

106
107 - Green energy is good, or else that is what it says in the marketing brochure. /
108 - There is a place for everything. Yes, I'm saying not in my backyard, but really I'm
... saying not in this ~~part of the Gorge Scenic View Corridor~~, a place where there is a new
... economic engine that is thriving and that is tourism, recreation, and the draw of a better
... lifestyle. The application makes it sound like this is one sad and destitute place with no
... future and for sure plenty of people are hurting from the current economic slowdown, but
... this is no reason to trade our long term economic future and the future that could be for
... one that has a short influx of capital and ^{money} jobs, the most lucrative of which do NOT come
... from the local community. The long term tax revenue from property taxes on depreciating
... windmill equipment is dubious at best as a significant revenue source for our future.
... (\$150 million to construct) but (87.5 million tax base). Basically, even if you are for
... the windmills, our county government is getting hung out to dry on the long term revenue
... stream being collected while the huge profits and tax payer funded subsidies are going
... directly into the developers pockets.

Scoping Comment
#136

109
110 Look at the communities here, Underwood, Mill-A, White Salmon, Bingen, Hood River as
... examples, the real economic driver is this new economy. Economic engines that truly
... benefit a community are all-inclusive and long lasting. This is a short jolt of money that
... doesn't even trickle down in a meaningful way to local people here, then the benefit
... degrades rapidly over time while we are left with this legacy forever, ^{impact / future possibilities.}
111
112 There are many people here who commute down the hill every day to work in Hood River, or
... White Salmon or Bingen. So it is impossible to look at the total picture without taking
... into account all the communities surrounding this site. This is worth noting since the
... movement of heavy wide-load equipment up Cook-Underwood road will impact people's ability
... to get their jobs and go about their daily business, as well as block escape routes in a
... wildfire like the one that raced up the bluff only a few short years ago.
113
114 The impact on Stevenson and surrounding areas is of far less relevance, it is a full 30
... min drive on the highway from here. It may be the seat of the county government but the
... residents there are not directly impacted by this proposed development. I'm glad you
... decided to have a meeting here as this is what is appropriate and required by law.
115
116 As far as the environmental impacts. I truly hope that this process is not a series of
... rubber stamps for wind energy expansion without looking at which places are unsuitable for
... such expansion based on factors such as proximity to local communities and residences and
... the fact that these windmills are being placed in forest land. This should give everyone
... pause for thought. This is not a farmers field or arid desert. This is a forest that has
... supposedly been sustainably logged to help protect the ecosystems it supports. It directly
... borders a community and residences as well as the protected national scenic area itself.
... It was interesting to find in the application that some of the protected species preferred
... "forest habitats characterized by multi-layered canopy, and a high incidence of large
... trees" and it goes on to say that "No late-serial forests are present within the project
... site." Well they were present a few short years ago until SDS decided to remove the last
... of them. There are still many species of large predator and prey that call it home or
... migrate past it, and birds such as Eagles, Owls, Osprey. The application also says that
... "The project has been planned and designed to eliminate or fully mitigate all
... environmental impacts." If the committee does end up recommending approval of this
... installation. I hope they will make every attempt to truly mitigate the effects of such a
... development on the surrounding communities and environment.
117
118 Any regard to zoning should take into account appropriate areas for large scale industrial
... installations and expansion. Remember that 450ft windmills are half the height of the
... bluff at it's highest point. They pierce the skyline and have bright red flashing lights
... at night. If you have not done so yet, try driving out east at night and see the sea of
... blinking red.
119
120 The windmills make a mockery of the restrictions most landowners in this community face
... who are not excluded from the scenic area and it's rules. The impact to the scenic area
... and it's zoning is horrendous. Everyone in this community pays a high price for the
... protection of the scenic area. To not include this as a significant factor in the approval
... process is to turn a blind eye. It weakens the foundation for protection of the entire
... area including it's burgeoning economy and this effect should be considered regardless of
... whether the windmills themselves are placed within it. Remember that SDS land was excluded
... from scenic area rules in order to protect timber jobs and timber resources. ~~Maybe the~~
... land should revert to scenic area zoning if they are no longer keeping this bargain.
121
122 In conclusion I would plead the committee to fairly assess all sides of the argument and
... validate any and all claims. Then provide a fair and unbalanced assessment to the
... governor.
123

Comments from:

Mike Eastwick

Underwood, WA 98651

Given the uniqueness of this project including forest based siting, closeness to a national scenic treasure, and closeness to residential area, there are several aspects which I hope you will consider carefully.

Primary "environmental" concerns are:

- 1) Visual impact to our national scenic treasure: Columbia Gorge Scenic Area. As it is currently defined the project will be visible from all of the nationally designated key viewing sites in the Mid-Columbia region. This would be a horrible, inexcusable, degradation of our national scenic treasure. In addition, as a board member of the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association, I also believe that turbines in sight of the scenic area will have a negative financial effect on our tourism business. Site the turbines so they cannot be seen from these key viewing sites.
- 2) Potential for elk and other large animal movement (deer, bear, cougar, etc.) to be redirected towards the south of the project, endangering the agriculture and residences in that area. Consider that when faced with the "wall" of turbines that will be running in the north-south direction, their movements will be more to the south and north. Please consider the potential effects to agriculture crops, and residential safety. Again, from the Agri-Tourism view, having our farms endangered by these animals due to this project is unacceptable. I request eliminating the "A" array (southern most 9) to allow wildlife passage without encroaching on residential/agricultural land.

Primary "land use" concerns are related to the turbine and construction vehicle traffic:

- 1) Regarding land use zoning, the project site is not zoned for industrial use. The public outcry against the last attempt for this type of zoning (Title 21) is well documented, by the county, during their public hearing process. Among many objections, 80% of ALL oral comments and 64% of ALL written comments on the proposed zoning demanded industrial setbacks from private property boundaries to be greater than one mile for ANY industrial facility. The only comment supporting the proposed setback was from Jason Spadaro of SDS, which due to reasons I cannot understand, the county officials sided with in the newest updated draft zoning.
- 2) The "no load limits" for the transportation route stated by the application does not indicate that the roads can withstand the heavy, wide vehicle traffic. I do not believe the limits have been determined or set into law. To avoid catastrophes the load limits of the route must be studied and necessary upgrades performed. I can still remember when Cook Underwood slide down the cliff over Broughton Mill and had to be reconstructed further to the north.
- 3) The planned route through Underwood is on residential streets, and in fact, on the ONLY residential arterial. Figuring 7 extra wide load trucks per turbine, this means approximately 700 trips up and down our residential streets. This does not include other construction traffic, and the eventual expansion of the project over the 50 turbines under discussion now. If this project must go through, with lack of consideration for the scenic and residential impacts, please consider limiting turbine and construction vehicle traffic to weekdays only, during non-commuting non-school bus, daylight hours. The 7am to 7pm, seven days a week indicated in the application is inconsistent with the residential nature of Underwood.
- 4) Should this project go through, special logistical considerations should be put into place for emergency vehicles during the transportation windows. Emergency services must be able to access all of Underwood, at all times. Enhanced/supplemented police enforcement of the construction traffic windows, compression braking laws, and other road safety laws would be required.

May 6, 2009

To the members of the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council,

Thank you for allowing the citizens who will be directly affected by the proposed wind farm to meet with you in our community as opposed to in the city of Stevenson.

I support finding alternative sources of energy and that includes harnessing power from the wind. I also strongly support the National Scenic Area Act. This was created by Congress and signed by the President of the United States to protect the scenic beauty of the Columbia River Gorge. I believe that siting a wind farm a mere 60 feet from the boundary line of the Scenic Area is incongruous with the Act and shows a complete disdain for the spirit behind the implementation of the act. Certainly the founders, researchers and writers of this act did not think they would have to contend with massive towers over 400 feet in height on the boundary of the proposed area or indeed restrictions would have been put in place twenty five years ago.

Therefore, I support the idea of moving the seven towers of the "A" phase to another location. This would mitigate the scenic damage on the clear cut ridgeline.

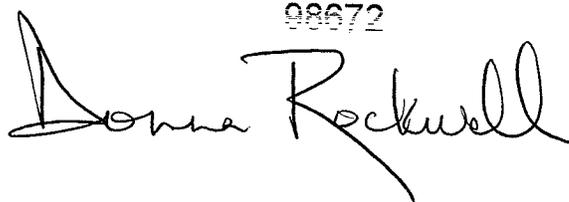
As you have read and heard in other testimony, one of the main sources of revenue for Gorge residents is derived from the tourism industry. People from all over the world come here for the mostly undisturbed beauty of this region, and in the mean time spend their money here. They do not come here to view the energy industrial complex proposed by the SDS Lumber company.

Thank you for your consideration on this very important matter.

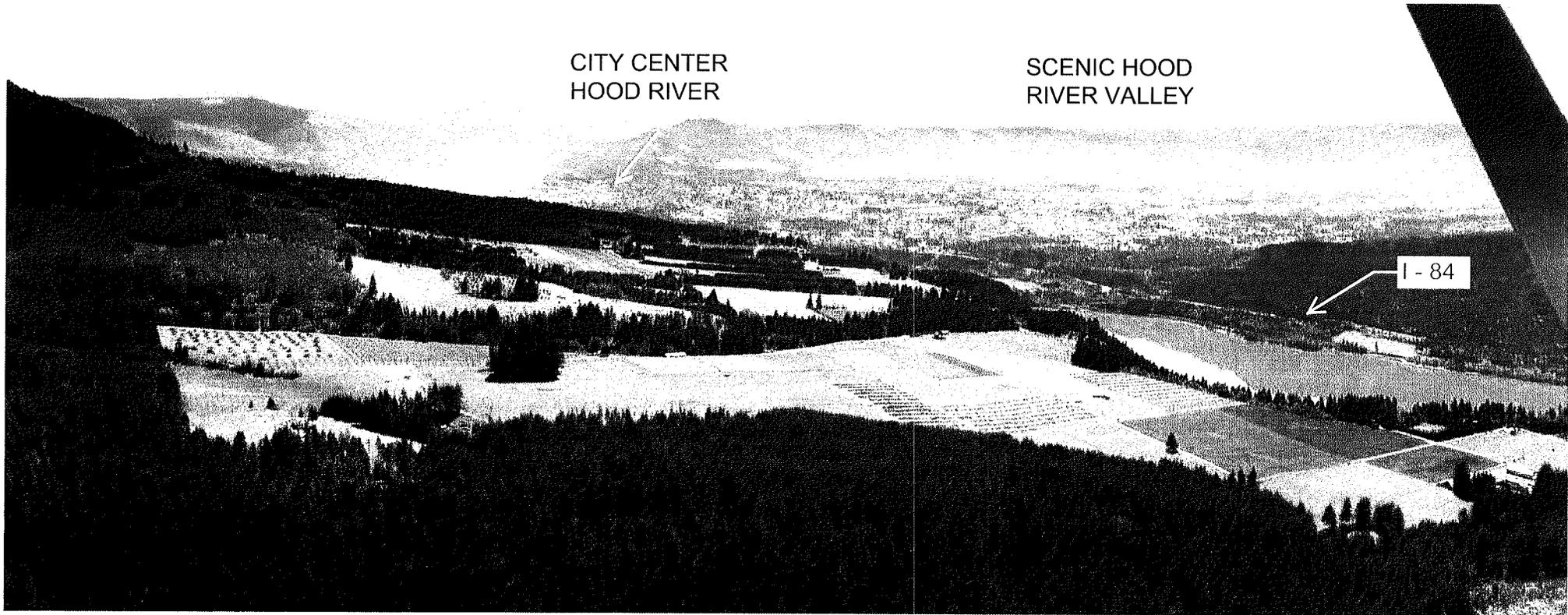
Donna Rockwell

[REDACTED]
White Salmon, WA.

