

BEFORE THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL

In the Matter of) Public Informational
Application No. 2009-01) and Scoping Meeting
WHISTLING RIDGE ENERGY, LLC.) Pages 1 - 108
WHISTLING RIDGE ENERGY PROJECT)
_____)

A Public Informational and Scoping Meeting in the above matter was held on Thursday, May 7, 2009, at the Underwood Community Center, 951 Schoolhouse Road in Underwood, Washington at 2:30 p.m., before the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council members.

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CHAIR LUCE: Good afternoon. Today is May 7, the time is 2:30 p.m. My name is Jim Luce and I'm the Chair of the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council. That's a long name. EFSEC is the acronym. On behalf of the Council I want to thank you for coming this afternoon and participating in this meeting. I want to begin by introducing the members of the Council, and I will ask them to identify their agency that they're associated. We will begin down on my left.

MS. McDONALD: Mary McDonald, Department of Natural Resources.

MR. FRYHLING: Dick Fryhling. I'm with Department of Community Trade and Economic Development.

1 MR. BYERS: Dick Byers, Washington Utilities and
2 Transportation Commission.

3 MR. TAYER: I'm Jeff Tayer. I'm with the
4 Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5 MS. WILSON: I'm Judy Wilson. I've been appointed
6 by Skamania County to represent Skamania County.

7 CHAIR LUCE: Now we will have staff identify
8 themselves.

9 MR. FIKSDAL: Allen Fiksdal, I'm the Manager of
10 the Energy Siting Council.

11 MR. LA SPINA: Jim La Spina, EFSEC staff.

12 MR. CREWS: Kyle Crews, Assistant Attorney
13 General.

14 JUDGE WALLIS: My name is Robert Wallis and I've
15 been appointed by the Council as an Administrative Law Judge
16 to assist the Council.

17 CHAIR LUCE: Shaun is our court reporter. We are
18 on the record. Everything that's said here and has been
19 said here so far will be transcribed. I will ask you to
20 speak slowly so that -- not real slowly but maybe in a
21 manner that will allow Shaun to do the very best job
22 recording these comments.

23 So with that, I will just say that the purpose of
24 today's meeting is to give you information about the
25 Whistling Ridge Energy Project, our review process,

1 introduce the Counsel for the Environment, and most of all
2 get comments from all of you relative to the scoping of the
3 Environmental Impact Statement. That's one purpose of this
4 meeting. The second purpose is to get specific comments
5 that you wish to offer on the application that has been
6 prepared, and for those of you who don't have a copy of the
7 application it is on our website.

8 This meeting is being held jointly by the Energy
9 Siting Council and the Bonneville Power Administration. I
10 would ask at this point in time for the Counsel for the
11 Environment to stand up and introduce himself if he is here.
12 There's the Counsel for the Environment.

13 MR. MARVIN: Good afternoon. My name is Bruce
14 Marvin. I am the Counsel For the Environment which is a
15 statutory designation. It's part of the EFSEC process. I'm
16 an Assistant Attorney General. I'm working out of Olympia,
17 and I have contact information that will be available at the
18 back desk there. I encourage you to pick it up.

19 If you have materials that you would like me to
20 consider or if you have comments that you would like to
21 make, I invite you to either give me a call or better yet
22 send me an e-mail. In my position I in fact represent the
23 environment and I don't represent the individual or groups.
24 I am, however, interested right now in gathering facts and
25 data information about the project and its impacts, and if

1 you're pro or con or just have a concern that you'd like to
2 raise, I'd be glad to take a look at it and I appreciate the
3 input.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you give me your name and
5 how we contact you.

6 MR. MARVIN: My name is Bruce Marvin, and my
7 e-mail address will be available at the back desk here, but
8 it is for the record bruce1@atg.wa.gov, and that's probably
9 the best way to contact me. My work number is 360-586-2438.
10 I can't guarantee that I will be responding back to a
11 voicemail, but if you provide me with an e-mail, I would be
12 happy to enter a dialogue that way. And I will be around
13 today and tonight if there are individuals who would like to
14 talk to me about the project. Thank you.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you, Bruce. Bruce's e-mail and
16 other contact information will be at the back with Tammy
17 Talburt. Tammy just raised her hand. She's the lady in the
18 green. She is the person who will be able to provide you
19 the best information. Mr. Fiksdal can answer questions, but
20 Tammy is the staff person who will be handling the point of
21 contact. And if you want to get on the mailing list for
22 EFSEC, she is definitely the person to see.

23 Now, do we have a representative of Bonneville
24 Power Administration present today?

25 MR. MONTANO: Yes.

1 CHAIR LUCE: If you could come forward and
2 identify yourself, spell your name for the record, and let
3 people know about Bonneville's role and how they can work
4 with Bonneville on this project.

5 MR. MONTANO: My name is Andrew Montano, Andrew
6 M-o-n-t-a-n-o. I'm with Bonneville Power. I'll be serving
7 as the Environmental Project Manager for this
8 interconnection request. SDS Lumber has requested to
9 interconnect 17 megawatts of energy from its wind farm, and
10 it is the role of BPA to study this request and see if it is
11 feasible. If you want to make comments as you heard
12 earlier, we are doing this jointly with EFSEC. You can make
13 comments either on the BPA website or at EFSEC's website.
14 BPA is www.bpa.gov/comment. You can also reach me directly
15 by e-mail if you need. It's ammontano@epa.gov, and my phone
16 number in Portland is 503-230-4145. My information is also
17 in back. We also have a project specific website that Tammy
18 could give you, and if you have any questions please feel
19 free to call me or e-mail me.

20 CHAIR LUCE: And you'll leave that information
21 with Tammy in the back so people can get it?

22 MR. MONTANO: Yes.

23 CHAIR LUCE: So before we proceed any further, I
24 would ask Council members who are involved in this
25 particular proceeding whether they have any disclosures they

1 would like to make for the record as to past involvement in
2 Columbia Gorge issues of any kind. I guess I'll start with
3 the left.

4 MS. McDONALD: I was a forest practice forester
5 for Skamania County probably ten years ago for two to four
6 years.

7 MR. FRYHLING: Around 2000 I was the
8 representative working with Skamania County with some grant
9 funds that we provided from the Department of Community
10 Trade and Economic so I do have some contacts because I
11 worked here in the past.

12 CHAIR LUCE: My name is Jim Luce. I'm the Chair.
13 From June 1999 until September of 2001, I was a member of
14 the Columbia River Gorge Commission serving under the
15 appointment of Governor Locke.

16 MR. BYERS: I have nothing further to say.

17 MR. TAYER: Nothing here.

18 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

19 MS. WILSON: Nothing to report.

20 CHAIR LUCE: Before we begin to receive public
21 comments, I would ask Mr. Jason Spadaro to come forward and
22 make some presentation on behalf of the applicant. That's
23 part of the EFSEC process.

24 Mr. Spadaro, the floor is all yours.

25 MR. SPADARO: Chairman Luce, Members of the

1 Commission and Members of the public, I'm going to stand to
2 the side. This is an informational presentation about the
3 project. I'd like to address the audience just as I would
4 the Council. Again, my name is Jason Spadaro, spelled
5 S-p-a-d-a-r-o, President of the SDS Lumber Company. The
6 name of this project is the Whistling Ridge Energy Project.

7 SDS Lumber is in the renewable energy business,
8 the renewable resource business. Part of that is renewable
9 energy and part of it is forest production. We would like
10 to combine renewable resources, our forestry with the
11 renewable resource wind to create energy. This will be the
12 first project in the Pacific Northwest on commercial forest
13 land. We believe that forestry and wind energy are fully
14 compatible and we'll show you how they are compatible.

15 Our approach to resource management has been to
16 practice sustainable forestry. Our trees are grown on
17 longer rotations than most commercial industrial
18 forestlands. As a result we produce high quality lumber,
19 plywood, and other building products. We also generate
20 steam and electricity from the byproducts of our forest
21 operations and the renewable energy at the mill in Bingen
22 which is biomass energy. And we have been exploring the
23 potential of our commercial forestland or renewable energy
24 by wind production since the year 2002. SDS has been in the
25 Columbia Gorge for a long time. We have been locally owned

1 for over 60 years. Many of you know -- I see many familiar
2 faces in this community -- we have been committed to this
3 community for a long time and will continue to be. When
4 we're running at normal operation we have 325 employees with
5 a payroll of slightly over 14 million. Our current
6 operations with the downturn in the economy and housing
7 nationwide we're now at 250 employees.

8 This project is important to us because it has
9 value to our commercial forestlands. It also strengthens
10 and diversifies the company so that we can continue to be
11 here for another 60 years.

12 The project location -- this map may be a little
13 difficult to see from the back. This is White Salmon, the
14 community of Underwood here. This line outlines the travel
15 route of the Cook-Underwood Road. So from the project site
16 is here to the northwest of White Salmon in the east part of
17 Skamania County. This line is the border between
18 Klickitat County and Skamania County so it's abutting the
19 southern southwest corner of Skamania County or Klickitat
20 County within Skamania County.

21 I said the name is Whistling Ridge. It is named
22 that for a couple of reasons. The first is that wind does
23 actually create a whistling sound on the ridge. The DNR
24 property to the north of us and extending down onto our
25 property the geographic name of that ridge is called

1 Whistling Ridge. It's set seven miles to the northwest of
2 White Salmon. The ridge line is approximately 2,100 feet in
3 elevation. It is north and west of the Underwood Mountain,
4 and it's in the western end of the Columbia Gorge wind
5 regime.

