done by the City of Sumas shows that the 150,000 cubic yards of fill
19 to be brought in for the project will increase flood depths at the dairy. They have
20 expressed concern about this issue. See attached Exhibit _____(CH-14) (original
21 is on file with EFSEC as Attachment H to Constance Hoag's Response to
22 Objections to Intervention) I believe the project should not be allowed to go
23 forward unless the flooding impacts are fully mitigated. The De Vries' are second

1 generation farmers, and they and other existing citizens should not be the
2 recipient of floodwaters displaced by the fill for this plant.

3 **Air Quality**

4 **Q. Do you have any concerns about air quality impacts from the proposed SE2**
5 **project?**

6 **A.** Yes.

7 **Q. Could you please explain?**

8 **A.** I am concerned about the amounts of criteria and toxic pollutants emitted by the
9 plant. If you add them up, they total nearly 3 tons per day. This figure does not
10 include carbon dioxide, which is unregulated. That's 3 tons being emitted in the
11 same place day after day, year after year. I am concerned not only with the
12 immediate impacts, but also with the long-term impacts as these toxins
13 accumulate in the soils and waters of the area. The Washington Toxics Coalition
14 also expressed concern, and voiced opposition to the proposed plant. See Exhibit
15 ____ (CH-15).

16 **Q. Why are you concerned, since the company states that it will meet all**
17 **standards, and will be reviewed by regulatory agencies?**

18 **A.** I am concerned because of past experience with regulatory agencies and because
19 medical studies have shown that the current standards are not adequately
20 protecting health. The regulatory agencies lack discretionary power, they simply
21 verify that no laws are being broken and that standards are being met. However,
22 there is ample evidence that the standards they apply do not adequately prevent
23 deterioration of the airshed, and do not adequately protect public health.

1 **Q. Could you give us an example?**

2 **A.** I am personally aware of an example in California, where I previously lived. At
3 the time I lived there, the airshed was meeting Clean Air standards. Shortly
4 before I left, a power plant was permitted in my hometown. It went through all
5 the legal permitting processes, and was required to use BACT, etc. All the
6 projects which were permitted were subject to the same standards, modeling worst
7 case scenarios, etc. Yet now the airshed has some of the worst air in the nation.
8 It has been listed as severe non-attainment. See Exhibit ____ (CH-16). They
9 arrived at that designation legally, using the same standards and processes that we
10 rely on to protect us.

11 Some like to blame cars, and they do play a part, but if you take a careful look at
12 the violations, particulate matter is not a pollutant that cars put out in much
13 quantity. In addition, modeling is supposed to take into account existing air
14 conditions when projecting ambient results.

15 **Q. Do you have concerns about the modeling done for the current plant?**

16 **A.** Yes. Although I am not a scientist, I have observed in reviewing the data and
17 conversing with SE2 officials, consultants, and US regulatory officials that
18 ambient levels in some areas of Canada which will be downwind of the proposed
19 plant have not been taken into consideration in the modeling.

20 I am also concerned, because when SE1 was proposed, there were long lines of
21 cars idling downtown, waiting to cross the border. The potential exists for this to
22 occur again, yet to my knowledge, it is not reflected in the modeling.

1 An additional concern is that the modeling assumes that under Northeast high
2 wind conditions there will be maximum dispersion of emissions because of the
3 velocity of the winds, yet my experience with the Northeast winds in this area is
4 that they drive emissions downward, and everything scuttles along the ground.

5 **Q. You mentioned that the standards do not protect health. Can you give an**
6 **example?**

7 A. Yes. There are numerous studies, such as the “Six Cities Study” done by Harvard,
8 the American Cancer Society study, the 90 Cities Study, and the study done in
9 Seattle on emergency room admissions that demonstrate a correlation between
10 increases in particulate matter and sulfur dioxide levels with increased hospital
11 admissions and mortality rates. In addition, the EPA revised its standards in 1997
12 for particulate matter and ozone because they found that public health was not
13 being adequately protected. Those revisions are held up in court at this time, so
14 this plant will be reviewed under the current standard, even though the
15 epidemiological studies indicate that people’s health will be adversely affected.

16 **Q. You refer to epidemiological studies. Are you a researcher, doctor, or**
17 **scientist?**

18 A. No. I have had the unfortunate circumstance of having a power plant proposed
19 near my home three times, so have become quite familiar with the emissions and
20 their impacts. Out of my concern for my family and my constituents, I have done
21 a great deal of research, and can speak in layman’s terms to the impacts. For
22 further verification of my testimony, please consult with Dr. Jane Koenig, as she
23 is an expert in the field, and can speak with authority on these subjects.

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END OF TESTIMONY

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing testimony is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

DATED: June ____, 2000

By _____
Connie Hoag

Signed at _____, Washington