98672



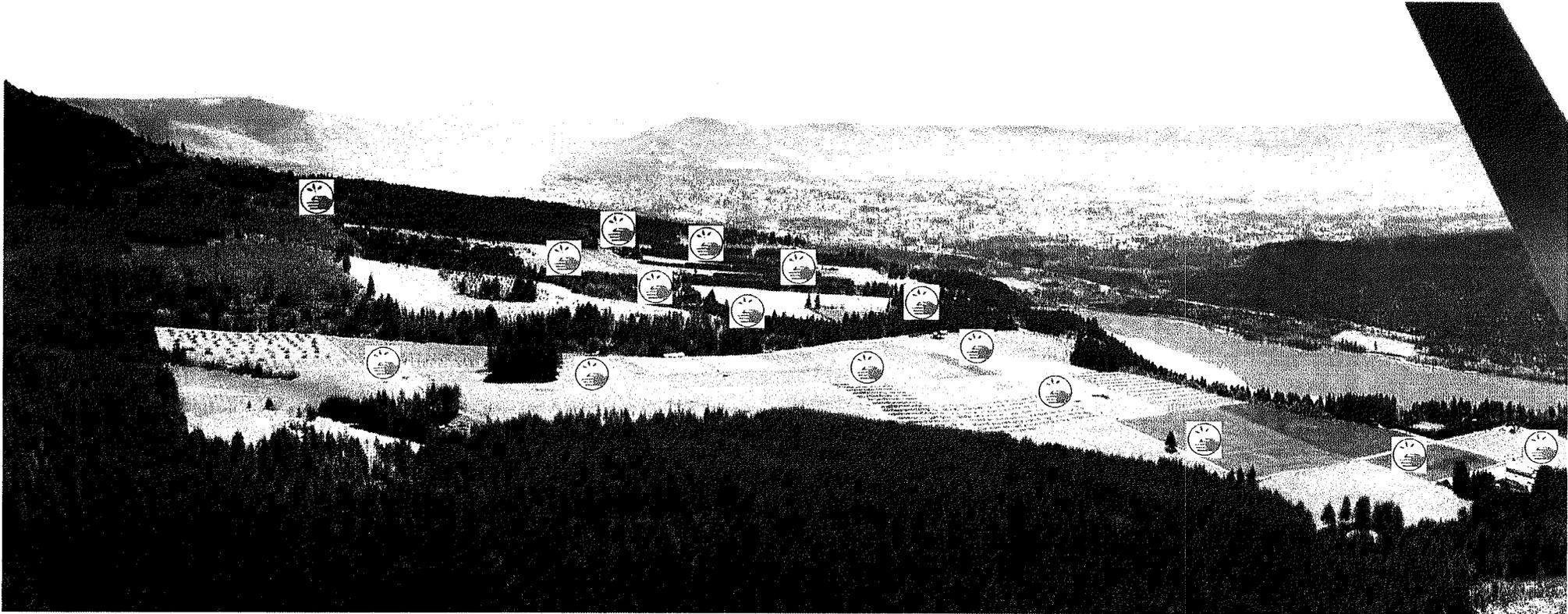
VISUAL IMPACTS FROM "A TOWER" RIDGE



**PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT 300 FT ABOVE RIDGE*
WHILE FLYING DIRECTLY ABOVE RIDGE**

*** NOTE THAT THE PROPOSED TOWERS ARE OVER 420 FT TALL
THEREFORE THIS PHOTO IS UNDER-INCLUSIVE OF
ACTUAL VISUAL IMPACT**

UNDERWOOD AGRI-TOURISM LOOP VISUAL IMPACTS FROM "A TOWER" RIDGE



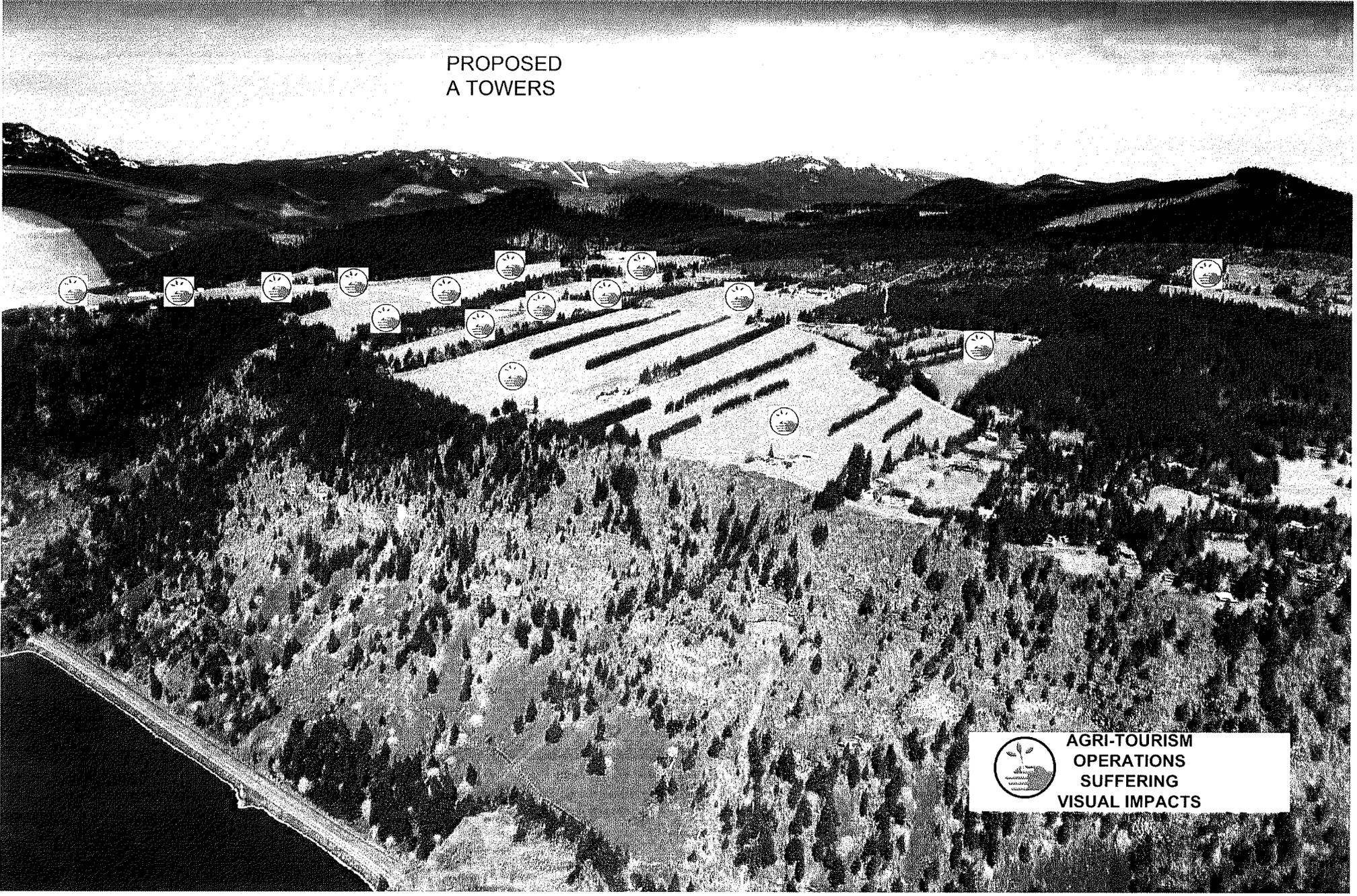
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ACTUAL VISUAL IMPACT**



**AGRI-TOURISM
OPERATIONS
SUFFERING
VISUAL IMPACTS**

PROPOSED
A TOWERS



AGRI-TOURISM
OPERATIONS
SUFFERING
VISUAL IMPACTS

WHISTLING RIDGE WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT

EIS Scoping Hearings

May 6 & 7, 2009

**Written Comments of the Board of Directors
Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association,
a Washington Non-Profit Corporation**

INTRODUCTION

My name is John Crumpacker; I live in Underwood, Washington. I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association. The Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association is a Washington non-profit corporation dedicated to the promotion and improvement of sustainable agri-tourism in Skamania County. Our mission is to create and maintain favorable business conditions for association members. All members own and operate agricultural businesses in Underwood, Washington which is located in eastern Skamania County. Our unincorporated community sits directly across the Columbia from Hood River, Oregon. Members of the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association include:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Business</u>
Acadia Vineyards	75 acre vineyard & orchard
Crooked Acres Vineyard	20 acre vineyard
The Davis Family Farm	50 acre farm & orchard
Energeia Vineyards	64 acre vineyard
Gorge Crest Vineyards & Winery	41 acre vineyard, winery & commercial event site
Gorge Estate Vineyards	95 acre vineyard & winery
Lamonti Vineyards	32 acre vineyard
Pearblossom Vineyards	18 acre vineyard & orchard
Sanctuary Herb Farm	18 acre herb farm and vineyard
Soluna Vineyards	34 acre vineyard
Underwood Gardens	6 acre lavender farm
Wine Spring	40 acre vineyard

As a group, these farms, vineyards and wineries currently give thousands of people each year a reason to visit our community and share in the awe inspiring beauty and bucolic charm. Some bring the entire family and 50 of their closest friends to say "I do"; some come to taste wine and touch grapes on the vine; some come to buy an organic free-range pig for a celebration; and others simply come because the views of the river, the Gorge, and the Hood River Valley

are unsurpassed. But more importantly for the purposes of this hearing, each of these people brings with them a domino effect of economic activity that benefits our entire region.

The Agri-Tourism Association is here today to provide the Council with our comments on the proposed Whistling Ridge project and the potential impact on our members and on agri-tourism in Underwood as a whole. We respectfully request that the negative impacts on agri-tourism in Underwood be addressed in the forthcoming EIS. Our comments focus on providing the Council with a clear understanding of the following five facts:

1. That tourism is the life blood of Skamania County and all communities throughout the Columbia River Gorge;
2. That Agri-Tourism is the present day driver of tourism in the famous Hood River Valley and that Underwood is well on its way to duplicating that economic success in Eastern Skamania County;
3. That Underwood's historic transformation from pear orchards to Agri-Tourism and to one of the premier wine producing regions in the world has enormous present-day socio-economic value;
4. That the very real present-day economic value of Underwood Agri-Tourism, as well as its future potential, would be severely impacted by the seven "A Towers" as currently sited; and finally
5. That this Council has the authority and responsibility to put the reins on this project by requiring the responsible re-siting of the seven "A Towers"; towers that will otherwise dominate the skyline and become Underwood's new "calling card."

In order to give responsible mitigation of the "A Towers" a clear voice in these proceedings, and thereby safeguard the tremendous socio-economic value of Underwood, the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association will petition this Council pursuant to WAC 463-30-091 for permission to intervene in these proceedings. However, the association has already taken a vote and the result is unanimous: if the Council, or the applicant of its own accord, makes a responsible

mitigation decision and re-sites the seven "A Towers" to eliminate the negative impacts, the Association intends to withdraw as a party and support the project.

As we detail in our written comments, failure to re-site the seven "A Towers" would improperly force the blossoming Underwood Agri-Tourism industry to bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental and socioeconomic impacts of this project in violation of WAC 463-60-085. Such a result is prohibited by WAC 463-47-110 which states that "[t]he overriding policy of the council is to avoid or mitigate adverse environmental impacts which may result from the council's decisions."

TOURISM IS THE LIFE BLOOD OF THE GORGE

Facts

Skamania County is more dependent on tourism than any county in the State of Washington. (See Appendix 1). In 2007:

- 47% of all retail and lodging tax collections in the county came from visitors.
 - The highest percentage in the state.
- Almost 11% of all spending in Skamania County was travel related. Over 58 million dollars.
 - The highest percentage in the state.

Where do these figures come from? In December of 2008, the State of Washington, through the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development, which also employs the staff of this Council, released these findings in a report on the importance of Travel Impacts to the economy of this state.

The state concluded that the travel industry:

- Generates tax benefits for Washington residents.
- Generates job opportunities for Washington residents.
- And benefits all regions of the state.

This study found in particular that rural counties, including Skamania County, have a greater number of travel-generated jobs in relation to total employment. And that we are more dependent on the travel industry. They determined that over 10% of Skamania County's jobs are generated by tourism. Maybe this is no great surprise since we live in one of the most beautiful places on earth.

The State of Washington also released a report in 2002 titled "Travel Industry Employment." (See Appendix 1). It was released by the Washington Department of Business & Tourism Development. They reached the same conclusions and found specifically that "[t]his is because some rural areas are recreation destinations and/or have little employment in manufacturing or other industries...." Once again topping the list are counties in the Columbia River Gorge.