6 A couple pictures for those of you on the site
7 tour today. Some of these will look familiar. This photo
8 in the lower right corner is the southern end of the project
9 area. We stopped on the site tour right about there. This
10 picture depicts up in this corner some of the Bonneville
11 transmission, Bonneville towers. The transmission lines are
12 through this picture. This is the view looking to the west
13 of the Little White Salmon Valley and this is the Bonneville
14 transmission line which traverses the valley and goes up and
15 over Augspurger Ridge to the west.

16 The project will deliver with 50, approximately 50
17 turbines the number, the final number of turbines will
18 depend upon the turbine size, but assuming 50 which is
19 likely, that will be a 51.5 megawatt machine, it would be a
20 75-megawatt project. That is enough power for 20,000 homes
21 per year in the Northwest with an estimated construction
22 cost of 150 million dollars. That would add close to that
23 number in taxable value to the Skamania County taxable base,
24 property taxable value base.

25 The project will help Northwest utilities to meet

1 the renewable portfolio standard requirements. Those are
2 the renewable energy standards passed by voter initiative in
3 the state of Washington. It would interconnect to
4 Bonneville Power's regional transmission systems on the
5 site, and we are working with Bonneville and Skamania County
6 and Klickitat PUDs to enhance local electrical service and
7 reliability as a result of the project.

8 A project overview of the project area this blue
9 outline defines what we are calling the project area. This
10 dash line defines the exterior boundary of the Columbia
11 Gorge National Scenic Area. The turbine strings would be
12 located here in this mustard color region. Those are the
13 areas of our study. Crossing the site are a pair of
14 Bonneville's regional transmission system lines here and the
15 second pair to the south here and to the north is the
16 Williams Pipeline Company's natural gas line. The project
17 area is commercial forestland. It is roaded and currently
18 developed for commercial forestry purposes.

19 How we intend to match forest production and wind
20 energy is depicted in this diagram. The key with wind
21 turbines at an elevated point and the blades and the
22 generator up at the elevation is to have an undisrupted flow
23 of wind through the blade zone of the turbine. With
24 forestry trees growing, the trees need to be limited at
25 heights so they do not interfere with that flow of wind

1 through the generating zone of the turbine. On a ridge
2 line -- and let me back up. The maximum tree height within
3 a near distance of the turbines is 50 feet tree height in
4 order to not interfere with that wind flow. The topography
5 that is trailing away on the leading edge or the trailing
6 edge of the turbine trees could grow to their maximum
7 potential tree height as is the case on part of our site
8 without any kind of interference or alteration of our forest
9 or management practices. Closer into the turbine there will
10 be alterations of our forestry management practices. We
11 will have to manage shorter rotations; perhaps they're grown
12 for biomass production or alternative forest crop that is
13 grown that stays within that 50-foot tree height limit. And
14 then within a zone from 50 feet out to 150 feet the maximum
15 feet height would be 15 feet. From 50 feet to the turbine
16 base that would be the cleared area that is gravelled and
17 used for maintenance operations. That is a 50-foot radius
18 by the way.

19 So three zones: 50-foot radius of cleared area,
20 150-foot radius of 15-foot tree heights, and then out to
21 500 feet in a quadrant centered on the prevailing wind
22 direction and in the upwind direction and the trailing wind
23 direction out to 500 feet with a maximum tree height of
24 50 feet. But in most cases we calculated the acreage in
25 most cases trees are allowed to grow given the topography

1 and siting of the turbine will be allowed to continue to
2 grow our trees without alteration of forest or management
3 practices out to that distance.

4 The project provides economic stimulus during
5 construction with an average of 143 full-time workers over
6 the 12-month period of construction, 18 million in payroll,
7 plus 13.2 million in local purchases by those construction
8 workers using a multiplier effect that is the equivalent of
9 107 new jobs created for the local area during construction.
10 The ongoing economic benefits we estimate eight to nine new
11 permanent jobs with a 3.75 million annual payroll. Those
12 employees are expected to spend local, could be expected to
13 spend 900,000 a year in local benefits and 730,000 per year
14 in new tax revenues to Skamania County as a result of this
15 new value brought into the tax base.

16 In conclusion, we feel strongly that this is the
17 right project, in the right place, at the right time. By
18 that we mean there is wind, there's abundant wind on the
19 site. We have the potential for practicing forestry and
20 wind energy. It has interconnection to the Bonneville
21 transmission system. It is outside the National Scenic
22 Area. All of those things we believe make it the right
23 project, at the right place, and certainly at the right time
24 as we are through voter initiative and other requirements
25 meeting renewable energy.

1 We're grateful for the County's support of the
2 project, we're appreciative of EFSEC's process, and we look
3 for public scrutiny and the process that will result and
4 we'll work hard to earn the endorsement and approval by
5 EFSEC and the public.

6 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Appreciate
7 that.

8 Mr. Spadaro will be available I think later to
9 speak with you individually.

10 Mr. Fiksdal, do you want to explain the Council's
11 process, give us an overview of what it is that we do?

12 MR. FIKSDAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Again, my name is Allen Fiksdal. I'm the EFSEC
14 manager. Just a little background on the Energy Facility
15 Site Evaluation Council. It was created by the legislature
16 in about 1970. At that time in the state of Washington
17 there were several nuclear power plants that were being
18 proposed to be built in different portions of the state and
19 the legislature created this body to review those
20 applications and determine whether they should be
21 constructed or not through the course of the years. The
22 Council has gained authority over different types of energy
23 facilities. It has authority over thermal energy
24 facilities, anything that generates heat and usually boils
25 water to create steam to generate electricity. They would

1 have to be 350 megawatts or greater and then they would come
2 under the Council jurisdiction. A few years ago the
3 legislature changed our law and allowed alternative energy
4 facilities -- those like wind, solar, tidal wave, biomass --
5 to be able to opt into the Council's process. So the wind
6 facilities if they want to the developer could choose to
7 come to the state or they could choose to go through the
8 local county and/or city or whatever is the allocated
9 process.

10 Our process is quite rigorous. We essentially
11 have a three track process. We have a sign over there in
12 the corner that has a whole bunch of arrows and timelines
13 down the side and some pictures. That's Jason holding it
14 up. I can't read from here. I'm sure you can't read it
15 unless you go up and look at it.

16 But essentially we are at the very beginning of
17 the Council's process. The Whistling Ridge application was
18 submitted to the Council in mid March of this year. We are
19 at the very beginning. We are required to hold these public
20 information and scoping meetings and we will be holding
21 other meetings throughout the process.

22 One track that we're on is -- I've mentioned there
23 are three -- is the land use consistency. The Council is
24 required to determine if the project is consistent in
25 applying the local land use plans and zoning. Tonight at

1 6:30 in this room we will be holding a land use consistency
2 hearing and ultimately the Council will have to make a
3 decision whether it's consistent or not.

4 The second track that we go down is we are
5 required by the State Environmental Policy Act to review the
6 potential environmental impacts of this project, and we will
7 be producing an Environmental Impact Statement and we are
8 working with Bonneville Power Administration because under
9 their laws they have to look at the environmental impacts
10 and so we are going to do that together, issue one
11 Environmental Impact Statement. It will be BPA/EFSEC
12 NEPA/SEPA are the letters. That's EFSEC/BPA NEPA/SEPA EIS.
13 It took me 20 years of government to be able to speak in
14 just letters.

15 But that process we're taking your comments today.
16 We took them last night. We're asking what you think the
17 Environmental Impact Statement should have in it. You can
18 give oral statements today. We have comment forms in the
19 back. BPA has comment forms, we have comment forms. BPA
20 has a website. You can e-mail it to us. They all will go
21 into one pot basically. We share everything, and so you
22 don't have to make two comments about the same thing, one to
23 BPA and one to EFSEC. You make it to EFSEC or you make it
24 to BPA. We will both see that same comment. So it's all in
25 one group.

1 Eventually we will develop a Draft Environmental
2 Impact Statement. We will issue that for public comment.
3 We will be back in this area to get your oral comments and
4 receive your written comments. We don't think that's going
5 to happen until maybe this winter. Their company still has
6 some biological studies to do this spring and fall so we
7 aren't probably going to get to that for a while.

8 The third track that EFSEC has is a little
9 different than most permitting processes, and that's an
10 adjudicative proceeding. This is a trial-like hearing that
11 the Council holds. At the appropriate time the Council will
12 ask any person, entities, groups, or government agencies if
13 they want to intervene, formally intervene in the hearing,
14 the adjudicative hearing. They the Council will review
15 those petitions for intervention and determine whether to
16 grant intervention or not. Those that are granted
17 intervention are able to bring expert witnesses to testify
18 before the Council. Those expert witnesses are then
19 cross-examined as in court by the other parties to the
20 proceeding. Those cross-examinations and that testimony is
21 done before the Council and Council uses that testimony as
22 part of that record for making a recommendation to the
23 Governor.

24 After we're through with those three tracks -- the
25 land use consistency, the environmental review, and the

1 adjudicative proceedings -- the Council takes all of that
2 information and will look at all of that information, read
3 all of the transcripts, read all of the comments, read the
4 EISs, and listen to all the testimony, and they will make a
5 determination whether to recommend to the Governor of the
6 State of Washington to approve or deny this project.
7 Ultimately the Governor makes that decision.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can she override an EFSEC
9 recommendation?

10 MR. FIKSDAL: The Governor it basically says in
11 the law if the Council recommends approval they will
12 recommend the conditions for construction and the operation
13 of the facility. If they were to recommend approval, the
14 Governor could say so or the Governor could say yes.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: And impose different conditions?

