

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

**ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION
NO. 96-1

OLYMPIC PIPE LINE COMPANY

CROSS CASCADE PIPE LINE
PROJECT

APPLICATION NO. 96-1

PREFILED TESTIMONY OF
RANDY PERSON

EXHIBIT _____ (RP-T)

ISSUE: POTENTIAL VISUAL,
RECREATION AND OTHER
IMPACTS IN THE TWIN FALLS
NATURAL AREA

SPONSOR: WASHINGTON STATE
PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION

- Q. Please provide your name and business address to the council.**
- A. Randy Person
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Post Office Box 42668
Olympia, Washington 98504-2668
Phone: 360-902-8655
- Q. Please summarize your employment and educational background.**
- A. I am currently the Assistant Manager of the Site Planning Program for Washington State Parks. As such, I am involved in all facets of park planning, from initial selection of appropriate land to design of recreation facilities. I also directly supervise planning staff charged with implementation of the State Park Capital Budget Program. I have been employed in various levels of park planning by Washington State Parks since 1971. I earned my Bachelors Degree in Outdoor Recreation Planning at the University of Washington in 1971.

1 **Q. Generally, what is the subject of your testimony?**

2 A. My testimony concerns the potential visual, recreation and other impacts related to the
3 proposed construction of a portion of the Cross Cascade Pipeline through the Twin Falls
4 Natural Area of Olallie State Park.

5
6 **Q. Are there certain limitations placed on your impact evaluations?**

7 A. Yes. I worked under the premise that project-wide concerns such as the applicant's ability
8 to construct a safe pipeline, properly restore the pipeline corridor, respond to leaks and
9 other emergencies, and so on, will be addressed by others with expertise in those areas.
10 My analysis is limited to site specific impacts, with the presumption that construction and
11 site restoration will follow all applicable guidelines.

12
13 **Q. Describe your background and experiences related to Twin Falls Natural Area.**

14 A. I have over 25 years experience in park planning and design. I have been the regional
15 planner serving the Puget Sound Region for 15 years. As a parks planner, my duties
16 routinely require evaluation of land use suitability, including especially visual and
17 recreational impacts of development. I am well acquainted with the Olallie State Park
18 and the Twin Falls Natural Area within the Park. I was the primary agency contact for the
19 construction of the Twin Falls Trail, the primary recreation facility constructed within
20 Twin Falls Natural Area. During that time, I covered most of the Twin Falls park site on
21 foot. Later, I was the planner for the DNR acquisition and subsequent land exchange
22 with Gary Wilson, which resulted in today's park boundaries. Finally, to prepare this
23 testimony, I visited the site on February 3, 1999, to make observations directly applicable
24 to the testimony. This proved to be excellent timing, since all the deciduous trees are
25 leafless, and the visual impacts are at their maximum. My observations and assessments
26

1 therefore reflect the “worst case” conditions, which will be substantially mitigated when
2 deciduous trees and shrubs are in leaf during the growing season.

3
4 **Q. Are you familiar with the proposal by the Applicant in this proceeding, Olympic
5 Pipeline Company, to construct a petroleum pipeline through the park?**

6 A. Yes. I have reviewed the Easement Application made by Olympic Pipeline Company to
7 the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission for this construction. The
8 application included a variety of maps and aerial photo representations of the proposal, as
9 well as written descriptions. I reviewed the entire application and concentrated my study
10 on those portions of the proposal that apply particularly to Twin Falls Natural Area.

11
12 **Q. Describe the general condition of Twin Falls Natural Area.**

13 A. Twin Falls is the westernmost portion of the larger park known as Olallie State Park.
14 Twin Falls was the first acquisition in the area, made primarily to preserve public access
15 to several waterfalls of the south fork of the Snoqualmie River. Following construction
16 of Interstate 90, which cut off a short pull out and trail that was available from the old
17 state highway, public access to the falls was very limited. The development of two
18 hydro-power generating stations on the river within the state park led to development of a
19 recreational trail as part of mitigation for that project. The trail now begins about a half-
20 mile off of Edgewick road and follows the north bank of the Snoqualmie River up to
21 between the upper and lower of the Twin Falls. The trail includes a major stairway and
22 observation platform in the middle of the lower, larger waterfall. At the river between the
23 falls, a bridge spans the river taking the trail to the south side of the river. From there it
24 continues eastward, climbing until it meets the old railroad grade and the John Wayne
25 Pioneer Trail, a little east of the major power line switch yard. That portion of park
26

1 ownership south of the river and west of the bridge is essentially undeveloped. It is
2 currently managed to provide visual buffer and wildlife habitat.

3
4 **Q. From what aspect did you evaluate the impacts of the pipeline?**

5 A. I evaluated impacts from four main aspects:

- 6 1. Travelers along Interstate 90.
- 7 2. Users of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail.
- 8 3. Users of the Twin Falls Trail.
- 9 4. As the Pipeline is proposed to enter the park from SE 162nd Street.