Two key conclusions of this study:

- The travel industry develops and thrives "to the extent [it] has comparative advantages in the Northwest relative to other locations in the U.S.
- "[H]igh-quality, natural, and outdoor recreation resources" are an example of such an advantage.

Why does this all matter in this hearing? Because any development proposal that has the potential to cut off the life blood of our economy needs to be closely monitored, carefully studied, and mitigated in a manner that eliminates damaging impacts.

AGRI-TOURISM DRIVES HOOD RIVER AND EASTERN SKAMANIA COUNTY

Facts

Hood River is a tourist mecca just like Skamania County. The Hood River Valley is famous worldwide for the breathtaking beauty of its farms, orchards and vineyards. In fact, Hood River is a case study in the economic power and sustainability of agri-tourism. You need look no further than the front page of the Hood River County Chamber of Commerce website. (See Appendix 2). The image of Hood River **IS** agri-tourism. It is plastered everywhere: pictures, events, festivals and links to other sites dedicated to agri-tourism in its many forms.

The other marketing push in Hood River? Recreation and scenery, of course. Just as the State of Washington has concluded in its studies, "high-quality, natural, and outdoor recreation

resources” are our primary asset and must be leveraged. They must also be carefully guarded to assure our economic health and well being.

Why is Hood River important at this hearing? Because Underwood, which is in Eastern Skamania County, and which is the site of this proposal, sits directly across the Columbia from Hood River and is inextricably tied to Hood River: topographically, economically, and evolutionarily. Although our county seat is 30 miles away in Stevenson, we have a uniquely different set of issues and opportunities. Issues and opportunities that county government has failed to understand. This is evident in light of the county’s decision to publically endorse this project without consideration of the impacts to Underwood agri-tourism. Agri-tourism that holds the key to Underwood’s economic future... if it is responsibly cared for.

UNDERWOOD AGRI-TOURISM IS GROWING QUICKLY

Facts

The primary driver of agri-tourism in Underwood is its far reaching reputation as one of the premier wine producing regions in the world. (See Appendix 3). Amazing as it may sound, the new Columbia Gorge Wine Appellation was recently recognized as one the best emerging regions in the world along with Paso Robles, California and the Maule Valley in Chile. The same accolades were earned in Seattle Magazine.

In fact the Washington wine industry is now ranked as the second largest premium wine producer in the U.S. Washington Winery of the Year in 2009 was Maryhill Winery, located here in the Gorge. Winery of the Year in 2007 was Cathedral Ridge Winery in Hood River, also located directly across the river from Underwood, and often touting Underwood wines. (See Appendix 3).

Even to the point, Celilo Vineyards in Underwood, is consistently ranked as one of the Top 10 vineyards in Washington, which as mentioned, is ranked second nationally in the production of premium wines. The entire south slope of Underwood Mountain is considered the cream of the crop. If any question remains regarding the value of the wine industry in Underwood, we need look no further than the seal of approval of SDS Lumber who recently informed the community that it has purchased potential vineyard land in Underwood.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC VALUE OF UNDERWOOD AGRI-TOURISM

Facts

Agri-Tourism is a reality in Underwood as we sit here today. There are over 30 large scale agricultural operations within the community. Some of these enterprises were started generations ago, and others have broken ground within the last year. In many ways, the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association owes its new found status to the proposal before you. We have formally come together for the first time out of necessity. A necessity borne from the threat that this project poses to our very existence.

Although our members have each made extraordinary commitments of time and capital to the common vision of making Underwood the premier agri-tourism destination in the Gorge, until recently, we were working in parallel, rather than in concert. The threat that this project poses to that vision, however, immediately galvanized farm, winery, and vineyard owners across the community. We now stand here with a consensus of opinion, not just on this project, but on future lobbying goals, marketing strategies, and product offerings.

The Association has two primary marketing strategies:

- Promote the “Underwood Agri-Tourism Loop” in a manner similar to the Hood River Fruit Loop.
 - The Hood River Fruit Loop is considered a national model for successful agri-tourism
 - See Appendix 2 (Fruit Loop) and Appendix 4 (Underwood Agri-Tourism Loop)
- Establish the Underwood Vineyard Trek as a “can’t be missed” one-of-a-kind opportunity to hike through 12 of the country’s premier vineyards while sampling world class wines and views.
 - Nowhere else in the U.S. have 12 contiguous vineyards collectively developed a private trek situated in the heart of a National Scenic Area.
 - See Appendix 4 (Underwood Vineyard Trek)

Underwood Agri-Tourism is not just about wine. Other members offer produce, free-range organic livestock, lavender viewing, and organic herbs. One of the original visionaries in Underwood is Hank Patton, who founded World Steward which is located in the Upper Underwood Agri-Tourism Loop, and is committed to environmental stewardship, sustainable farming, research and education. (See Appendix 4).

In addition, three wineries are already in operation in Underwood. One of those wineries is now considered by many to be the premier commercial events site in the Columbia Gorge. A number of other vineyards located in the Upper Loop have future winery plans which have been put on hold as a result of the potential negative impacts of this proposal.

As set forth in Appendix 4 to our comments, the economic and socioeconomic value of the existing Underwood Agri-Tourism industry is significant and quantifiable. It is diverse and sustainable and benefits citizens and governments throughout the region. The tremendous future potential is also quantifiable and dwarfs the tax benefits of the seven A Towers as projected by SDS Lumber. (See Appendix 1, 2, 3 & 4-Economics of Wine in Underwood).

AGRI-TOURISM & 40 STORY TURBINES DON'T MIX

Facts

SDS once told the Underwood community that wind turbines are "beautiful." We are all welcome to our personal opinions, but in these proceedings facts should rule. And the fact is that tourists, and especially tourists in the Gorge, don't want to see industrial development. This fact is set forth clearly in studies conducted by the U.S. Government, and the State of Oregon which are attached to our comments as Appendix 5 and Appendix 6. These facts are undisputed and need no further discussion.

MOVING THE "A TOWERS" MITIGATES TOURISM IMPACTS

Facts

The seven "A Towers" sit alone on a clear-cut ridge at the very most southern portion of the proposed project. If installed they would dominate views, day and night, from far more locations than are depicted in the application submitted to Council. To remove any uncertainty about the visual impacts of the seven A Towers, the Agri-Tourism Association hired a pilot to fly a photographer along the ridge where these towers are proposed. In Appendix 7 to our comments, you will find the results. Take note of the photograph that was taken directly over the ridge at an elevation of 300 feet above the ridge. This photograph tells the story of who will see the seven A Towers. Also note that the photograph was taken 120 feet below the top of the proposed towers.

Then take note of the next photograph that shows the locations of existing businesses along the Underwood Agri-Tourism Loop. The impacts are clear. The solution is also clear. The re-siting of the seven A Towers eliminates all visual impacts to the Underwood Agri-Tourism industry, as well as the visual impacts to a vast area throughout the Gorge.

When you consider our fate, please keep in mind the following statement of SDS Lumber Company which was made in reference to its decision to expand this project to 80+ turbines by leasing adjacent DNR land:

“[Expansion] also gives us more flexibility. If we have more flexibility, we can use that to optimize the site and ***minimize impacts.***”

Hood River News on February 25, 2009 (emphasis added). We are glad that SDS is realizing that the impacts of this project must be mitigated. But, the seven A Towers should be mitigated whether or not this project is expanded. And that mitigation decision should be based on a balancing of the negative impacts of the A Towers alone.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We are very thankful that the Council brings to this process a broad perspective of the benefits and impacts of wind development. A perspective that is understandably missing from a county government in financial crisis.

We are also confident that this council will use its broad mitigation powers, its depth of experience and basic common sense to draw a line in the sand. A line that will make it clear to people throughout the country that in the Northwest, turbines don't have a right to dominate every ridgeline just because the wind blows.

We feel fortunate. Fortunate that each of you is here in the Gorge, and fortunate that during your site visit, you'll have the chance to experience the extraordinary beauty of our agricultural community and understand why it is a priceless resource in and of itself...not just to those of us who live Underwood, but to people throughout the Gorge who benefit economically from its snowballing reputation as one of the premier wine producing destinations in the United States.

We ask you to take a moment. A moment to make sure you visit the southern most portion of the site where you will decide whether the A Towers should abut the boundary of a National Scenic Area. Take in the sweeping view of the vineyards below, of the Columbia River Gorge, and of the vast panoramas of the Hood River Valley in the background.

And then, take a moment to transport yourselves from the prominent ridgeline where you stand, to any one of the places you see before you. Now from that spot imagine looking back to the Underwood skyline. What will catch your eye first? Would it be the 40 story "A Towers" spinning as they reach skyward from a clear-cut ridge?

That image will be Underwood's new calling card. **Will** turbines beckon the millions of tourists who come to the Gorge every year for the "Beautiful National Parks" and "Protected Environmental Areas"? **Will** tourists be inspired to drive the Agri-Tourism Loop to upper Underwood and walk from vineyard to vineyard, and winery to winery, directly below a complex of 40 story towers?

It is this Council's responsibility to make sure we never know the answers to those questions. With the stroke of a pen, the A Towers should simply be moved elsewhere in the matrix of this project.

These comments, and the supporting data, will be posted on the "News" page of the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association web site which is located at www.scaassn.org Thank you for this opportunity to comment and welcome to the Gorge.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Columbia River Gorge
National Scenic Area

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Hood River, OR 97031
541-308-1700
FAX 541-386-1916

File Code: 2370

Date: May 6, 2009

Allen J. Fiksdal
EFSEC Manager
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Counsel
905 Plum Street SE
PO Box 43172
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

Dear Mr. Fiksdal:

It is my understanding that your office is accepting agency comment on the proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project application for site certification. The Forest Service is submitting the following comment with respect to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area--one of America's natural wonders known worldwide for its scenic beauty and the variety and quality of its recreational opportunities. Since the Scenic Area was created by Congress in 1986, new developments occur within a controlled framework that protects the resources that make the Scenic Area special. I understand that only a small portion of the proposal is located within the boundaries of the Scenic Area. This letter concerns impacts that will result from wind turbines visible from within the Scenic Area.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the risk of significant impacts to protected scenic resources if the proposed energy project is built as currently planned. This letter is not meant to imply that the project outside of the Scenic Area is regulated by the Scenic Area Act. In a letter dated May 8, 2008, the Columbia River Gorge Commission provided technical assistance in response to a request by the Oregon Department of Energy regarding a similar project in Oregon. In that letter, the Gorge Commission explained that the National Scenic Area Act specifically prohibits the implementation of a buffer around the boundaries of the Scenic Area. However, the letter also explains how Scenic Area resources would be affected by the project and how they could be protected. By requesting comments on the project, I assume that EFSEC would similarly benefit from scenic resources technical expertise in this matter.

Diana Ross, CRGNSA landscape architect, provided me the following analysis of the Aesthetics portion of the application starting on page 4.2-27. My comments are based on the findings of that portion of the application and the recommendations made by my staff:

1) **Key Viewing Areas (KVAs)**

As mentioned in the application, the effects to scenic resources in the Scenic Area are assessed by analyzing the effects of a project on lands visible from 26 selected public vantage points from which the public views the landscape. It was not foreseen at the time the Act was passed that any development outside of the Scenic Area would be seen from these viewpoints. However, it is clear from the application that several Scenic Area Viewsheds



(the land seen from these vantage points) will be affected.

9 of the 21 viewpoints analyzed are also Key Viewing areas (#6 & 9 were missing).

- 1-SR 141
- 4 & 22- Cook-Underwood Road
- 10-Panorama Point
- 11-I-84 Westbound
- 12-Koberg State Park (Columbia River)
- 13-I-84 Eastbound
- 14-Viento State Park (Columbia River)
- 19-Historic Columbia River Highway

2) **Methodology and Summary of Scenic Impacts**

There are many unknowns in the summary of methods on page 4.2-30-31 of the application. For example, the methods section did not disclose the heights used for the turbines or whether the software placed and sized the turbines or whether this was done in Photo Shop as an art project.

There are also several questions concerning the methods used to 1) choose viewpoints, 2) define visual quality and viewer sensitivity, and 3) represent and make conclusions about impact.

1) Choosing viewpoints in the Scenic Area should be based on Key Viewing Areas. Several of these were missing from the discussion (SR-14, Tom McCall Point) and others are linear viewpoints where only one or no views were picked in the NSA (Columbia River, Hwy 35, I-84, Historic Columbia River Highway). Therefore, it is unclear whether the impacts to NSA scenic resources were adequately captured.