16 MR. FIKSDAL: The history has been if the Governor
17 has had questions about the project our governor has
18 remanded the recommendation back to the Council for
19 reconsideration of the specific topics that she or he were
20 concerned with. It's happened both under Governor Locke and
21 under Governor Gregoire. So the Governor can remand it back
22 to the Council.

23 I think that's it, Mr. Chairman.

24 CHAIR LUCE: I think that's it as well. The only
25 thing I was going to add is one of the reasons that the

1 Energy Facility Siting Council was established was to look
2 at energy projects on a statewide basis, particular energy
3 structures throughout the state. So when we look at a
4 project we look at what's consistent with our policy
5 directives, the benefits to the entire State of Washington.

6 Now, I would like to get started here in just a
7 second, and I would just notice that Representative Bruce
8 Chandler is with us. I guess I didn't see your name, but I
9 don't know if you have any comments to offer, Representative
10 Chandler. We would be glad to begin with you if you wish to
11 offer comments and everyone is going to be treated equally.

12 Limit your oral comments to four minutes, please
13 and I do means four minutes. Last night we had some
14 extensive comments. Those are always appreciated and we
15 would respectfully request that you submit comments in
16 excess of four minutes in writing. If it turns out that you
17 agree with someone just say so. That's all you need to say
18 is you affirm what the previous speaker or other speaker
19 said.

20 We will be calling three individuals at a time.
21 We have two chairs behind the podium or we will have
22 shortly, and we want to make sure everyone has a chance to
23 speak. So after Representative Chandler I would ask Mr.
24 Truitt for Skamania County, John Sherry I believe the Board
25 of Skamania County. All speakers are requested to identify

1 themselves, spell their name for the court reporter, and
2 give us your address.

3 Representative Chandler.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CHANDLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
5 just want to welcome you folks to the Columbia Gorge. It's
6 the 15th Legislative District. I appreciate you being down
7 here and I especially appreciate the commission being
8 willing to hold multiple hearings and to really take the
9 time to take all the input. There is a lot at stake, not
10 just in this project but in the long-term future regarding
11 wind generation, and the 15th District is at the heart of
12 all that. I would like to have you welcome my new seat mate
13 for the last four weeks. His name is David Taylor. He's
14 succeeded Dan Newhouse when Dan went to the Department of
15 Agriculture, and he's here toward the back.

16 CHAIR LUCE: Dave, raise your hand and wave it.

17 REPRESENTATIVE CHANDLER: So you're going to be
18 seeing a lot of him for a long time so I wanted to make sure
19 you guys met him.

20 CHAIR LUCE: Well, thank you very much. We
21 appreciate your time here showing interest in this project.

22 REPRESENTATIVE CHANDLER: Thank you.

23 CHAIR LUCE: Dave, did you want to say anything?

24 Dave says that he'll remain silent. That's
25 interesting. I'm not sure that's an auspicious start for a

1 new politician but, Dave, whatever works.

2 So right before we begin to get comments everybody
3 check your cell phone and make sure it's turned off. You
4 won't agree necessarily with everything everybody says, but
5 I would ask you to be respectful of their views, and I would
6 now call Mr. Truitt, W.D. Truitt from Skamania County to
7 come forward to offer whatever comments you wish to offer.

8 COMMENTS BY W.D. TRUITT

9 My name is W.D. Truitt. I'm District 2 Board
10 Commissioner. I am also on the Skamania County Planning
11 Commission, and we thank you guys for being here. We, the
12 Planning Commission, went through a whole bunch of these for
13 a long time in trying to shake all this out.

14 Speaking from the Port's point of view, we are pro
15 wind power. It's for the tax base for the county, for the
16 job providing. What we do is we try to provide an
17 infrastructure so businesses do move into the county and so
18 they can provide jobs for the workforce in the county.

19 The Planning Commission looked at this a lot and
20 where its at and, you know, we listened to a lot of public
21 input and we decided it should be taken on a case-by-case
22 basis with the process for review as it is tough, and there
23 is a lot of input towards that.

24 I just, we're just in support of the thing, of the
25 project. When I walked in the door a gentleman gave me a

1 folder about agricultural tourism and how this would impact
2 that. I've seen the people who own the property here change
3 it from orchards. I grew up in Willard. My father worked
4 for a garage door company. Grew up here, lived here all my
5 life. And they've changed from orchards to vineyards, and
6 they own property. They did what they wanted to stay with
7 the economy and the market. That's all SDS is trying to do,
8 and I am in support of the project.

9 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. Mr. Truitt, your name and
10 spell it.

11 MR. TRUITT: T-r-u-i-t-t.

12 CHAIR LUCE: And your address is?

13 MR. TRUITT: P.O. Box 215, Carson, Washington
14 98610.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

16 MR. TRUITT: Thank you.

17 CHAIR LUCE: As I said, I believe additional
18 comments are certainly possible, and we've asked that you
19 provide those May 18, any additional comments in writing by
20 May 18 close of business. They can be e-mailed. They do
21 not have to be posted with the post office.

22 Next speaker will be John Sherry, Port of Skamania
23 County. Mr. Sherry, going once, twice. We'll move ahead to
24 the next speaker. Mr. Bronsveld, Stephen Bronsveld.

25 Those of you who spoke last night, and I believe

1 Mr. Bronsveld is one of those people, I would ask you not to
2 repeat the comments that you made last night. If you have
3 additional comments that you want the Council to consider
4 within the four-minute rule, I appreciate hearing those.

5 COMMENTS BY STEPHEN BRONSVELD

6 Yes, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you
7 again. I've reviewed the applicant's submission to you and
8 I did have a few comments about that that I wish to put
9 forward. It's nice to meet the Counsel for the Environment.
10 I would encourage the Counsel for the Environment to
11 consider the local community and its normal mode of industry
12 as a cultural resource.

13 In the application it's in Section 4422, and on
14 this diagram over here the applicant states that the
15 increase in property tax revenue to the county would be
16 \$731,500 and would represent a permanent annual increase of
17 7.6 percent to the current 2007 year. I don't see anything
18 in the application that supports the claim that it will be a
19 permanent revenue stream so I would like to point that out.
20 If there is, I'd like to know what it was.

21 Also in the application you drove up there today
22 and you went by the intersection of Kollack-Knapp and
23 Scoggins roads. There's a bunch of photographs in this
24 application, and none of them show the Rawley's house that's
25 on that corner that you drove right around. That road makes

1 a 150-degree turnaround. You were there. You saw it. You
2 stopped and you took a look at it, and I'm curious as to why
3 that house was not depicted in all of those photos when that
4 house could be severely impacted by the haul route and road
5 use procedure that takes place in Skamania County here.

6 And that's the next thing I want to talk about
7 because in the application the applicant states that all of
8 the road use access and haul route issues would be handled
9 under Title 21 of Skamania County, and therefore go through
10 a county approval process for determining if there is in
11 fact a legal route for delivering these items to the
12 proposed site, and I suggest that process be completed
13 before we proceed with this application because it's
14 fundamental. It's a threshold issue whether or not there's
15 a legal route for those items to get up there. So I would
16 request that that issue go before Skamania County as it
17 should and states in the applicant's submission and that
18 those determinations about those routes and as it says in
19 here in the application the applicant says right of way and
20 ownership, right of way ownership and easement determination
21 would be required at those three intersections:
22 Kollack-Knapp Road, Scoggins Road, and the intersection with
23 the private roads as listed in their thing. So why don't we
24 settle those right-of-way and ownership easement
25 determinations before we proceed with this siting. So

1 that's what I would like to see happen there.

2 There's one other thing on page 4339 of the
3 application states that the traffic southbound on
4 Cook-Underwood Road would increase from 20 vehicles an hour
5 during peak time during construction up to 285 vehicles per
6 hour at 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Cook-Underwood Road. And I can
7 tell you that would represent an unacceptable increase in
8 traffic and therefore danger to the community. That impact
9 is not being addressed in this application.

10 It also mentions in Section 4416 that fire
11 protection from Underwood. Underwood would respond to
12 incidents at this site and the cost incurred by Underwood
13 Fire Department has not been addressed. In fact, none of
14 the costs associated that's for the county have been
15 identified and those are significant impacts on us. The
16 county's in trouble for money. We don't get a project that
17 make us lose any money. Thank you very much.

18 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Mr. Bronsveld,
19 we have your name and spelling and address from last time,
20 but let's have it one more time.

21 MR. BRONSVELD: My name is Stephen S-t-e-p-h-e-n
22 Bronsveld, B-r-o-n-s-v-e-l-d. My address is 1111 Scoggins
23 Road, Underwood, Washington.

24 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

25 Mr. Steve Curley.

1 COMMENTS BY STEVE CURLEY

2 Nice to be back. Steve Curley, 10381
3 Cook-Underwood Road, right up hill here in Underwood.

4 I was not going to speak again today because I
5 know I don't want to take up too much time, but I had some
6 business in the Dalles today and I drove to the Dalles, and
7 I was coming back through Mosier. And once you're in Mosier
8 you're driving down the Gorge, and why don't you just look
9 right now and you can see Underwood Mountain. And I'm not
10 sure when you took your tour today did you get a view
11 looking east down the Gorge? Okay. So you saw that view
12 where the Hood River Toll Bridge is located right here in
13 our lap. So obviously when you're -- most of you folks are
14 from Olympia or anybody here local? Yeah, I mean you're in
15 the Gorge driving across the bridge you look up and see what
16 is about to happen right here in the Columbia Gorge National
17 Scenic Area.