10
11 **Q. What is your assessment of visual impacts of the pipeline construction to travelers
12 along Interstate 90?**

13 A. The portion of Twin Falls that would be impacted by the pipeline is difficult to see while
14 traveling on Interstate 90.

15
16 Traveling eastbound, east from exit 34, the road begins to climb and there is a view down
17 into the general forested area for probably less than a minute at normal freeway speeds.
18 The view is 90 degrees to the direction of travel, so drivers would have a difficult time
19 seeing anything there, although passengers would have the leisure to look that way.
20 Much of the freeway that would otherwise have a good view is bordered by mature
21 timber, which completely obstructs the view down into the proposed pipeline impact area.
22 The overall impression of a traveler on Interstate 90 is an area that is thickly forested with
23 a mix of conifer and deciduous trees. It is worthy to note that existing housing
24 development in the vicinity is very difficult to notice, but, as will be discussed later, is
25 prevalent throughout the proposed pipeline route.
26

1 Traveling westbound on Interstate 90, there is even less likelihood of visual impacts. The
2 same forest that blocks the view from the eastbound lanes blocks much of the view from
3 the westbound lanes. By the time there is an open view from the westbound lanes, the
4 driver is pointing well away from the potentially impacted area. One would have to look
5 sideways and backwards while traveling at 70 mph to try to discover the route of the
6 pipeline. The visual impacts of the pipeline to travelers on Interstate 90 are negligible.
7

8 **Q. What is your assessment of the visual and recreational impacts of pipeline**
9 **construction to users of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail?**

10 A. At the location the pipeline would join the trail, it will be coming up a steep slope of
11 approximately 50 percent. Below the trail is a small, level bench and ridge that the
12 pipeline would pass over, to then drop down another steep slope. Visual impacts would
13 be limited to the area between the trail and the far side of the bench, a distance of a few
14 hundred feet. The hillside is heavily forested with mixed deciduous and evergreen trees.
15 Certainly, a construction clearing for the pipeline down into the forest would be visible
16 from the John Wayne Pioneer Trail. Careful selection of tree removal and a change in
17 direction of the pipeline alignment after leaving the trail could minimize visual impact.
18 Several photos of this area are attached as Exhibits RP-1, 2, and 3.
19

20 Recreation and management impacts of the pipeline corridor would be primarily negative.
21 The bottom end of the hillside transect begins at the end of a private road. The pipeline
22 corridor passes through a natural area of high value for wildlife habitat, especially for
23 resident elk. Introduction of casual public use of the pipeline corridor, which will form a
24 *de facto* trail, may have adverse impacts on both the private residents and the animal
25 communities living in the area. Specific measures would most likely need to be taken to
26 prevent casual recreation use of the corridor in this area. Both physical barriers such as

1 gates and explanatory signing would probably have to be employed to gain an acceptable
2 degree of compliance.

3
4 **Q. What is your assessment of the visual and recreational impacts of pipeline
5 construction to users of the Twin Falls Trail?**

6 A. The Twin Falls Trail is completely cut off visually from the proposed pipeline route.
7 Even at its highest points, the south face of the Snoqualmie River canyon is higher than
8 the recreational trail. There will be no recreational or visual impacts to the Twin Falls
9 Trail due to pipeline construction along the proposed pipeline route.

10
11 **Q. What is your assessment of visual and other impacts of pipeline construction at the
12 entrance into State Park property near SE 162nd Street?**

13 A. The impacts are similar to those from the John Wayne Pioneer Trail. Vegetation in the
14 lower area is a more uniform, dense second growth Douglas-fir stand. A pipeline
15 corridor through it will look much like one of the many driveways or small gravel roads
16 serving new homes in the area. A long, straight clearing would be a dramatic visual scar
17 from its initiation point. Also, unwanted public use in this private community will need
18 to be addressed. As mentioned earlier, changes in alignment of the trail to put bends in it
19 can help mitigate the visual impact of a long straight corridor.

20
21 **Q. Will the visual impacts of the proposed pipeline corridor be significantly different
22 from different viewpoints?**

23 A. Yes. The maximum visual impact will be from a person on the ground looking down the
24 length of the corridor. From a distant view, breaks in the tree canopy are difficult to see.
25 Both deciduous and evergreen trees in the area have large crowns, with diameters of fifty
26 feet or more common. It is likely that trees left at the time of construction will have

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

branches overhanging the pipeline route, softening the straight line appearance of the proposed corridor. Further growth will continue to reduce the visual impact. The area near the entrance of the corridor into the Twin Falls Natural Area has a couple dozen new homes. It is very difficult to pick out the clearings for the homes and the roads serving them from a distance.

DATED this _____ day of February, 1999.

RANDY PERSON