2) The NSA is a nationally known and protected landscape of high quality and high sensitivity. All KVA scenic analyses should reflect this. The results of the applicant's analysis are heavily weighted on the assignment of existing scenic quality and viewer sensitivity. These methods were not tracked and do not represent the reality of the Scenic Area.

3) The conclusions made on the summary chart would more accurately be made using degree of contrast with the natural landscape both during the day and at night, and distance of the viewer from the project area. This assumes that the most visually impacted viewpoints have been found and that the simulations accurately depict the degree of contrast. The impact summaries starting on page 4.2-68 discuss these contrasts but the ratings do not reflect the discussion. For example the text for viewpoint #1 states that "the presence of the turbines would reduce the scene's degree of intactness by introducing a large number of highly visible engineered vertical elements" but the impact rating is low to moderate.

The Summary of Existing Scenic Quality and Project Visual Impacts on page 4.2-67 did not rate any viewpoint as having a high level of impact defined as: turbines "highly

3) Recommendations

In order to assure that the scenic resource impact is adequately analyzed, I recommend the following improvements to the scenic resource impact assessment:

- Include a discussion or summary of the most visible turbines,
- Include photographs of existing energy projects visible in the NSA,
- Do not use visual simulations (at a small scale with clouds in the picture) to depict the visual impact of visible turbines,
- Make certain that the most visible viewpoints have been covered, especially with respect to the linear viewpoints, and
- Make certain to include the night-time effects in your analysis.

In order to prevent the scenic impact of the turbines visible from the Scenic Area Key Viewing Areas, I also recommend that the applicant eliminate turbine locations found to be visible from Scenic Area KVAs. I am hopeful that close attention to these impacts will result in a solution which will fit the unique area that this project will potentially benefit.

Sincerely,

/s/ Daniel T. Harkenrider

DANIEL T. HARKENRIDER
Area Manager

cc: Jill Arens
Columbia River Gorge Commission

INITIATIVE 937

2006

I, Sam Reed, Secretary of State of the State of Washington and custodian of its seal hereby certify that, according to the records on file in my office, the attached copy of Initiative Measure No. 937 to the People is a true and correct copy as it was received by this office.

1 AN ACT Relating to requirements for new energy resources; adding a
2 new chapter to Title 19 RCW; and prescribing penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** INTENT. This chapter concerns requirements
5 for new energy resources. This chapter requires large utilities to
6 obtain fifteen percent of their electricity from new renewable
7 resources such as solar and wind by 2020 and undertake cost-effective
8 energy conservation.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** DECLARATION OF POLICY. Increasing energy
10 conservation and the use of appropriately sited renewable energy
11 facilities builds on the strong foundation of low-cost renewable
12 hydroelectric generation in Washington state and will promote energy
13 independence in the state and the Pacific Northwest region. Making the
14 most of our plentiful local resources will stabilize electricity prices
15 for Washington residents, provide economic benefits for Washington
16 counties and farmers, create high-quality jobs in Washington, provide
17 opportunities for training apprentice workers in the renewable energy

1 field, protect clean air and water, and position Washington state as a
2 national leader in clean energy technologies.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3. DEFINITIONS.** The definitions in this
4 section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly
5 requires otherwise.

6 (1) "Attorney general" means the Washington state office of the
7 attorney general.

8 (2) "Auditor" means: (a) The Washington state auditor's office or
9 its designee for qualifying utilities under its jurisdiction that are
10 not investor-owned utilities; or (b) an independent auditor selected by
11 a qualifying utility that is not under the jurisdiction of the state
12 auditor and is not an investor-owned utility.

13 (3) "Commission" means the Washington state utilities and
14 transportation commission.

15 (4) "Conservation" means any reduction in electric power
16 consumption resulting from increases in the efficiency of energy use,
17 production, or distribution.

18 (5) "Cost-effective" has the same meaning as defined in RCW
19 80.52.030.

20 (6) "Council" means the Washington state apprenticeship and
21 training council within the department of labor and industries.

22 (7) "Customer" means a person or entity that purchases electricity
23 for ultimate consumption and not for resale.

24 (8) "Department" means the department of community, trade, and
25 economic development or its successor.

26 (9) "Distributed generation" means an eligible renewable resource
27 where the generation facility or any integrated cluster of such
28 facilities has a generating capacity of not more than five megawatts.

29 (10) "Eligible renewable resource" means:

30 (a) Electricity from a generation facility powered by a renewable
31 resource other than fresh water that commences operation after March
32 31, 1999, where: (i) The facility is located in the Pacific Northwest;
33 or (ii) the electricity from the facility is delivered into Washington
34 state on a real-time basis without shaping, storage, or integration
35 services; or

36 (b) Incremental electricity produced as a result of efficiency
37 improvements completed after March 31, 1999, to hydroelectric
38 generation projects owned by a qualifying utility and located in the

Thursday, May 7, 2009

For Public
Comment

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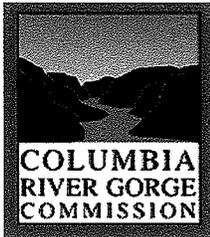
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View of The Dalles taken by John Hardham
(www.lightwavevideo.com)

Sec. 2. Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; definitions (16 U.S.C. 544)

Sec. 3. Purposes (Sec. 544a)

Sec. 4. Establishment of scenic area (Sec. 544b)

Sec. 5. Columbia River Gorge Commission (Sec. 544c)

Sec. 6. Scenic area management plan (Sec. 544d)

Sec. 7. Administration of scenic area (Sec. 544e)

Sec. 8. Administration of special management areas (Sec. 544f)

Sec. 9. Land acquisition (Sec. 544g)

Sec. 10. Interim management (Sec. 544h)

Sec. 11. Economic development (Sec. 544i)

Sec. 12. Old Columbia River Highway (Sec. 544j)

Sec. 13. Tributary rivers and streams (Sec. 544k)

Sec. 14. Implementation measures (Sec. 544l)

Sec. 15. Enforcement (Sec. 544m)

Sec. 16. Authorization of appropriations (Sec. 544n)

Sec. 17. Savings provisions (Sec. 544o)

Sec. 18. Severability (Sec. 544p)

Sec. 17. Savings provisions (Sec. 544o)(a) Nothing in sections 544 to 544p of this title shall -

(1) affect or modify any treaty or other rights of any Indian tribe;

(2) except as provided in section 13(c), authorize the appropriation or use of water by any Federal, State, or local agency, Indian tribe, or any other entity or individual;

(3) except as provided in section 13(c), affect the rights or jurisdictions of the United States, the States, Indian tribes or other entities over waters of any river or stream or over any ground water resource or affect or interfere with transportation activities on any such river or stream;

(4) except as provided in section 13(c), alter, establish, or affect the respective rights of the United States, the States, Indian tribes, or any person with respect to any water or water-related right;

(5) alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by the States before November 17, 1986;

(6) affect or modify the ability of the Bonneville Power Administration to operate, maintain, and modify existing transmission facilities;

(7) affect lands held in trust by the Secretary of the Interior for Indian tribes or individual members of Indian tribes or other lands acquired by the Army Corps of Engineers and administered by the Secretary of the Interior for the benefit of Indian tribes and individual members of Indian tribes;

(8) affect the laws, rules and regulations pertaining to hunting and fishing under existing State and Federal laws and Indian treaties;

(9) require any revision or amendment of any forest plan adopted pursuant to the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (Act of October 22, 1976, Public Law 94-588, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.)); or

(10) establish protective perimeters or buffer zones around the scenic area or each special management area. The fact that activities or uses inconsistent with the management directives for the scenic area or special management areas can be seen or heard from these areas shall not, of itself, preclude such activities or uses up to the boundaries of the scenic area or special management areas.

(b) Improvement of navigation facilities at Bonneville Dam. Except for the offsite disposal of excavation material, nothing in sections 544 to 544p of this title shall be construed to affect or modify the responsibility of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to improve navigation facilities at Bonneville Dam pursuant to Federal law.

(c) Rights and responsibilities of non-Federal timber land owners. Except for the management, utilization, or disposal of timber resources of non-Federal lands within the special management areas, nothing in sections 544 to 544p of this title shall affect the rights and responsibilities of non-Federal timber land owners under the Oregon and Washington Forest Practices Acts or any county regulations which under applicable State law supersede such Acts.

(d) Interstate compacts. Mandatory language in sections 544 to

544p of this title respecting the powers and responsibilities of the Commission shall be interpreted as conditions precedent to congressional consent to the interstate compact described in section 544c of this title.

(e) Failure to establish Columbia River Gorge Commission; responsibility of Secretary. In the event that the States of Washington and Oregon fail to comply with the provisions of section 544c of this title, the Secretary shall not be obligated to take actions which are predicated upon the establishment of the Commission.

(f) Actions of Secretary as major Federal actions affecting the environment

(1) Actions by the Secretary pursuant to subsections (f), (g), and (h) of section 544d of this title; subsections (f), (g), (k), and (1) of section 544f of this title; section 5448 of this title; and subsections (a) and (b)(2) of section 544h of this title shall neither be considered major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the environment under section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332) nor require the preparation of an environmental assessment in accordance with that Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (1) of this subsection, nothing in sections 544 to 544p of this title shall expand, restrict, or otherwise alter the duties of the Secretary under the National Environmental Policy Act.

(Pub. L. 99-663, Sec. 17, Nov. 17, 1986, 100 Stat. 4300.)

Columbia River Gorge Commission
PO Box 730 | 1 Town & Country Square | 57 NE Wauna Avenue | White Salmon, WA 98672 | ph: 509-493-3323 | fax: 509-493-2229

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RCWs > Title 19 > Chapter 19.285 > Section 19.285.020

[19.285.010](#) << [19.285.020](#) >> [19.285.030](#)**RCW 19.285.020**
Declaration of policy.

Increasing energy conservation and the use of ~~appropriately sited~~ renewable energy facilities builds on the strong foundation of low-cost renewable hydroelectric generation in Washington state and will promote energy independence in the state and the Pacific Northwest region. Making the most of our plentiful local resources will stabilize electricity prices for Washington residents, provide economic benefits for Washington counties and farmers, create high-quality jobs in Washington, provide opportunities for training apprentice workers in the renewable energy field, protect clean air and water, and position Washington state as a national leader in clean energy technologies.

[2007 c 1 § 2 (Initiative Measure No. 937, approved November 7, 2006).]



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SDS eyes expanded wind power project

30 additional turbines possible on DNR land Scoping Comment #144

By [Jesse Burkhardt](#)

Although its original proposal to site 42 wind power turbines in eastern Skamania County remains on hold pending the outcome of an appeal, SDS Lumber Co. is considering expanding the scope of its renewable energy project.

SDS President Jason Spadaro said SDS may want to add more wind turbines on Whistling Ridge, north of the original proposal's boundaries. The expansion would be onto Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) property and within Klickitat County.

"We could site 30 additional turbines on DNR land if studies prove it's viable," Spadaro said.

Spadaro said no decisions have been made, and there has been no official filing.

"All we've done is apply for the right to study the property," Spadaro explained. "It is potentially a 'phase two' for wind power development, but we still have to do wildlife studies, a wind study, review the topography, and then apply to lease DNR property. We still would need a DNR review, environmental review, the EIS, public meetings -- the entire public process."

DNR is now determining whether to allow SDS to study the site for possible wind power development. A DNR comment period regarding the idea closed on Feb. 10, but Spadaro said he had no idea how long the DNR decision process would take.

"DNR is considering leasing four Common School Trust parcels totaling approximately 2,560 acres for wind power development in western Klickitat County," read an excerpt from a Jan. 12 DNR document regarding the inquiry from SDS. "It is possible that these parcels may be incorporated into a larger surrounding wind power project."

"We just want to study it, and it's smart for DNR to allow it," Spadaro said. "This would diversify the revenue source for schools, diversify the tax base, and diversify energy sources."

According to Spadaro, the Whistling Ridge site is ideal for wind power

development. He explained that Underwood Mountain works like a "wind dam," with the wind flowing like water around Underwood Mountain.