18 But do you know what the real cost of this
19 development? Does anybody really understand what these
20 costs are going to be? The impact on degrading the beauty
21 of the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area is reduction of
22 visitors, the reduction in room tax, the reduction of
23 receipts to potential tourism is something that should be
24 addressed and probably looked at. The reduction of property
25 values. People unwilling to invest here which impacts tax

1 values, of course, which I think most people are looking at
2 the tax impacts when you put this thing up coming into the
3 county. But what if my property values go down? And who's
4 going to tell me what the costs are or will be?

5 And when you drive right back through Bickleton --
6 I mean have you ever been through Bickleton and seen the
7 wind farms out there? Do you know where Bickleton is? It's
8 east of here about an hour. You know, you're driving
9 through and you see these wind farms all over the place.
10 You know, it's kind of cool, but, you know, you drive
11 through the Columbia Gorge and you see these wind farms
12 right here in the National Scenic Area it's a different
13 view. I recommend there needs to be an economic impact
14 study to understand what these costs are, not just an
15 environmental but an economic. And Eric Popey of Popey
16 Associates in Vancouver can help you out with that, Eco
17 Northwest in Salem, and the beauty of the Gorge is what
18 attracts world class businesses here because of the
19 livability and it will be a large impact on all of us now.

20 Now, Jason says that it's the right project, the
21 right place, and the right time. You know this is the wrong
22 place. This project should be out east not here in the
23 Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. Thank you for being
24 here.

25 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

1 Mr. Stevenson followed by Chris Lloyd and James
2 Buckland.

3 Mr. Stevenson, I think you have an announcement to
4 make about your vehicle before we get started.

5 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, I do. I loaned my car for
6 the tour and came back and got in a different car, both the
7 same cars, and I was hoping somebody would show up and have
8 my car, and I guess I have theirs.

9 CHAIR LUCE: We'll send out someone to scout the
10 parking lot. Mr. Stevenson, the floor is yours.

11 MR. STEVENSON: Is this here okay?

12 CHAIR LUCE: I think we can hear you well.

13 COMMENTS BY WALLY STEVENSON

14 I haven't got to much to say, but I thought
15 probably since I'm the one that maybe started this whole
16 problem by starting the mill here 63 years ago, and we've
17 continued to work on that mill to make it an excellent mill
18 that stays and runs efficiently. We've hired many, many
19 people and have enjoyed the whole deal. We've kept at it
20 continuously and we have Jason. As you might tell I'm a
21 little long in tooth, and I'm going to be 91 years old
22 pretty quick. So we have people to take over and we hope
23 this thing goes. We hope that we continue to help all the
24 people in the country and help ourselves as well.

25 Now, I'm going to give you a little rundown of my

1 life which it's pretty simple, but I was five years old when
2 my dad became a partner in Broughton Lumber Company and we
3 were raised at the logging camp and in Portland because we
4 went to school in Portland. And then after school, after
5 the local schools in Portland, went to University of
6 Washington, joined the Navy; was in the Navy ROTC program,
7 ended up getting out of the Navy, graduated, and went
8 directly into World War II. Spent five years in World War
9 II, was involved in the D-day in France, and was a captain
10 of the 65-crew subchaser and also spent a year and a half in
11 Alaska there.

12 So I've done quite a few things before I got
13 started here. I couldn't wait to get out of the Navy to get
14 started with the sawmill, having been raised in a sawmill
15 which I did with my brother and my dad's foreman of
16 Broughton Lumber Company. The three of us took off on our
17 own and we've enjoyed it. We fought from day one that we
18 wanted to have forestland, and we immediately started buying
19 forestland and that was my specialty. And we started out
20 the first piece I bought in about 1947 was a ten-acre piece
21 and we've been going at it ever since. We're now able to
22 about halfway sustain our own operation and we buy logs in
23 the outside, and we think it's a pretty good way to go.

24 I will look at a couple notes here. Now, we
25 started SDS in 1946. On reforestation I planted my first

1 trees when I was ten years old. In fact, they've been
2 harvested since that time. And it has been our main thing
3 is the reforesting. We've done that long before it was
4 required, and we have just completed a ten-acre seed farm
5 that's to raise our own seeds. It's sitting right up in the
6 middle of this area, and it's about two years old now so it
7 will be another few years and we will be able to furnish our
8 own seeds.

9 But we're here to stay and anyways we think that
10 this is a very good way to get into the business that will
11 help keep White Salmon and Underwood and everything alive
12 around here. So I just want to say that we appreciate you
13 people coming here and we're very serious about this and we
14 intend to do our best to do it right. Thank you.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. Mr. Stevenson, is Wally
16 with a Y?

17 MR. STEVENSON: Yes.

18 CHAIR LUCE: Is Stevenson with a --

19 MR. STEVENSON: S-t-e-v-e-n-s-o-n.

20 CHAIR LUCE: And your address?

21 MR. STEVENSON: 705 Oak Street, White Salmon,
22 Washington.

23 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much for coming.

24 Mr. Chris Lloyd.

25 ///

1 and the future that could be for one that has a short influx
2 in capital and minimal jobs, the most lucrative of which do
3 not come from the local community. The long-term tax
4 revenue from property taxes on depreciating windmill
5 equipment is dubious at best as a significant revenue source
6 for our future. (\$150 million to construct) but (87.5 tax
7 base). Basically even if you are for the windmills, our
8 county government is getting hung out to dry on the
9 long-term revenue stream being collected while the huge
10 profits and taxpayer funded subsidies are going directly
11 into the developer's pockets.

12 Look at the communities here: Underwood, Mill A,
13 White Salmon, Bingen, Hood River as examples, the real
14 economic driver is this new economy. Economic engines that
15 truly benefit a community are all inclusive and long
16 lasting. This is a short jolt of money that doesn't even
17 trickle down in a meaningful way to local people here. Then
18 the benefit degrades rapidly over time while we are left
19 with this legacy forever impacting future possibilities.

20 There are many people here in Underwood and Mill A
21 who commute down the hill everyday to work in Hood River or
22 White Salmon or Bingen so it's impossible to look at the
23 total picture without taking into account all the
24 communities surrounding this site not just Skamania County.
25 This is worth noting since the movement of heavy wide-load

1 equipment up Cook-Underwood will impact people's ability to
2 get to their jobs and go about their daily business, as well
3 as block escape routes in a wildfire like the one that raced
4 up the bluff only a few short years ago. I actually
5 personally witnessed all the people being evacuated from
6 their houses at that time.

7 As far as the environmental impacts, I truly hope
8 that this project is not a series of rubber stamps for wind
9 energy expansion without looking at which places are
10 unsuitable for such expansion based on factors such as
11 proximity to local communities and residences and the fact
12 that these windmills are being placed in forestland. This
13 should give everyone pause for thought. This is not a
14 farmer's field or an arid desert. This is a forest that has
15 supposedly been sustainably logged to help protect the
16 ecosystem it supports. It directly borders a community and
17 residences as well as the protected National Scenic Area
18 itself. It was interesting to find in the application that
19 some of the protective species preferred forest habitats
20 characterized by multilayered canopy and a high incidence of
21 large trees.

22 It also goes on to say that no late-serial forests
23 are present within the project site. Well, they were
24 present a few short years ago until SDS decided to remove
25 the last of them. There are still many species of large

1 predator and prey that call it home or migrate past it and
2 birds such as Eagles, Owls, Osprey. The application also
3 says the project has been planned and designed to eliminate
4 or fully mitigate all environmental impacts. If the
5 committee does end up recommending approval of this
6 installation,

7 I hope they will make every attempt to truly
8 mitigate the effects of such a development on the
9 surrounding communities and environment. Getting close.

10 Any regard to zoning should take into account
11 appropriate areas large of scale industrial installations
12 and expansion. Remember that 450-foot windmills are half
13 the height of the bluff at its highest point. They pierce
14 the skyline and have bright red flashing lights at night.
15 If you have not done so yet, try driving out east at night
16 and see the sea of blinding red.

17 The windmills made a mockery of the restrictions
18 most landowners in this community face who are not excluded
19 from the scenic area and its rules. The impact to the
20 scenic area and its zoning is horrendous. Everyone in this
21 community pays a high price for the protection of the scenic
22 area. To not include this as a significant factor in the
23 approval process is to turn a blind eye. It weakens the
24 foundation for protection of the entire area, including its
25 burgeoning economy, and this effect should be considered

1 regardless of whether the windmills themselves are placed
2 within it. Remember that SDS land was excluded from scenic
3 area rules in order to protect timber jobs and timber
4 resources.

5 In conclusion, I would plead the committee to
6 fairly assess all sides of the argument and validate any and
7 all claims, Then provide a fair and unbalanced assessment to
8 the Governor.

9 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. It looks like you've
10 gotten your comments written out. If you want to provide
11 those in writing that would also be helpful.

12 Next speaker.

13 COMMENTS BY JAMES BUCKLAND

14 My name is James Buckland. I live up in Mill A
15 and I don't have much to say about this. Just that everyone
16 talks about the impact and it's going to impact my view
17 everyday. I come down the end of Jessup Road which comes
18 into Cook-Underwood and boom it's right there. I've looked
19 at that mountain for lots of years. It's beautiful watching
20 the sun come up over it now when you're looking up there.
21 It's not going to be the same. The issue of the beacon
22 lights on top of that at night, my sons and I used to lay
23 out in the yard in the evenings, nice dark sky, and watch
24 the meteor showers and stars. It looks like now from what
25 we're hearing there's a chance that we're not going to be

1 able to see those stars as well just because of the light
2 function. I don't know. I haven't seen that yet, but
3 that's just what we've been told.