"It creates a funnel where the wind flows. that's why the site is so windy," Spadaro said. "The other reason why the site works so well is because there is a regional BPA transmission system coming through the area. We can connect right onto it."

Spadaro added that a larger project makes it more viable economically. "It also gives us more flexibility. If we have more flexibility, we can use that to optimize the site and minimize impacts," Spadaro said.

Some residents have been outspoken in opposition to the siting of wind power turbines in the area. One of those alarmed about the possibility is Ruth Dye of Underwood.

"This severely impacts my life, as I live just south of where this project is planned," said Dye.

Dye pointed out that there could be serious restrictions on public access if the DNR allows wind power development in the area.

"If this project goes forward, we will be locked out of access to this public land," Dye said. "If you hunt, fish, ride a mountain bike, ride a horse, or just enjoy a walk in the woods, sorry, but you will not be allowed to use this area any more."

Dye also expressed concern about impacts on water quality.

"There are three streams in the proposed wind farm area," Dye explained. "These feed the White Salmon, Little White Salmon, and eventually the Columbia River. This watershed will be disturbed. Chemicals to control noxious weeds may be used. If you kayak, windsurf, kiteboard, fish, swim, or use downstream water, you might want to think about the impact of this wind farm on you."

According to Dye, the area in question also has been designated by DNR as a "Northern Spotted Owl Conservation Area," and pointed out that the proposed wind farm could harm owl habitat and other wildlife as well.

"The area has been determined to be a conservation area for the spotted owl, but how will they make good on the losses to the owl or the other species in this area?" Dye questioned.

Spadaro said he thought it was unfortunate that even at this informational-gathering stage, opponents have been attacking the concept.

"There are certain people on almost every project who say they are for renewable, green power, but then come out and say, 'I like it, except anywhere near me,'" Spadaro said.

Spadaro debunked claims that the wind turbines would be within the White Salmon watershed.

"It's not even close to Buck Creek," he said.

The move to develop energy sources is part of a long-range strategy by SDS as it moves to diversify beyond being primarily a wood products company.

"This is another revenue source," Spadaro said. "No one knows when the demand for housing will improve, but there is always growing demand for energy. This helps us diversify."

Spadaro pointed out that the state of Washington has mandated that at least 15 percent of the energy used in the state must come from renewable sources by 2020.

"If we're going to meet renewable energy requirements, that energy is not all going to come from eastern Washington," Spadaro commented. "And the federal economic stimulus plan is based in large part on developing new renewable energy sources. That's a big deal. That demand has to be met somewhere."

Spadaro also sounded a geo-political warning about the consequences of failure to develop innovative sources of energy.

"We can either participate in it," he said, "or forget about clean energy and about independence from foreign oil."

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KLICKITAT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA

Regular Meeting
May 18, 2009
7:00 p.m.

**Klickitat County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Room
205 S. Columbus Ave.
Goldendale, WA 98620**

1. Roll Call
2. Review Minutes
3. Old Business:
 - a. Snowden Sub-Area Plan and Zoning Amendments, continuation, closed to further testimony
 - b. Rezone Request No. ZON2006-08
Comp Plan Amendment No. CPA2006-02, continuation, closed to further testimony
Applicant: SDS Co.
4. New Business:
 - a. Rezone Request No. ZON2009-03 Applicants: FM & BL, LLC
Richard and Martha Hunsaker
Hunsaker's Oil Co.
Representatives: Frank Hunsaker & Ben Beseda, Tenneson Engineering

Proposal: A request to rezone 20.60 acres from Residential "R" to General Commercial "GC" and construct a 52,000 sq. ft. building with 78,000 sq. ft. of paving for parking and access. The property is located within a portion of Section 19, T3N, R11E, W.M., Klickitat County, WA, Lots 1, 2, & 3 of Short Plat SP-95-18 (vicinity of N. Main St., Dewalt Dr. and Snowden Road, White Salmon
5. Other:

Elect Officers for 2009

June Agenda (subject to change): No hearings scheduled
6. Adjournment

EFSEC Scoping Hearing

May 7, 2009

1. Economics.
 - a. You need to look at Skamania County and the land base that is available to them to generate economic growth. Most of Skamania County is owned by the USFS and a large part of the private land is restricted by the CRGNSA.
 - b. You need to annualize the importance for small private lumber companies like SDS to diversify their income stream. This is very easy to see in the current economic climate. SDS has had to reduce employment and has had to stop production for the month of March because they were unable to sell their products. SDS payroll is vital to the local communities.
2. Energy
 - a. Please consider that Washington passed a referendum requiring utilities to use renewable energy and Skamania County passed it with a 54% majority. Wind is one of those sources.
3. Columbia River National Scenic Area
 - a. You need to understand the compromises that led to the existing National Scenic Area. Originally the concept was that it would be a national park. This concept was discarded as it did not work in this kind of setting. What was settled on was an area with three different levels of protection, the Urban Areas that are exempt from regulation, the General Management Area with some regulation and the Special Management Areas with a high level of regulation. This concept never envisioned that there would not be any level of change in the urban areas and more importantly there has never been any expectation that change could not occur outside the external boundary. **The Boundary is the Boundary.**

Frank Backus



White salmon, Wa. 98672

Sally A. Newell



Underwood, WA 98651

For the record, my name is Sally Newell. I am the president of the Underwood Community Council, chair of the Skamania County Noxious Weed Board, boardmember, Friends of the White Salmon River, librarian, Mill A school, and former Columbia River Gorge Commissioner, appointed 1994-98 by Governor Lowry.

Today I speak as none of these, but only offer you the following comments as my own input to the application filed by SDS Lumber to construct a wind energy project near my community of Underwood.

I was born and raised in The Dalles, Oregon, and have never lived more than 30 miles from where we now stand. I love the place better than any I've seen, and as a former Gorge Commissioner, I have the scars to prove it.

For openers, I don't understand the name of this project. The land on the maps in the application is a ridge known locally as Saddleback, and that was the original name of the project. Suddenly, this has become the Whistling Ridge Energy Project. Why?

There was a proposal by SDS to lease Whistling Ridge (which adjoins Saddleback to the north) from DNR, but that appears to be stalled. If the applicant intends to continue to pursue that lease, your organization should wait for that process to play out before moving the current application forward. The public interest is far better served if one EIS is applied to the entire project, rather than allowing a piecemeal approach to the first project of its kind to be proposed in the forested mountains of the Evergreen State. It is difficult to speak about scoping without knowing the total size of the project.

You should study the environmental record of SDS. They have been cited by various agencies over the years, and those violations should be part of the EIS.

While I do believe there are many natural resource concerns with this project, I am sure there are others who will address them at length. I support studies to assess impacts on natural resources, and I support your agency finding a disinterested third party to conduct all studies. For the record, I find studies performed by the applicant (or any applicant) suspect.

There will be testimony about the effect of turbines on human health. I am concerned about potential health effects and want them studied as I said, by a third party.

I expect you will hear about noise from the turbines, and how it can echo in forested mountains. I hope you will find a disinterested third party to study that.

Speaking of noise echoing through the mountains, we get jets from Whidby Island Naval Air Station flying low through here from time to time. The effect the turbines will have on their exercises should be addressed in scoping.

Our tourist season gets longer every year, but is still heaviest between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The EIS should include impacts of construction on the tourist experience, as well as the impact the aesthetics will have on the local tourism industry, on both sides of the river. Our economies are tied together. Underwood is influenced more by economic factors in White Salmon, Bingen and Hood River than by the economy in Stevenson.

I am troubled that the proposed project will be visible from so many places in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, as well as other beauty spots nearby, like the Hood River Valley and the White Salmon River Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The aesthetic impact for me is less about how these turbines look during the day, turning their lazy circles. BUT, if I had to look at these dudes at night, with their strobing red lights, I'd buy drapes. I was shocked the first time I drove home from Goldendale at night and saw windfarms in Oregon blinking in unision.

Up until then, I thought a soft summer night was a birthright in the gorge.

People here used to say, "It's a beautiful place, but you can't eat the scenery." They meant that the natural beauty of the place doesn't feed the family or pay the bills, but that was before folks from other places discovered that it's a nice place to visit, and you might even want a second home here. You should study the effect the project will have on local real estate values, both during construction and after completion.

The folks in the gorge, especially this part of it, have begun to eat off the scenery. We have tourism, and a budding agritourism industry. We grew a world-class aircraft manufacturing business and, as a region, have helped it recruit and train a skilled labor force, fueling a long-awaited replacement for the timber industry. Pear orchards are coming out and vineyards are going in. We have wineries and wedding mills. My husband's grandpa's old strawberry farm up on Wess Road has grown a final crop of million dollar homes.

One of the reasons those homes can command such prices is the National Scenic Area. You can't just buy a couple of acres here and drag your trailer onto it. Right or wrong, it does restrict the supply, and demand drives up the price. We have only just begun to eat the scenery here – please don't yank it out of our mouths.

People here have sacrificed, often unwillingly and sometimes at great and unanticipated personal expense, to preserve the beauty of this place for the larger public interest. The State of

Washington signed a compact with the State of Oregon because this place is special, and both states agreed that it should be protected. Taxpayers from both states have contributed a lot of money over the years to administer the complex management of the place, and taxpayers from all 50 states have shelled out millions for land acquisition, economic development and the administration of the federal role here. Your scoping should consider the impact the project will have on this huge public investment.

The Gorge Commission spends a great deal of time concerning itself with precedent. There are good and sound reasons for doing so. I hope you will consider the precedent that your approval would set for the National Scenic Area. Can you describe the effect of that in your EIS?

In 1986, when Congress created the scenic area, the boundaries were drawn based on what could be seen from the river, the highways beside it, and various viewpoints. Nobody could have foreseen that anyone would want to erect a 400' tower at the boundary, let alone 50 of them. The history of the creation of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and its legislative history should be part of the scoping for the EIS

Transportation of turbines to the site will be an immense burden for our community. As you have seen, our Cook-Underwood Road is narrow and curvey. There are homes built very close to it in places, and a cliff along much of it. I know that road very well – I drove a schoolbus on it for 10 years. I am so grateful that I never had to share it with a turbine-hauling-truck. You'd better study the safety of our kids on buses.

Will fixing up the road to accommodate those trucks require any condemnation of land? Surely our county commissioners would never sanction that. You should study the psychological effect that concept has on people in Skamania County.

SR 14 into Bingen is narrow, with geological barriers to widening, and rockfall hazards. I don't know how they plan to get those big trucks up to Saddleback, but it doesn't look like it's going to be easy on anybody's patience. Think about all the energy burning up as exhaust, while people wait for flaggers. The air quality in the gorge is already an issue. This won't enhance it. Please study how many tons of exhaust will be added to our airshed during construction.

There will be cars waiting on the Hood River Bridge (a whole other can of worms, potentially backing traffic onto Oregon's Highway 35 and I84), and on Alt 141 on the east bank of the White Salmon River. The stretch of SR14 running from Underwood to Bingen is one of the busiest roads around here, especially in tourist season, with a wild traffic mix of long-haul trucks, RVs, tourists, and locals in a hurry. It also has three very dangerous intersections. The EIS should study the accident rate between Bingen and Underwood on SR14. I totaled my car at Dock Grade last fall. (The wreck was NOT my fault!) The impact of construction traffic on emergency response times should also be studied.

Finally, I'd like to share what I learned from an honest-to-pete wind energy engineer. Right after I got first wind of this proposal, I went out to Wasco Oregon, to see for myself. As I've said before, the sight of windmills in the daylight doesn't bother me so much, and I didn't find them noisy.

I had spent some time the night before looking for independent studies about wind energy on the internet, and was frustrated that all the information out there appeared to have a bias to one side or the other. Out in Wasco, I stumbled onto a trailer full of engineers.

They were very kind, and answered some of my questions. One of them asked if I lived near a proposed project, and when I told him I did, and where, he told me that he was familiar with the project. He said that in his opinion, the project would never be built. The winds were too marginal and the engineering challenges of transporting the turbines to the site were too great to overcome, he said.

That makes me wonder. Maybe the project just needs to be bigger to be financially feasible. Maybe it's not really feasible without Whistling Ridge, hence the name change. If that is the case, the public has a right to know what the whole project is going to cost us all in a single, scientifically independent EIS.