4 The other aspect is I'm going to have this in my
5 backyard. It's going to impact my life and I feel that, you
6 know, SDS has been the background of this county around here
7 for a long time, and they've closed the woods down now. I
8 raised my boys hunting and fishing in those woods and
9 horseback riding and now that's closed down to us. So it's
10 like I don't know. There's been rumors around that they've
11 done that because of the vandalism and other people are
12 saying they're just kind of upset that they're being opposed
13 for this windmill project so they shut it down. So now
14 anyone who walks out there -- I mean I can't even walk my
15 dog out in the woods anymore. It's a \$250 fine for
16 trespassing, and recently someone just got stopped in the
17 forest and warned. Hey, we'll let you go this time which is
18 good, but it's a \$300 fine.

19 So if we're going to have to live with these
20 things here, I hope they can see to opening the woods at
21 least so we can enjoy what we used to enjoy. I mean we are
22 going to be impacted by these things. I don't want to see
23 them there. I'm not going to fib to you. I don't want to
24 see them at all, but I just hope they will open the land
25 back up so we can use it. That's all I have to say.

1 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. I appreciate
2 that.

3 Mike Eastwick. Then after Mike, Rick Aramburu,
4 and after Rick it will be Rebecca Stonestreet.

5 Good afternoon, sir. If you could state your name
6 and spell it and give your address as well it'd be much
7 appreciated.

8 COMMENTS BY MIKE EASTWICK

9 My name is Mike Eastwick, E-a-s-t-w-i-c-k. I live
10 at 62 Beach Lane, Underwood, Washington, just up the hill
11 here.

12 Some of this you heard last time. I'm going to
13 try and repeat it because I think it's important. Given the
14 uniqueness of this project, including its forest-based
15 setting closest to the National Scenic Area, closest to
16 residential areas, and there are several aspects that I hope
17 that you will consider carefully because of those reasons.

18 Regarding the environment a lot of people are
19 talking about the visual impact of the Gorge. As it's
20 currently defined the project will be visible from all
21 nationally designated key viewing sites in the mid Columbia
22 region. This would be a horrible inexcusable degradation of
23 our National Scenic Treasure. In addition, as a member of
24 the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association, I also believe
25 that the turbines sited in the scenic area will have a

1 negative financial impact to our tourism business. Site the
2 turbines so they cannot be seen from key viewing areas.

3 Also there is a potential for elk and other large
4 animal movement to be modified due to this wall of turbines
5 that is going to span the current corridor for animal
6 movement. Along with the large animals will come predators.
7 We have Cougars in this area. They will be redirected. The
8 question is where will they go? Most likely to the south of
9 the wall of turbines. That means they're going to be now
10 going through residential and agricultural areas. Let me
11 tell you elk and deer cause major damage to agricultural
12 products, not to mention the predators in the residential
13 areas will not be safe for our community. I would suggest
14 that you delete the "A Towers" to allow the corridor for the
15 animals to continue to cross without pushing them into the
16 residential areas.

17 Regarding land use, as you know Skamania County
18 tried to update the zoning to support industrial facilities
19 in the county. It's called Title 21, and as you know that
20 has been stopped temporarily. It's interesting. It's well
21 documented what the public thought about this zoning draft
22 that they had come up with. If you look at the statistics
23 80 percent of all comments, all the oral comments made about
24 the zoning said they wanted setbacks for industrial
25 facilities, all kinds of industrial facilities to be greater

1 than one mile; yet, the county did not listen to this.

2 CHAIR LUCE: We're going to have a land use
3 hearing this evening. I think those comments will be very
4 helpful, but would be more helpful this evening. Do you
5 have them in writing that you can submit them now?

6 MR. EASTWICK: Sure. The application mentions no
7 load limits for the transportation route; that there are no
8 load limits on the transportation route. I would suggest
9 that that is a positive spin. I would say there's load
10 limits that have never been determined or at least set into
11 the law. I can still remember when Cook-Underwood collapsed
12 just above Broughton Mill, and it had to be rebuilt to the
13 north. This is a slide area so I just would suggest that
14 you have someone take a look at actual load testing of the
15 route.

16 The planned route goes through Underwood and its
17 on residential streets and, in fact, the Cook-Underwood is
18 the main arterial residential street. Figuring seven extra
19 wide trucks per turbine that means that we're going to have
20 approximately 700 trips up and down of these huge trucks
21 through the residential site. If this thing has to happen,
22 I would like to see that there are some controls to we'll
23 call to the traffic window or the trucking window. Right
24 now the application says they're going to be doing this from
25 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. That's ridiculous in a residential

1 area. You should limit this to times when there is no
2 school bus traffic. You should limit it to times there is
3 no commuting to and from work and you should also limit it
4 to just weekdays. That way the tourism and the scenic area
5 will be less impacted because we do have most of our
6 visitors on the weekends.

7 In addition, I think that there needs to be some
8 special logistic considerations if this project goes through
9 regarding emergency vehicles, and they should be targeted at
10 these transportation windows as well. These roads are not
11 wide. These are not four-lane highways like they are out
12 east here where all the traffic for the turbines goes. This
13 is a two-lane country road and a fire truck will not be able
14 to get by one of these wide loads. So anyway there's a
15 logistic challenge. We need to have emergency vehicles be
16 able to access all Underwood during these traffic windows.

17 And in addition, we would need to have enhanced or
18 supplemental police enforcement of the traffic windows and
19 suppress breaking laws. These huge trucks down the hill are
20 going to have trouble, and the other roads' safety laws
21 should be further enforced.

22 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. We'd appreciate
23 you submitting those comments in writing.

24 Mr. Aramburu, four minutes. Also we don't want to
25 see a lawyer with a poster board. It reminds me of my days

1 before the court so we will enforce the four-minute rule.

2 TESTIMONY OF RICHARD ARAMBURU

3 I'm Richard Aramburu. My office is 720 Third
4 Avenue, Suite 2112, Seattle, 98104 and I'm here today
5 speaking on behalf of Save our Scenic Area or SOSA. We're
6 going to be providing some detailed scoping comments to you
7 by the deadline of the 18th, but I want to address four
8 points with you today concerning the project and the scoping
9 for the EIS.

10 Point No. 1, the Council has apparently authorized
11 the applicant to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement
12 for this proposal. It is done so without any record of why
13 that was done in that manner when other choices exist such
14 as it being done by a contractor for the Council. It's
15 absolutely illegal for BPA to allow an applicant generate an
16 EIS. This is a big mistake. You should reverse that and do
17 your own EIS, point one.

18 Point 2, the project that is being announced today
19 is not in fact the entire project that's being proposed by
20 the applicant. We learned from the applicant's website and
21 from information provided on that website that in fact the
22 applicant is intending and has filed an application with DNR
23 to extend this proposal to the north of the project area on
24 approximately 2,500 acres of DNR property to add an
25 additional 30 turbines to this proposal. That's a proposal

1 that's been made formally to DNR. We're going to address
2 this in our comments with you, but we think it's important
3 that the scope of the EIS be extended to the additional
4 turbines that are being developed in this area mainly
5 because the applicant has said that's what they're going to
6 do and also because the turbines that would be generated in
7 this location would rely upon the substation which you all
8 saw this morning for the connection to the BPA transmission
9 grid. So if this is being developed in this area, it must
10 attach to the grid at the substation on the 230, 115 kV
11 lines. That makes this project very much dependent on this
12 location and would generate additional momentum for this
13 project. So the EIS needs to include the environmental
14 aspects of the proposal already made by the applicant to
15 proceed and develop on the DNR property, Point No. 2.

16 Point No. 3, the involvement of DNR in this
17 project and the fact that this project will facilitate
18 development on DNR property raises questions as to whether
19 or not this Council passes on the Whistling Ridge proposal
20 should include the representative of DNR when DNR has a
21 vested interest in this development because the development
22 will provide a connection to the grid for possible uses on
23 DNR property.

24 The fourth point -- I'm going to keep to my four
25 minutes -- is to ask the commission for the period of time

1 from January 13th to January 22nd of this year when it was
2 so bloody cold all over the Northwest how many megawatts of
3 power came from wind energy? Does anybody know? None. For
4 nine days notwithstanding all this business about installed
5 capacity there wasn't a single megawatt of power that came
6 from wind energy to the Northwest grid when the Northwest
7 grid was running from 9,500 to 11,000 megawatts. That's
8 because all of this depends on the wind blowing. If it
9 doesn't blow, there is no energy. So when you look at this
10 capacity, it's not like capacity from other sources of
11 energy.

12 I'll be back tonight to address land use
13 consistency issues.

14 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much for the time. We
15 look forward to hearing from you tonight.

16 Rebecca Stonestreet.

17 Look, I'm cognizant of the fact you appreciate
18 some of the comments. Your spontaneous applause or
19 otherwise is something that's not necessary at this point in
20 time or at any point in time for that matter. We will all
21 listen carefully and we'll not be swayed one way or the
22 other.

23 So, Rebecca, you're up.

24 COMMENTS BY REBECCA STONESTREET

25 Thank you. Thank you all for being here. My name

1 is Rebecca Stonestreet and that's R-e-b-e-c-c-a
2 S-t-o-n-e-s-t-r-e-e-t. I live at 4491 Cook-Underwood Road,
3 Mill A, Washington. I've lived in Mill A since 1996. I'm
4 against the proposed Whistling Ridge Project for several
5 reasons, and I feel like my head is just cocked, and I'm
6 going to get more straight here. I am at the same time a
7 proponent for solar and wind energy, but more importantly I
8 am a supporter of conservation which I never hear about.

9 I live in Mill A, a great community. I moved for
10 the creeks, the community, the visual stimulation, the
11 Gifford Pinchot is not very far away, and I have a five-acre
12 farm that I live on and I'm a property owner there with two
13 other people, and we are developing a permaculture farm.

14 I oppose this wind project for several reasons;
15 first, the visual impact to this area. The towers proposed
16 are 400 plus feet. That's like over a 42-story building,
17 which I can't even imagine 42-story buildings along those
18 ridges. These towers would become visually dominant in this
19 area. That's what people would see. They would see those
20 towers instead of everything else that is so beautiful.
21 Wind farms are -- as I said, I'm for wind projects in
22 flatter, more agricultural areas. This is not one of those
23 areas obviously. The wind towers would be huge additions to
24 the industrialization of our quiet and beautiful landscape.

25 Where I live in Mill A, there's a ridge where

1 they're proposed. That's where the sun comes up.
2 Mr. Buckland was saying the same thing in Mill A. That's
3 where the sun rises and where the moon rises, and I would
4 see red flashing tower lights the rest of the time I live in
5 Mill A from where I live, and that would just be the turbine
6 red flashing lights would interfere with the stunning views
7 in Mill A for everyone living there.

8 The other thing is impact on wildlife. I believe
9 that wind generators kill birds and bats, and bats are very
10 important to our permaculture farm. They help with pest
11 control, insect pest control.

12 And another reason that I'm opposed to this
13 project is the energy generated would leave this community.
14 We would be faced with living with these towers, but yet we
15 wouldn't benefit from the towers because that electricity is
16 going to go to the general grid and we're not going to see
17 any benefit from that. The destruction of the earth that
18 will occur building these wind farms with the roads being
19 built could wreak havoc of the Little White Salmon and the
20 White Salmon River. The proposed wind farm is just too
21 close to the National Columbia Gorge Scenic Area. It's just
22 too close. It just needs to be put into another place.

23 I want to thank SDS for being committed to the
24 local as Jason put on his slides, but I would ask SDS to
25 reconsider its proposal to be open to our money making

1 projects that are more of a project win-win situation for
2 everyone, and I have one in mind and I would love to meet
3 with you and the county commissioner of your choice so we
4 can go over any plans to make your land viable and
5 economically viable and environmentally viable for everyone.
6 And there's other things out there that could be done out of
7 the box, and that's what we need right now is projects out
8 of the box because we're going down the tubes. Okay. And I
9 think that that's it.

10 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Appreciate your
11 comments.

12 MS. STONESTREET: Thank you.

13 CHAIR LUCE: Lynn Bergeron. Did I pronounce that
14 correctly?

15 MS. BERGERON: You did.

16 CHAIR LUCE: Lynn, can you spell it for the court
17 reporter and give the court reporter your address.

18 COMMENTS BY LYNN BERGERON

19 Lynn Bergeron, 4491 Cook Underwood Road, Mill A,
20 B-e-r-g-e-r-o-n. I am another co-owner of the farm you just
21 heard about, and I did a lot of soul searching before
22 deciding whether to even get involved in opposing this
23 project because of the not in my backyard thing. And what I
24 decided was that it was a lot of opposition to the visual
25 impact and the aesthetic impact.

1 So I don't want to look at the towers. I'll tell
2 you that right now. But I think whether or not I want to
3 look at the towers doesn't matter. I live here. I don't
4 like looking at clear cuts. I don't like looking at housing
5 developments and I've gotten used to all of this so I just
6 don't think whether or not I have to look at it matters.

7 But this is a scoping meeting, and part of your
8 job as a state agency and part of your job is to look at the
9 bigger picture. So I talked to a power grid interconnect
10 engineer who used to work for Pacific Corps to try and get
11 an understanding of some of the bigger picture. Obviously
12 there's a demand for more power or none of these power
13 projects would even come to be. But my question is, is it a
14 short-term demand or a long-term demand? And is the demand
15 that we're trying to meet in power something that's going to
16 put a lot of money and a lot of benefits in a few pockets
17 and, you know, 25 years from now the picture is entirely
18 changed and we're left with the towers, the roads, the
19 environmental degradation? Also, you know, it's been an
20 issue with me that a lot of the power demands are not met
21 without a whole lot of talk about conserving power. So as
22 part of your scope of what you're looking at I would like
23 you to tap into people who have a long-range vision of power
24 generation in the state because a lot of things that we do
25 just end up to be short-term impacts.

1 There was one more. Also in talking to this
2 engineer I came to recognize that the proximity of the
3 Bonneville Power Lines and the proximity to where the power
4 is going to be used do make this a good site to consider for
5 wind power. Then there's the big but. Hopefully you will
6 be applying best available science and national science.
7 Organizations that have looked at the impacts of wind
8 projects have said that, you know, sticking them on mountain
9 tops has a lot more challenges and therefore to the
10 environment and therefore they're not a prime choice. So
11 you know that already.

12 As far as the economic benefits to Skamania
13 County, Skamania County definitely needs economic benefits
14 and people here need them. I've been impacted by the
15 economy. I lost my job Christmas Eve and haven't found
16 another one yet, but I don't want the county or the people
17 that live here or the state to focus on money. When we do
18 something for money it's called whoring, and there's other
19 things of value that need to be taken into consideration.

20 And, finally, I've been really bothered by the
21 tight coupling of this energy project and the economic
22 development organizations in our county in the Gorge and the
23 process with the company who is planning zoning ordinances
24 in this county. It just smells fishy. I don't like it.
25 And so I don't know if there's anything here that should be

1 included in your scoping, but, yeah, for what it's worth.

2 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. It's about ten to 4:00.
3 We're going to take a ten-minute break so the court reporter
4 can recover some feeling to her fingers which are probably
5 numb by now and then the rest of us might want the rest
6 break as well. We will resume at four o'clock sharp and we
7 will resume with the next witness. Thank you. We will be
8 in recess until four o'clock.

9 (Recess taken from 3:50 to 4:00 p.m.)

10 CHAIR LUCE: For those of us who are here we will
11 stay until all of your comments have been heard. I would
12 like to encourage those of you who have comments that are
13 similar to what others have offered to limit yourselves to
14 agreeing or disagreeing to what has been previously said.
15 We have the four-minute rule in place. We will try to keep
16 that. We have 20 people left to speak, and I guess that's
17 enough to be said.

18 So we will begin now with Wirt Maxey. If you
19 could spell your name and give us your address for the court
20 reporter.

21 COMMENTS BY WIRT MAXEY

22 Yes. My name is Wirt. That's W-i-r-t Maxey,
23 M-a-x-e-y. I live at 8992 Cook-Underwood Road, Underwood.

24 I have a couple of comments about scoping.
25 Something that I haven't heard anybody mention either last

1 night or today is my understanding is there's a month's
2 stage of band up there, particularly on the south where the
3 slope slopes steep. I don't believe that that's been
4 documented as part of DNR making connections with some of
5 SDS logging permits and so forth. I intend to make written
6 comments to supply you with that, but I'm mentioning it now.
7 As well you're perfectly aware that there's some springs
8 again at the south end very, very close by where they're
9 talking about doing all those turbine strings. Those
10 springs serve a lot of the agriculture there down below.
11 Again, I believe at least one or two households so I think
12 in terms of your scoping you need to take a close look at
13 those two things.

14 The other thing that concerns me and it's a theme
15 that you've heard many times and you're going to hear it
16 again is the scenic impacts. You know, the proponents of
17 this project make much about Initiative 937. You all know
18 what that is. It established the renewable energy
19 requirements and proponents are constantly bringing that up.
20 They say we need this project because of 937. Let me just
21 read to you very briefly two lines out of Initiative 937
22 codified by the RCW 19.285. This is a declaration of
23 policy. Increasing energy conservation and the use of
24 appropriately sited renewable energy facilities,
25 appropriately sited renewable energy facilities. Now, look,

1 it's pretty windy on Mount Rushmore. I don't think any of
2 us would say that it would be appropriate to site a windmill
3 farm on the next ridge behind Mount Rushmore. It wouldn't
4 be appropriate to site a windmill farm along say the rim of
5 the Grand Canyon or just outside the borders of Yellowstone
6 National Park or for that matter just outside the borders of
7 Mount Rainier National Park. Why? Because these are
8 national scenic treasures specifically set aside by our
9 Congress, and I stress these are national treasures. These
10 are not State of Washington or State of Oregon treasures or
11 in the case of Mount Rushmore the State of South Dakota.
12 They're national treasures, and that's why it's not
13 appropriate to site these here and the same reasoning
14 applies to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

15 This is a totally unique national scenic treasure,
16 and to allow this project to go through will destroy that.
17 The Scenic Area Act talks a lot about the visual
18 subordination. I'm telling you these towers they're taller
19 than the highest building in Seattle are not going to be
20 visually supportive from anywhere in the scenic area.
21 They're going to be visually dominant.

22 I would like to take just a brief moment and rebut
23 something that Commissioner Pearce made much to do about in
24 his speech last night. He spoke at some length about
25 Section 17 of the Scenic Area Act so-called no buffers

1 provision. Let me read you what it says. It says, I'll
2 paraphrase needless to say.