I understand that the State of Oregon has a law requiring their energy siting board to consider lands bearing special state or federal designations very carefully when siting facilities like wind turbines. I know you have no state law compelling you to give special consideration to a national treasure, but I hope your good sense and moral compass will lead you in that direction. .

**The 2:30 meeting is on broader issues of impacts or no impacts.
It would be good for people to speak saying;**

I support the project because we all need renewable energy.

This project is good for the local Skamania County tax base.

All wind turbines will be outside the scenic area.

**Any construction traffic impacts will only be temporary.
therefore are not a major ongoing concern**

**Underwood Community Council is not a representative government
entity, as some are trying to make it seem.**

**PUD #1 of Skamania County will greatly benefit from this project with
circular connection which could prevent future outages.**

WIND TURBINES ON MAWI NOT INTRUSIVE

**The 6:30 meeting is a more formal hearing on land use consistency. It
is most important that people show up for this hearing to state that**

**Wind energy is compatible with forestry and other renewable resource
uses.**

**It is very important for someone to point out that the property
to the south where there is a lot of opposition coming from, is zoned
large scale Agriculture where orchard fans, farms, windmills and other
like activities are allowed outright.**

**These neighbors chose to live in an agricultural zone where such
activities can occur and wind energy would be consistent with this
area.**



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project

Public Informational & Scoping Meeting – Skamania County, Washington, May 6 & 7, 2009

Name: Sharon Cymal

Address: [Redacted] Underwood Wa 98651 (Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the Whistling Ridge Energy Project Informational & Scoping Comments

Leave this sheet in the Comment Box today, or mail it to: EFSEC, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172. Comment letters must be postmarked by Monday, May 18, 2009.

As a member of a family going back 6 generations in Hot River Valley in an area called 'Pine Grove' 6 miles up on Hwy 35. One of the views from our family farm & many many others including any view from the fir Mtn, Gilnowley, Panorama Point, will be ruined looking towards Underwood. Please consider the impact of these large lighted monsters.

Thank you

Use the back of this form if you need more room for your comments.

For more information about EFSEC's review of these project changes, please contact: Jim La Spina, EFSEC Siting Specialist, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172, call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.

6 May 2009

Comments regarding the Whistling Ridge Project

My name is Tom Rousseau. I live in Hood River, Oregon. I am here to comment on the Whistling Ridge wind generator project.

It is always difficult when one finds oneself trapped between two passions, as I currently am. I have a long term passion for protecting and enjoying the beautiful Columbia River Gorge with its unique and spectacular scenery, geological formations and many rare species of flowers and wildlife. I am also passionate about trading our dependence on fossil fuel energy sources for more readily renewable sources derived more directly from the sun, such as wind power, hydroelectric power, and solar panels.

So that is my conundrum: conflicting passions. In such situations, one must seek a balance and chose the least-worst solution. I conclude that the best balance is to not place wind generation facilities within visual range of the Gorge. Wind generators should not be viewable either from river level or from the many trails along the ridges and peaks of the Gorge. This solution is certainly well within the intent and spirit of the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Act, and is common sense. It is the best way to preserve the Gorge. The West has plenty of lower impact places on which to build wind generator farms without having to further desecrate the Gorge.

I fear that this proposal is driven primarily from potential financial gains for a few individuals and not from a balanced perspective of what is best for the region.

You would not build a wind generator farm on Half Dome at Yosemite, on Mt Rainier, or along the rim of Crater Lake. In like vein, you should not build one in or near the Gorge. I urge you to nip this proposal in the bud and not pursue it further, before it gains momentum.

Thank you.

Tom Rousseau
[REDACTED]
Hood River, OR 97031
[REDACTED]@gorge.net



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project

Public Informational & Scoping Meeting – Skamania County, Washington, May 6 & 7, 2009

Name: Paula O'Gorman

Address: [Redacted] Underwood WA 98651 (Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the Whistling Ridge Energy Project Informational & Scoping Comments

Leave this sheet in the Comment Box today, or mail it to: EFSEC, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172. Comment letters must be postmarked by Monday, May 18, 2009.

As an Underwood Resident I do not approve of this project (Whistling Ridge).

Use the back of this form if you need more room for your comments.

For more information about EFSEC's review of these project changes, please contact: Jim La Spina, EFSEC Siting Specialist, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172, call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.

Probable Wind Farm objections:

1. View/National Scenic Area:

The proposed location is outside of the National Scenic Area, therefore, those regulations are not material to this issue. As far as "ruining the view" goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. My present view includes orchards and vineyards. The orchards are unsightly in the winter, barren of leaves and non-symmetrical from repeated pruning. The vineyards are an unsightly forest of posts and wires, many with plastic tubes or rotting milk cartons in disarray for six to seven years or more – and these are in the national scenic area. Within the Hood River urban area (just outside of the boundaries of the scenic area) an unsightly yellow three-story building with a bright red roof has been constructed right on the river bluff next to a scenic waterfall without any objections from those concerned with protecting our scenic views.

2. Noise:

Most objections to wind farms relate to noise and windmills do create noise. There have been many studies of noise relating to wind farms. Windmills have been in existence in Europe for centuries and modern wind farms for electrical generation for decades. The questions are (a) how much noise is objectionable, (b) who is objecting, and (c) how much noise do wind farms generate?

First, a basic understanding of the measure of noise is necessary. Noise is measured in decibels. The decibel scale is logarithmic, in that 60 decibels represents 10 times the sound pressure as 50 decibels and 70 decibels represent 100 times the sound pressure of 50 decibels. 80 decibels is therefore 1000 times the sound pressure of 50 decibels.

Second, sound travels in three dimensions and the sound pressure level drops on distance from the source. How much? Turns out that the sound pressure drops 20 decibels for each 10-fold increase in distance. For example, if the sound pressure one foot from the source is 100 decibels, then at 10 feet from the source, it will be 80 decibels and 100 feet from the source it will be 60 decibels. 1000 feet from the source drops the sound pressure down to 40 decibels.

How much noise is objectionable?

Typical sound levels in suburban neighborhoods in the US are greater than 40 decibels. Sound levels inside a residence where ordinary conversation is underway (or refrigerator, heating system or other household equipment running) is greater than 60 decibels. The ambient sound levels in three US wilderness areas was measured as follows:

Golden Trout	47 decibels
Cohutta	52 decibels
Superstition	38 decibels

European noise regulations applicable to wind farms are interesting and informative. Different countries have different regulations. The following are regulations of some of the more advanced countries:

Denmark		45 dBA outside
Germany	Industrial Areas	70 dBA day, 70 dBA night
	Mixed areas	60 dBA day, 55 dBA night
	Pure residential	55 dBA day, 40 dBA night
France	dBA over background	5 dBA day, 3 dBA night
Scotland	dBA over background	5 dBA
Netherlands	1 m/sec wind	50 dBA day, 40 dBA night
	12 m/sec wind	60 dBA day, 50 dBA night

(Netherlands is chart based on wind speed, different values for each one meter per second of wind speed).

Who objects to the noise?

Apparently, not everyone. Surveys regarding wind farms have yielded consistent results that those who object to the view of wind farms are much more likely to object to the noise. Also, the louder the noise, the more people are likely to find it objectionable. The wilderness areas previously mentioned were surveyed for airplane noise (since this is not related to view) for loudness issues. At Golden Trout, 12% of the people surveyed found the airplane noise level of 50 dBA to be objectionable. At Cohutta, 2% found a noise level of 47 dBA to be objectionable and at Superstition, 1% found a noise level of 34 dBA to be objectionable, so there are people who find noise objectionable at practically any level and the louder the noise, the higher percentage of people notice it.

How much noise do wind farms generate?

This depends on a lot of factors. The primary consensus seems to be that the machinery noise, although it may be louder, is less objectionable than the rhythmic "whoosh" of the blades. At the base of a windmill east of Klondike, Oregon, we could carry on an ordinary conversation while the mill was in operation. This would indicate that standing right below the mill, the sound level was 70 dBA or less. The sound level depends on wind speed, but so does the ambient noise level. If the wind is blowing harder, the ambient noise level is higher. The sound level depends on distance. All of these factors are measurable and measurements should be available given the hundreds of wind turbines in Washington and Oregon east of John Day Dam. If 70 decibels exist at ground level and the blade swings 30 feet above the ground, then at 300 feet away, the level should be 50 decibels or less and at ½ mile, should be well below 40 decibels.

My opinion? Background sound levels definitely come into play as well as wind speed. If rules are required, both could be taken into effect by measuring the background sound level at various wind speeds and relating the allowed sound levels to be some value equal or slightly above background. For example, a scale such as the Netherlands with an allowance like France of perhaps 3 dBA over the background sound levels for a site at the wind farm property line.

3. Bird Kill:

This was a problem with wind generators in the early 80's but is no longer a significant issue. Early wind generators were lower to the ground, turned at high rpm, and were erected on lattice towers that were attractive to birds as a place to roost and look for prey. Modern wind generators are streamlined smooth surface tubes without resting places, they turn at low RPM, and the blades are very visible so birds can avoid them. There are hundreds of wind generators east of John Day Dam in both Washington and Oregon and both states should have very good records of bird kills from these units, since routine measurements are made and reported. Since they are still permitting additional hundreds of windmills, the kill rate is obviously not of concern.

4. Environmental hazards:

Various environmental hazards have been touted by SOSA as dangerous to property, fauna and the public. These range from hazardous materials (presumably lubricating oils, transformer oils and maintenance materials) to vibrations that affect the human body, low frequency sound that affects the nervous system or the body, chunks of ice that may be thrown like projectiles, and the avoidance of wind mills by livestock, wild animals and pets. These probably should be addressed separately:

Vibration – No one putting up a \$3 million generating structure is going to tolerate vibration of such a magnitude to damage nearby structures or property. Vibration sensors have been used in electrical generating plants since the beginning of the electrical age. Steam turbines, gas turbines, reciprocating engines, and electrical generators are all equipped with sensitive vibration monitors that automatically shut the system down if any significant vibration is detected. If the vibration was of such magnitude that even the most sensitive human could feel it at the base of the tower or in the foundation, the entire \$3 million structure is at great risk. The owners and manufacturers of the wind generator cannot afford that risk and protective equipment is installed to monitor, record and prevent this from happening.

Low frequency sound – Some people may object to sound, but after many scientific surveys, there has been no physical effect ever found from sound frequencies either below or within human hearing range in the range of 80 decibels and below.

Hazardous materials – The maintenance materials of paint, lubricating oils, transformer oils, diesel fuels, etc., that may be used or spilled is of less quantity and no different than the same materials stored and used by loggers, vintners, orchardists, and ordinary residents both inside and outside of the scenic area.

Certainly these materials are a lot less hazardous than the pesticides and herbicides that are transported, stored and sprayed throughout the area on the many vineyards and orchards – some of which are only tens of feet away from residences and yards where children and pets play. Unused pesticides and waste pesticides are rated as extremely dangerous wastes in Washington State and their disposal within the state is not permitted. Application of these materials is indiscriminate. They are blown into the air

Don Bradford
Underwood, WA
6 May 2009

with high velocity fans, some are persistent in the environment for weeks and months, many are suspected or known carcinogens, most are extremely toxic to aquatic life, and many are toxic to birds, animals and humans. Arsenic and other rodent poisons are plowed into the ground and there are no controls on runoff or possible aquifer contamination. The persons dispensing these chemicals are required to wear hazardous substance protective gear and respiratory protection – what about the nearby residents? What is their protection? This is presently all allowed both in and out of the scenic area and yet some of the very people who dispense these dangerous chemicals are objecting to the potential of “hazardous” fuels and lubricants from the wind farm.

Ice throw – In the winter and under certain conditions, ice will build up on the blades of the windmills and will at some time be thrown off of the blades. If this unbalances the blades, balance and vibration sensors will shut the mill down and alarm the control center. The maximum distance that a chunk of ice can be thrown can be calculated by any freshman engineer or physics student by ignoring air friction. The maximum velocity of the tip of the blade is given by the mill revolutions and the radius of the blades. A series of calculations will show that the maximum distance from the mill will occur if the ice comes off the tip when the tip is at a 45-degree angle from the horizontal and rising. The maximum force on the ice pulling it from the blade will be when the centrifugal force and gravity are aligned at the low point of blade travel and this is the most likely place for the ice to come off. If air friction is taken into account, the maximum throw angle will not be at the ideal 45-degree angle above the bottom, but the travel is less than the distance calculated at the 45-degree ignoring air friction. The planned ½ mile offset from nearest occupied property is sufficient protection from ice throw.