3 CHAIR LUCE: That would be helpful.

4 MR. MAXEY: Nothing in Section 544 and so forth of
5 this type shall establish protective perimeter buffer zones
6 and so forth. Nothing of this type. So with this
7 legislation it is merely a limitation on the jurisdiction of
8 the Scenic Area Act. It has no bearing whatsoever.
9 Contrary to what was suggested by Commissioner Pearce this
10 has no bearing whatsoever on the duty and obligation of this
11 Council under SEPA and of the BPA for NEPA to consider the
12 scenic impacts as part of your environmental review. So
13 don't be led down the primrose path on that.

14 Finally, almost finally, I would like to say
15 there's been a lot of talk about how this project will take
16 care of the economic woes of Skamania County. I submit to
17 this Board plundering the National Scenic Area is not an
18 appropriate way to cure the economic woes of Skamania
19 County, whatever they may be.

20 In closing, let me leave you with this thought.
21 There are lots and lots of alternative sites for wind farms.
22 In Washington to the east there's hundreds of thousands of
23 acres, and they're a much more appropriate site. So there's
24 lots of alternative sites. There is only one National
25 Scenic Area. You can't pick it up and move it someplace

1 else. Thank you.

2 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

3 Mr. Tyler, John Tyler followed by Tom Quinn.

4 State your name and address for the record and
5 four minutes and please don't repeat what others have said.

6 MR. TYLER: I will try to make it brief.

7 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

8 COMMENTS BY JOHN TYLER

9 My name is John Tyler. I live at 421 Highland
10 Orchards Road. It's T-y-l-e-r.

11 I have three points that I would like to make.
12 One is I'd simply like to amplify some of the concerns that
13 have been raised already about the visual impact of huge 400
14 plus foot concrete towers. I think it's going to be very
15 devastating to the beauty of this area.

16 My concern is my wife and I retired here three
17 years ago having lived in North Dakota for the preceding
18 35 years and know what it's like not to live in a scenic
19 area. We were drawn to this place because of the national
20 beauty. I'm afraid this is going to be severely affected by
21 all the wind towers and the wind farm that it contains.

22 Second point, I am concerned about the
23 irreversibility of this project. Three million dollar or
24 thereabouts massive concrete towers are not going to be
25 willingly moved when they become obsolete. They aren't

1 going to rot and deteriorate. They're going to be here for
2 the duration. What happens if our needs change? A lot of
3 technological advances in the last 25, 50 years as far as
4 power, our alternative sources of power and so forth. I
5 think we can expect it to continue into the future. What if
6 further into the future a few years from now we no longer
7 need wind power, where are they going to go? That's one
8 thing I would like to ask this group. Are there perhaps for
9 removing the towers, a precedent for moving towers of this
10 sort? Who would bear the costs and what can be the impact
11 environmentally of removing towers no longer needed?

12 Final concern is the precedency of the thing for
13 this. Jason mentioned earlier that this hasn't been tried
14 before in reforested areas. I think that's a bad thing
15 because if it is done here, I think we can expect other
16 people who have an interest in wind energy to also seek
17 outward a place to move and relocate and start an industry
18 up here, plenty of wind. More people will follow, and the
19 people who follow this may not have the roots in the
20 community that SDS does and may not have the confidence of
21 many community members that would look out for the interest
22 of this. They may be mega companies like G.E., you name
23 them, that could care less about local concerns. We open
24 the door for one project it's going to be much harder to
25 close the door to others. The rule is it's much harder put

1 the Jeannie back in the bottle if we decide we don't like it
2 when we get into it. Thank you very much.

3 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. Appreciate your comments.
4 Mr. Quinn followed by Cam Thomas.

5 COMMENTS BY TOM QUINN

6 My name is Tom Quinn, Q-u-i-n-n, and my house is
7 2085 Martin Road in the Dalles, and, you know, the reason I
8 wanted to come here tonight or today is that my neighbors
9 and I recently finished a two-year saga similar to what you
10 people here are just beginning. Two years ago a
11 Massachusetts company named UPC proposed a wind farm for a
12 hill between Mosier and the Dalles and that would have
13 affected my house and obviously the neighbors around me.
14 And I think that set off on a path to decide to really look
15 at this issue of wind power, and I guess I felt like I'd
16 been a supporter of wind power and I guess to a certain
17 extent I still am. But after looking at this issue in the
18 Gorge, I'm not any longer a supporter of wind power in the
19 Gorge in this scenic area.

20 First of all, I talked to everyone I could talk
21 to. I talked to people in the wind industry, I talked to
22 city planners, I talked to my neighbors, and what we decided
23 was just the visual impacts was just too great. And one
24 thing I think the tour allows is to give you a chance to
25 make your assessment of the visual impact of this project.

1 There's something called the Sinclair Thomas Matrix. It's
2 just an easy way to common sense decide what the impacts of
3 wind power would be. Essentially it boils down to anything
4 up this five miles is capable of dominating the landscape.
5 So take one of these proposed towers and draw a radius up
6 from that and then see how it will impact the Gorge up to
7 ten miles this same matrix that these towers are clearly
8 visible and intrusive. So now take those same radius drawn
9 out to ten miles and see the impacts. I think my neighbors
10 and I decided after seeing this is that our area of the
11 Gorge was just not acceptable and I don't think this is area
12 acceptable either.

13 Any time Mr. Spadaro gave his speech the one thing
14 he didn't say he didn't mention anything about the impact on
15 the scenic area. That's crucial.

16 The other thing I would like to talk to you about
17 is I'm not sure of these particular distances, but in our
18 case a lot of towers were proposed for a half mile from
19 people's houses, and if you did the research the wind
20 industry will say that there's no peer reviewed study of
21 wind towers that close to people will have any adverse
22 effect. And I still think there's enough anecdotal evidence
23 to say this is not a good idea to put a wind tower that
24 close to someone.

25 I think I'll finish up by telling you that two

1 years ago you could stand outside my home and look out to
2 Wasco where the Klondike Wind Farm was. It was 35 miles
3 away and when the sun shines right I can see each individual
4 tower, you know, 35 miles away. In two years there's
5 obviously a huge boom going on. Every time you drive out to
6 Pendleton you can't believe how many wind farms there are.
7 I mean and they're coming this way. I was just at the mouth
8 of the Deschutes the other day. They're right up from the
9 Deschutes. That's the eastern channel of the scenic area.
10 They're coming up on Maryhill. That's a good place. At
11 least Maryhill is getting its money to put them up there,
12 but somehow it has to stop. You have to make them draw the
13 line somewhere and say this can't happen and on our coast in
14 Oregon ironically the impact would have been on Washington.
15 The people of Lyle these things would have been coming right
16 down on them.

17 Now, here in your proposal in Underwood the impact
18 is going to be greater for people in Oregon, and I'm not
19 sure if they know what's coming. I would just encourage you
20 to draw the line somewhere and say anything five miles from
21 the scenic area is just a no-go zone for a wind turbine and
22 two miles from a house. I mean those are just common sense
23 setbacks. Thank you.

24 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

25 Cam Thomas, followed Sally Newell, followed by

1 Glenda Ryan.

2 COMMENTS BY CAM THOMAS

3 Good afternoon. My name is Cam, that's C-a-m,
4 Thomas at 52 Thomas Road, Underwood, Washington. As a
5 61-year resident of Underwood, I think Wally Stevenson is
6 probably the only person that's been around here longer than
7 I have. This project will be in my backyard as a local
8 Underwood resident as much as anybody else's, but I'm here
9 to say that I'm in favor of the 75 megawatts of renewable
10 power, and \$731,000 of tax base and income that it will
11 bring to Skamania County. And it's my understanding that
12 all of the wind turbines that were proposed in this project
13 are outside of the scenic area, and there are areas even
14 closer to the scenic area that are farmland on which these
15 type of turbines would be permitted outright. So I think
16 the forestry and wind generation is compatible in this area.

17 One thing that I haven't heard mentioned here
18 today is that Skamania County PUD will get a huge benefit as
19 will all of Skamania County PUD's customers because the
20 interchange and interconnect to the Bonneville line will
21 provide Skamania County with a circular loop that is not
22 available right now. Approximately two years ago there was
23 an outage that lasted for like three days. The whole PUD
24 supply was out. There wasn't anything the PUD could do to
25 help us at all, and that problem will be prevented in the

1 future. I was just fortunate enough to be a tourist on the
2 mountain in the last two weeks, and from where I was which
3 was the big tourist area there are wind turbines visible on
4 the ridge about a mile and a half away from the tourist area
5 that I was visiting. They are visible. They are certainly
6 not intrusive. I did not hear any comments at all about the
7 wind turbines in the area. Thank you.

8 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

9 Sally, good to see you again today. Four minutes
10 would be appropriate I think.

11 COMMENTS BY SALLY NEWELL

12 That's fine. Thank you for the opportunity to
13 comment and thank you so much for coming to Underwood.

14 CHAIR LUCE: State and spell your name and give us
15 your address again for the record.

16 MS. NEWELL: Sally Newell. I live at 142 Donna
17 Road. If you want to mail me something mail to Post Office
18 Box 186, Underwood, Washington 98651.

19 For the record, my name is Sally Newell. I'm the
20 president of the Underwood Community Council, Chair of the
21 Skamania County Noxious Weed Board, board member, Friends of
22 the White Salmon River --

23 CHAIR LUCE: Sally, can you read a little slower.

24 MS. NEWELL: Okay.

25 CHAIR LUCE: The court reporter is fast but you're

1 faster.

2 MS. NEWELL: I'm a librarian for the Mill A school
3 and a former Columbia River Gorge Commissioner appointed
4 1994 through '98 by Governor Lowry.