5. Increased traffic on roads:

There is no question that construction of the wind farm will temporarily incur traffic problems and delays in the Underwood area. There will be construction equipment, concrete delivery trucks, trucks delivering the massive pieces of the windmills themselves and it will be disruptive to our normal travel routine. There are no regulations to avoid this and, it is after all, temporary. Maintenance activities on the roads and highways, the installation of new decking on the Hood River bridge, expansion of Highway 14 west of Bingen, all of these were disrupting to our normal traffic routine as well.

Don Bradford



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project
May 6, 2009, Stevenson, WA
May 7, 2009, Underwood, WA

Public Informational &
Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting

Name: LADONNA POLLARD

Address: [REDACTED] UNDERWOOD, WA 98651
(Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the proposed
Whistling Ridge Energy Project
below and leave this sheet in the Comment Box.

The route the components are traveling
up to the "site" is of great concern...
Streets are narrow, many curves and
will impact many family homes.

I am in complete agreement - we need
this project!!

Please, give the route problem more
thought and open dialog, so we know
what the end result will be on this
one small ?? concern. Thanks

Use the back of this form if you need more room for your comments.

For more information about EFSEC's review of this application, please contact:
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call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project
May 6, 2009, Stevenson, WA
May 7, 2009, Underwood, WA

Public Informational &
Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting

Name: Adrienne Rudekman

Address: [Redacted], Underwood WA 98651

(Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the proposed
Whistling Ridge Energy Project
below and leave this sheet in the Comment Box.

1) In regards to National Scenic Area - we've all been required to follow specific guidelines/laws for building + developing our land with the main goal of limiting an impact to prime viewing areas w/in the scenic area. The land sps is proposing while legally outside the scenic area are clearly not in compliance with the intent of the law. This project will permanently scar this beautiful part of the world. I believe that any financials gains made ~~are~~ ^{caused by project with} ~~are~~ ^{ultimately} ~~will~~ hurt our community.

2) Economic diversity + development - It has recently been brought to my attention the other projects designed to bring a far higher number of long term jobs to

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To obtain future updates about the Project and notice of public meetings, please be sure to include your name and complete mailing address on this comment form or call (360) 956-2121.

this area along along with over 2 million in
economic stimulus money - why would this
project be turned down while a project creating
8 jobs be pushed through

3.) Water - where is SPS going to get all of
the water to run this project -



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project
May 6, 2009, Stevenson, WA
May 7, 2009, Underwood, WA

Public Informational &
Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting

Name: Mary Twombly

Address: [REDACTED] 98605

(Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the proposed
Whistling Ridge Energy Project
below and leave this sheet in the Comment Box.

Height - Do you see any 42 story buildings in our area? These large turbines are industrial power generators that don't belong in a rural scenic (close proximity to) area.

Wealth - does not seem just or fair that one large powerful landowner create a huge impact on a large area's view & health & economic impact to recreational, cultural & other economic issues. re: Health - please consider the growing wealth of well documented serious health issues being published & studied due to low frequency vibration (being ignored by wind energy companies) Please see (google) Nina Pierpont MD to see numerous case studies - by her & others. Please site these turbines no closer than ~~100~~ miles from residences
Use the back of this form if you need more room for your comments.

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call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.

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In considering the decibel level/noise please consider the peak levels & not just the averages.

Please consider CONSERVATION! There is very little conservation explored these days as we enjoy many electrical appliances/machines/lights & development.

Possibly right choice & time but putting 42 story moving structures on hilltops/ridges in bird flyways & rich wildlife areas does not make good sense.

Also agree that wildlife & other studies be done by objective 3rd party. Don't just SDS to do their own studies.



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project

Public Informational & Scoping Meeting – Skamania County, Washington,
May 6 & 7, 2009

Name: DON BRADFORD

Address: [REDACTED] UNDERWOOD, WA 98651
(Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the
Whistling Ridge Energy Project Informational & Scoping Comments

Leave this sheet in the Comment Box today, or mail it to:
EFSEC, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172.
Comment letters must be postmarked by Monday, May 18, 2009.

I AM IN FAVOR OF THIS PROJECT - SKAMANIA WHISTLING RIDGE
ENERGY PROJECT - SKAMANIA NEEDS THE JOBS & TAX BASE.
THE REGION NEEDS ADD'L ELECTRICAL CAPACITY AND THE LOCATION
IS IDEAL W/TH RESPECT TO TRANSMISSION FACILITIES.
OPPONENTS TO THIS PROJECT HAVE MOUNTED A MIS-INFORMATION
CAMPAGN CITING THREATS TO PUBLIC HEALTH, DAMAGE TO
PROPERTY DUE TO VIBRATION, HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSALS,
VIEW FROM NATIONAL SCENIC AREA, AND FAMILY BREAK UP
DUE TO NOISE & LOW FREQUENCY VIBRATION.

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call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.

MOST OF THESE OBJECTIONS CAN BE PROVEN INVALID UPON

TECHNICAL EVALUATION. THERE ARE VALID OBJECTIONS

DUE TO ROAD CONGESTION DURING CONSTRUCTION AND SOME

PEOPLE OBJECT TO ANY DISRUPTION FROM THEIR VIEW.

A ~~FEW~~ FEW MAY BE ABLE TO HEAR SOUND FROM THE NEAREST

TURBINE, BUT A LOT OF THE OBJECTIONS ARE BASED ON

A MISUNDERSTANDING OF SOUND DECIBELS AND SOUND

ATTENUATION.

NOISE, TOXIC CHEMICALS, HEALTH HAZARDS, ANIMAL

& HUMAN DAMAGE DUE TO VIBRATIONS, ETC ARE FALSE

~~AND OF THE~~ THERE ARE MUCH GREATER THREATS

FROM ORCHARD & VINEYARD OPERATIONS THAT ARE

PERMITTED THROUGHOUT THE AREA.

I HAVE INCLUDED WHAT I BELIEVE IS AN OBJECTIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE THREATS CLAIMED.



Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

COMMENT FORM

Whistling Ridge Energy Project

Public Informational & Scoping Meeting – Skamania County, Washington,
May 6 & 7, 2009

Name: Eileen Garvin

Address: [REDACTED] Hood River, OR 97031
(Please include your Zip!)

Please write any comments you have with respect to the
Whistling Ridge Energy Project Informational & Scoping Comments

Leave this sheet in the Comment Box today, or mail it to:
EFSEC, PO Box 43172, Olympia, WA 98504-3172.
Comment letters must be postmarked by Monday, May 18, 2009.

Thank you for taking our comments on this project.
As a resident of the Columbia River Gorge, I strongly
opposed the Whistling Ridge Energy Project for
several reasons:

- ① It will negatively impact our tourism economy
- ② It will negatively impact property values
- ③ The visual obstruction to the horizon violates
the philosophy of the National Scenic Area
- ④ The night time lighting is an added concern
- ⑤ It will harm wildlife, including bats, birds

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call (360) 956-2047, or e-mail efsec@cted.wa.gov.

and endangered species

⑥ This project seems like it will offer short term gain to a few and long term gain to even fewer

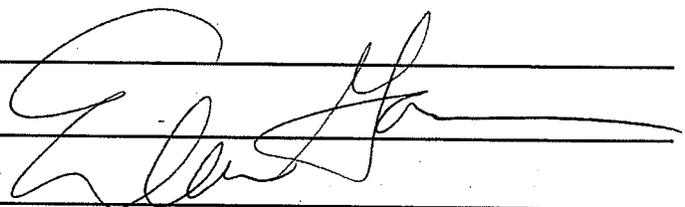
⑦ I worry about the lack to talk about energy conservation

⑧ I worry about instability of land in the area + potential for negative impact to local rivers

⑨ The project endangers the residents of the community during construction- especially kids.

The ~~#~~ Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area is a special place. We need to protect it. ~~By~~ The Whistling Ridge Energy Project jeopardizes the cultural resource of this place.

Thank you for your time



Scoping Comment
#158**Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)**

From: LaSpina, Jim (CTED)
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2009 2:05 PM
To: Talburt, Tammy (CTED); Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)
Subject: Whistling Ridge Public Comment/Enquiry and My Response
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Blue

Tammy & Monica,

I have responded to Ms. Repar's enquiry. Please document her enquiry and my response.

Thanks,
Jim

From: LaSpina, Jim (CTED)
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2009 2:03 PM
To: [REDACTED]@saw.net
Subject: FW: REVISED Whistling Ridge Scoping Notice

Ms. Repar,

According to the application submitted to EFSEC, the entire Whistling Ridge Energy Project is located within Skamania County (Section 2.2.1). The applicant has informed EFSEC that Figure 2.1-1 incorrectly shows the northern portion of the project as located in Klickitat County.

Thank you for your interest,
Jim La Spina
Energy Facility Siting Specialist

From: repar [mailto:[REDACTED]@saw.net]
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2009 11:11 AM
To: Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)
Subject: RE: REVISED Whistling Ridge Scoping Notice
Importance: High

Dear Ms. Bhavnani,

To my knowledge, which I realize may be flawed, Whistling Ridge covers Skamania and Klickitat counties. If that is true, why isn't there a scoping meeting in Klickitat County?
Thank you.

Mary Repar

From: Bhavnani, Monica (CTED) [mailto:MonicaB@CTED.WA.GOV]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 4:57 PM
To: Talburt, Tammy (CTED)
Subject: REVISED Whistling Ridge Scoping Notice

5/14/2009

Attached: Revised Scoping Notice

<<WRE Scoping notice Revised 4 21 09 final.pdf>>

If you have problems opening this attachment please contact me.

Monica Bhavnani

Office Assistant

Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC)

MonicaB@cted.wa.gov

360-956-2048

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)

From: jake culver [REDACTED]@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2009 10:29 AM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: Concern about Whistling Ridge

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

Allen Fiksdal
Manager, Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council PO Box 43172
905 Plum Street SE
Olympia , 98504-3172

Dear Mr. Fiksdal, ,

I am writing to comment on the proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project in Skamania County, Washington.

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area needs protection from all such proposals. Were every developer marketing a "blue-sky" development proposal - big box-stores, casinos, pipelines, etc - allowed unlimited access to this public treasure, it would quickly become unrecognizable.

I support renewable energy, but I am opposed to industrial-scale wind energy development within or adjacent to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

jake culver
[REDACTED]
portland, OR 97202

Scoping Comment
#160**Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)**

From: Erin Swayze [redacted]@skamania-edc.org]
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2009 1:55 PM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: Energy Project
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

From: Anita Gahimer Crow [mailto:[redacted]@kineticsinc.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 12:01 AM
To: efsec@cted.wa.gov
Cc: Peggy Bryan
Subject: Whistling Ridge Energy Project

To The EFSEC and whom it may concern,

I would like to express my support for the Whistling Ridge Energy Project. In fact, I hope to have the opportunity to express my pride of living in a community willing to do their part in helping our country become self sustaining in its energy use by having a wind energy project in our backyard!

With a positive attitude this project can become an asset to every local resident and business! Even a marketing asset.

I live on the Cook-Underwood Road, on the west side of Windy Ridge. I will have a view of the wind turbines from my property, and may or may not hear some noise as I lie in bed at night with the windows open. Just as I put aside the wafting in sounds of the trains and barges from down on the Columbia River, the generators from our Federal Salmon Hatchery, and the occasional car with a loud engine, I will hear the turbines and sigh with content, being fortunate to live here in the mountains of the Columbia River Gorge hearing these faint sounds rather than screeching sirens of various sorts. In fact, this is exactly what the multitudes of wildlife do. They hear the jets, train whistles, etc., yet they are still here, like the pretty doe here just a short while ago munching on the lower half of my blueberry bush!

The environmental impact is small, acceptable, and not detrimental in the long-term.

Alternative energy projects like wind farms must be located not only where there is wind, but where there is a willing land owner to do a project, as a project would have difficulty financially if a developer of such an energy project had to purchase land for the effort. We are lucky to have a land owner willing to take on such an endeavor.

This wind energy project developer has an excellent reputation in this community as a supporter of community, our citizens, our events, fire departments, schools, etc., and goes out of their way to conduct their business in acceptable manners that are important to us all today. You can call them up and talk to the President!

Economic benefits abound and will be a big help to the local communities and counties.

Please allow the project to proceed and assist it to fruition.

Thank you,

5/13/2009

Anita Gahimer Crow

[REDACTED]
Mile Post 2.5 Cook-Underwood Road
Mill A, Washington 98605
509-538-[REDACTED] (day #)
[REDACTED]@kineticsinc.com

Scoping Comment
#161**Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)**

From: Erin Swayze [redacted]@skamania-edc.org]
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2009 1:56 PM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: FW: WHISTLING RIDGE PROPOSAL COMMENTS
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

From: ANN LUEDERS [mailto:[redacted]@wildblue.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 10:22 PM
To: tammyt@cted.wa.gov
Subject: WHISTLING RIDGE PROPOSAL COMMENTS

I am sending these comments in support of the Whistling Ridge Wind Project proposal that has been submitted by SDS Lumber Co. This project would benefit Skamania County in countless ways, such as: 1) it's a homegrown stimulus package that will provide much needed tax revenue and jobs; 2) it's a project that uses a renewable resource and has little, if any impact on the environment; 3) it's a project that has the potential to ignite future, similar projects that are both good for the county and its residents.

The majority of the land in Skamania County is owned or controlled via Scenic Area legislation, or owned by the federal and state government. Of the remaining property that is privately owned, *3% or less* is available for development. Many of these developable properties are owned by generations of families who have strive to keep up with the ever changing rules, and regulations that are imposed upon their private property rights. They have gone from managing what was once solid logging land, to thinning operations, to what is now the push for a more "green" or "tourist based" use. These same families have fought battle after battle against the denvironmental groups that try to prohibit their ability and rights as landowners.

An accomplished publisher once said "An ounce of hypocrisy is worth a pound of ambition." Unfortunately for Skamania County, one of the organizations that is most loudly opposing the Whistling Ridge proposal is full of hypocrites. which leads to endless amounts of ambition. This hypocrisy is made evident by a simple visit to the SOSA website, where one will find a statement that notes "we are not against renewable energy." Yet, SOSA most vehemently opposes the Whistling Ridge development. Friends of the Gorge are right in line with the same disapproval of the project, even though it **CLEARLY SITS OUTSIDE OF THE SCENIC AREA MANAGEMENT**, both on the map and in the legislation. Meanwhile, the residents who are in support of economic growth, sustainable energy and private property rights are unable to conquer the mass lobbying and legal landmines that are thrown out by these opposing organizations.

Skamania County, the State of Washington and the Federal Government have a responsibility to see past the lobbying of radical environmental groups whose sole intent is to prohibit any type of development. They have a responsibility to zone, and allow use that protects private property rights and is in the best interest of ALL of their constituents - not just the handful who are chanting "Not in my backyard."

5/13/2009

I would encourage EFSEC to support the Whistling Ridge Wind Project as do many of the residents of Skamania County, the Board of County Commissioners, the EDC and the Skamania County PUD.

Sincerely,
Ann Lueders

[REDACTED]
Carson, WA
509-427-[REDACTED]

Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)

From: Alan Wilcox [REDACTED]@gorge.net]
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2009 2:25 AM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: Conditional Support for Whistling Ridge

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

Allen Fiksdal
Manager, Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council PO Box 43172
905 Plum Street SE
Olympia , 98504-3172

Dear Mr. Fiksdal, ,

I am writing to comment on the proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project in Skamania County, Washington.

I support the forward looking proposal to add wind energy generation in Skamania County. However, I have one major concern that I feel should be addressed if you wish to preserve the livability of our communities.

When people choose to relocate (and to remain) in the communities abutting the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, one of the prime motivators is the outstanding natural scenic beauty of the area.

It appears to me that locating 426-foot-tall turbines on the ridgeline of the Columbia River Gorge would degrade the scenic values of the Gorge. The turbines would be highly visible from several designated key viewing areas within the National Scenic Area, including Interstate 84, the Historic Columbia River Highway, Cook-Underwood Road, and Panorama Point.

Locating this type project in our communities should be done in such a way that it does not introduce highly visible industrial facilities into the natural, forested landscape, protruding above ridgelines and detracting from the natural scenic beauty of the Gorge.

I support renewable energy at the Whistling Ridge project, as long as the turbines are not visible from the key viewing areas in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, a designated national scenic treasure.

Alan Wilcox
[REDACTED]
White Salmon, WA 98672-8968

Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)

From: Tom Rousseau [REDACTED]@gorge.net]
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2009 11:09 AM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: Comments on Whistling Ridge Wind Project
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

Dear Mr. Fiksdal,

I am writing to comment on the proposed Whistling Ridge Wind Generator Energy Project on Saddleback Mountain near the Columbia Gorge.

First, I would like to establish my position regarding wind power generation. I am fully supportive of this source of energy generation, and believe that it has an important role in a portfolio of energy alternatives. I also believe that it must be implemented in a manner that is in good balance with the other demands and expectations that we place on our environment.

I am in favor of the continued development of wind electric generation farms in the Northwest, but strongly believe that Saddleback Mountain is the wrong place build such a facility.

My comments are regarding three primary areas of concern, and I believe that each of these must be effectively addressed in the EIS, and if so done, will show that this project is poorly conceived:

- 1) **Locating in a mountainous forested area:** this would be the first time that an extensive wind generator farm would be built in a heavily forested mountainous area. The EIS must address the impact on natural wildlife, including all the habitat (such as deer, elk, bears, cougars, small mammals, and the many birds). How will the noise (both audible and subsonic), vibrations, visual prominence, and high speed moving blades impact this wildlife? Will the animal populations decrease? Will the animal populations be forced to move, such as into nearby human settled areas (of particular concern with cougars and bears)? Will there be a neurotic impact on the animals?

How will the control of vegetation (required for proper clearance around the towers) affect soil stability and erosion?

These must be scientifically determined by a neutral and reliable study group such as a respectable university. Not SDS, its affiliates or contractors.

- 2) **Energy reliability and storage:** Contrary to the belief that seems to be held by some of the Skamania County residents, wind power is not a reliable, stable source of energy. Its production is highly dependent on the availability of suitable winds. Extended periods without wind is common, even in the region of the Columbia Gorge. Wind power cannot be relied upon to source local areas in times of broad power grid failures. This needs to be conspicuously noted in the EIS.

Further, to be effective, wind power needs to have a means of storing the energy from peak generation periods to accommodate the periods with no or little generation. This must be addressed in the EIS.

- 3) **Visual impact in the region:** The Columbia River Gorge is a natural wonder of great beauty and diversity. Wind generator farms should not be visible either from river level or the many trails and ridges of the Gorge. This requirement is certainly within the intent and spirit of the 1986 Columbia Gorge National Scenic Act, if not the written word. The NSA is very critical about viewable man-made contrivances, and would have also addressed wind generator farms with 400 ft towers, had that be anticipated at the time.

Among other worthy benefits, the beauty of the Gorge attracts many tourists and visitors. Desecrating the views will discourage visitors and the tourist revenue that benefits the region. Certainly the folks of Skamania County appreciate the revenues brought by the presence of Skamania Lodge.

The project plan must ensure that no towers are visible from any elevation or location in the Gorge.

You would not build a wind generator farm on Half Dome in Yosemite, Mt. Rainier, or along the rim of Crater Lake. In like vein, you should not build one in or near the Gorge.

Finally, the photos showing the proposed project that were presented at the Stevenson meeting on 6 May 09 were misleading, at best. Most of them portrayed the towers against a partly cloudy sky, the clouds being about the same color as the towers. This made the towers appear invisible. I hope that purposeful deception was not the intent, but this needs to be corrected in future presentations.

I appreciate your consideration of my concerns and positively addressing them. Please contact me if I can be of further help. Thank you.

Best regards,

Tom Rousseau

[REDACTED]
Hood River, OR 97031

[REDACTED]
@gorge.net

May 6, 2009

Mr. Allen Fiksdal
EFSEC
P.O. Box 43172
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

RE: WHISTLING RIDGE WIND FARM

Dear Mr. Fiksdal:

After reviewing the SDS application for Whistling Ridge Wind Farm, we are extremely concerned about its location for the following reasons:

1. Even though it is physically just outside the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area, the turbines will have a severe detrimental visual effect to the beauty of the Gorge for visitors as well as for residents of the area.
2. The improvement to logging roads in order to accommodate delivery of the turbines to the farm will be major. The weight and length of the huge towers plus the blades will require, as noted in the application, widening of these narrow roads plus stabilization of the road base. It is our understanding that this type of road improvement is not currently allowed in the National Scenic Area as the construction does not relate to forestry.
3. The Landslide Hazard Areas, particularly the narrow ridge of the southern portion of Tower Line A needs further review. Recalling the Gorge landslides caused by the floods of 1996, this ridge could prove to be less stable than the application indicates. The precipitation records cited in the application seem to focus on years from 1951-1978 rather than more current records.
4. The location of the wind farm in a forested area rather than on open rolling hills will undoubtedly have a negative impact on wildlife habitat. The SDS contracted surveys are still in progress so obviously are incomplete. The fact that the area has been used for logging in the past cannot compare to the habitat damage caused the clear-cutting adjacent to a wind farm of 50 turbines much less the huge concrete foundations required for each turbine.
5. Much of the application seems short of detail ... i.e., the FAA lighting required on the turbine blades which will create a visual blight on the Gorge. Many of the design details are still being developed. Also, zoning changes required for the wind farm, still under review, and are being challenged.

These concerns are enough to warrant further study of the Whispering Ridge Wind Farm. Should the application eventually be approved, it is imperative that the wind turbines be located out of view of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

Very truly yours,



Ann and Dave Bronson

[REDACTED]
Hood River, Oregon 97031

RECEIVED

MAY 11 2009

ENERGY FACILITY SITE
EVALUATION COUNCIL

Bhavnani, Monica (CTED)

From: Mayra Avila [REDACTED]@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2009 8:43 PM
To: CTED EFSEC
Subject: Concern about Whistling Ridge

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Green

Allen Fiksdal
Manager, Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council PO Box 43172
905 Plum Street SE
Olympia , 98504-3172

Dear Mr. Fiksdal, ,

I am writing to comment on the proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project in Skamania County, Washington.

The proposed project would cause significant negative impacts to sensitive wildlife and plant habitat and would degrade the outstanding scenic beauty of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The Whistling Ridge proposal includes more than 80 wind turbines in two counties, yet the application filed with EFSEC discusses only 50 turbines in Skamania County. The EIS must review the cumulative environmental impacts of all portions of the project, including both the Skamania Co. and Klickitat Co. portions.

This proposal is likely to have different and greater wildlife impacts than any other wind energy facility proposed in the State of Washington and Oregon, because this project is proposed at a heavily forested site. The project would permanently disturb large areas of forested habitat and result in direct and indirect impacts to multiple wildlife species through habitat loss and displacement, direct collisions with turbine blades, and other factors. The potentially affected species include northern spotted owl, western gray squirrel, northern goshawk and other raptors, several species of bats, multiple migratory bird species, mule deer, black-tailed deer, and elk. Several of these species are listed as sensitive or threatened in Washington State.

Locating 426-foot-tall turbines on the ridgeline of the Columbia River Gorge would also degrade the scenic values of the Gorge. The turbines would be highly visible from several designated key viewing areas within the National Scenic Area, including Interstate 84, the Historic Columbia River Highway, Cook-Underwood Road, and Panorama Point. The project would introduce highly visible industrial facilities into the natural, forested landscape, protruding above ridgelines and detracting from the natural scenic beauty of the Gorge. The wind towers would have daytime and nighttime warning lights, which would worsen the aggravate scenic impacts.

Finally, the proposed project would be located partially within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Specifically, the applicant proposes to construct, expand, and improve more than two miles of roads within the National Scenic Area in order to haul industrial materials with gross vehicle weights of up to 53 tons. This proposal to construct and use Scenic Area lands for industrial purposes is prohibited by the

National Scenic Area Act and Management Plan, and must be denied.

I support renewable energy, but I am opposed to industrial-scale wind energy development within or adjacent to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, a designated national scenic treasure.

Please try to find another peice of property in a different state and location. I would appreciate that greatly!

Mayra Avila


Hood River, OR 97031