5 Today I speak as none of these but only offer the
6 following comments as my own input on the application filed
7 by SDS Lumber. A lot of people have already talked about a
8 lot of the things that I would be concerned with. I would
9 concur with the SOSA attorney, Richard Aramburu,
10 particularly regarding the need for independent studies. I
11 for one am not willing to accept any studies that have been
12 already commissioned by SDS Lumber. I'd like to see a
13 neutral third party conducting studies.

14 Oh, let's see. Natural resource concerns,
15 wildlife particularly, the affect of turbines on human
16 health, noise from the turbines. And speaking of noise
17 echoing through the mountains, we get jets from Whidbey
18 Island Naval Air Station flying low through here from time
19 to time. The affect the turbines will have on their
20 exercises should be assessed in your scoping.

21 I am troubled the proposed project will be visible
22 from so many places in the Columbia River Gorge National
23 Scenic Area as well as other beauty spots nearby like the
24 Hood River Valley, White Salmon River Wild, and Scenic River
25 Corridor. The aesthetic impact for me is much less about

1 how these turbines look during the day turning in their lazy
2 circles, but if I had to look at those dudes at night with
3 their strobing red lights, I'd buy drapes. I was shocked
4 the first time I drove home from Goldendale at night and saw
5 the wind farms in Oregon blinking in unison, unbelievable.
6 Up until then I thought a soft summer night was a birthright
7 in the Gorge.

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

16 The folks in the Gorge, especially this part of
17 it, have begun to eat off the scenery. We have tourism and
18 a budding agri-tourism business. We grew a world class
19 aircraft manufacturing business right here in Underwood.
20 That captain that was rescued by the little drone that drone
21 was built in Bingen, Washington but it was invented in a
22 house in Underwood. Pear orchards are coming out and
23 vineyards are going in. We have wineries and wedding bells.
24 My husband's grandpa's old strawberry farm up on Wess Road
25 has grown a final crop of million dollar homes.

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

7 People here have sacrificed, often unwillingly and
8 sometimes at great unanticipated personal expense to
9 preserve the beauty of this place for the larger public
10 interest. The State of Washington signed a compact with the
11 State of Oregon because this place is special.

12 CHAIR LUCE: Sally, I think we're at four minutes.
13 Do you have comments -- you're reading from the comments.
14 Could you submit them for the record and summarize for the
15 rest of them, please.

16 MS. NEWELL: Well, I think with Mr. Eastwick I am
17 very concerned about the transportation. I want to know how
18 many tons of exhaust will be going into our air shed here
19 because the Columbia River Gorge Air Shed is already in
20 trouble as you know.

21 Finally, I understand that the State of Oregon has
22 a law requiring their Energy Siting Board to consider lands
23 bearing special state or federal designations very carefully
24 when siting facilities like wind turbines. I know you have
25 no state law compelling you to give special consideration to

1 a national treasure, but I hope your good sense and moral
2 compass will lead you in that direction. Thank you.

3 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

4 Glenda Ryan, followed by Nathan Baker, followed by
5 Rebecca Maxey.

6 COMMENTS BY GLENDA RYAN

7 My name is Glenda Ryan. I live at 9372
8 Cook-Underwood Road. My mailing address is P.O. Box 146,
9 Underwood.

10 CHAIR LUCE: The spelling of your name.

11 MS. RYAN: G-l-e-n-d-a Ryan R-y-a-n. I have been a
12 resident of Underwood for over 20 years and I love living
13 here, but my main concern which I am not sure has been
14 addressed and I haven't heard anyone speak about it is the
15 amount of water that's going to be necessary to the footings
16 for these towers, spraying the roads to eliminate the dust.
17 And when I first came here, we had water holding tanks and
18 frequently we would run out of water. And my question about
19 our water quality is something I would like to see addressed
20 and how it's going to impact our water supplies and future
21 water supplies as far as the aquifer and that sort of thing.
22 I'm not sure if it has been affected. I didn't hear
23 anything about it, but that's all I have to say.

24 CHAIR LUCE: Well, thank you very much. If you
25 want to submit something in writing, please do so by May 18

1 close of business.

2 MS. RYAN: I will do that. Thank you for your
3 time.

4 CHAIR LUCE: Much appreciated.

5 Mr. Baker.

6 COMMENTS BY NATHAN BAKER

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Members of the Council.
8 For the record, my name is Nathan Baker. I'm the staff
9 attorney with Friends of the Columbia Gorge. My address is
10 522 S.E. Fifth Avenue, Suite 720, Portland, Oregon 97204.

11 First, I just want to thank you for your time, for
12 your public service, and for your patience in hearing
13 everybody's testimony. These proceedings actually kicked
14 off yesterday afternoon at three o'clock. There was an
15 agency scoping meeting where the staff of EFSEC took
16 comments from agencies and it just so turned out that only
17 one agency showed up. That was the U.S. Forest Service.
18 That's one of the two agencies that administers the Federal
19 Scenic Area Act; the other one being the Gorge Commission
20 which was created by an interstate compact between the
21 states of Oregon and Washington.

22 I wanted to read briefly some key excerpts from
23 the Forest Service's letter that they presented yesterday.
24 It is part of the record, but given that was the
25 spokesperson for the Forest Service it was literally the

1 only person who you haven't heard directly from, and I
2 wanted to emphasize those points.

3 This is a letter from Daniel Harkenrider who is
4 the area manager of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic
5 Area of the Forest Service, and in general the letter is
6 very critical of the applicant's analysis of the scenic
7 impacts, and the letter makes some recommendations.

8 So page 1, the Forest Service is submitting the
9 following comment with respect to the Columbia River Gorge
10 National Scenic Area, one of America's natural wonders
11 worldwide known for its scenic beauty. It has a variety of
12 quality and recreational opportunities. Since the scenic
13 area was created by Congress in 1986 new developments occur
14 within a controlled framework that protects the resources
15 that make the scenic area special. I understand that only a
16 small portion of the proposal is located within the
17 boundaries of the scenic area. This letter concerns impacts
18 of all the wind turbines visible from within the scenic
19 area.

20 Page two, there is several questions concerning
21 the benefit of use to, one, choose viewpoints; two, define
22 visual quality and viewer sensitivity; and, three, represent
23 conclusions about the impacts.

24 Point 1, choosing viewpoints in the scenic area
25 should be based on key viewing areas. Several of these were

1 missing from the discussion; therefore, it is unclear
2 whether they are national scenic areas and resources were
3 adequately captured.

4 Point 2, the National Scenic Area is a nationally
5 known and protected landscape of high quality and high
6 sensitivity. All key viewing areas and analysis should
7 reflect this. The results of the applicant's analysis are
8 heavily weighed on the assignment of existing scenic quality
9 and viewer sensitivity. These methods were not traveled and
10 do not represent the reality of the scenic area.

11 Point 3, the conclusions made on the summary chart
12 were more accurately conveyed using degree of contrast with
13 the natural landscape both during the day and at night and
14 distance of the viewer from the project area. This assumes
15 that the most visually impacted viewpoints have been found
16 and that the simulations accurately depict the degree of
17 contrast. The impact summaries discuss these contrasts, but
18 the rates do not reflect the discussion. For example, the
19 text for Viewpoint No. 1 states that the presence of the
20 turbines would reduce the scenic degree of impactness by
21 introducing a large number of highly visible engineered
22 vertical elements, but the impact rate is only low to
23 moderate.

24 Page three, the visualizations are important for
25 finding the number and location of the visible turbines but

1 have limited utility for assessing scenic impacts.

2 Finally page 4, the recommendations of the Forest
3 Service. Recommendations: In order to assure that the
4 scenic resource impact is adequately analyzed I recommend
5 the following improvements to the scenic resource and BACT
6 assessment: A fluid discussion or summary of the most
7 visible turbines; include photographs of existing energy
8 projects visible in the National Scenic Area; do not use
9 visual simulations of a small scale with clouds in the
10 picture to depict the visual impacts of visible turbines;
11 make certain that the most visible viewpoints have been
12 covered, especially with respect to linear viewpoints, and
13 make certain to include the nighttime effects in your
14 analysis.

15 In order to prevent the scenic impact of the
16 turbines visible from the scenic area key viewing areas, I
17 also recommend that the applicant eliminate turbine
18 locations found to be visible from the scenic area key
19 viewing areas. I am hopeful that close attention to these
20 impacts will result in a solution which will fit the unique
21 area the project will potentially benefit.

22 So I encourage the Council to look at this letter
23 and follow the advice of the Forest Service which is the one
24 of two agencies charged with protecting the resources of the
25 National Scenic Area. Thank you.

1 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. We'll look closely at
2 that letter.

3 Rebecca Maxey.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.

5 CHAIR LUCE: All right. Matt Ryan and after Matt
6 Ryan we will have Dan Bradford I believe and Frank Backus.

7 COMMENTS OF MATT RYAN

8 My name is Matt Ryan, M-a-t-t R-y-a-n. I live at
9 9372 Cook-Underwood Road, and thank you again for taking
10 time to listen to all our comments.

11 I just want to say that I fairly strongly oppose
12 this project for many reasons. I think most of them have
13 been well stated by others today already. I just wanted to
14 reemphasize my concerns both primarily with the scenic
15 impacts. I believe, you know, technically all these towers
16 are going to be sited outside the scenic area. I understand
17 that. But I think that the dotted line of the boundary was
18 drawn before this foreseeable intrusion could even be
19 imagined. I think that boundary was placed so that 60- or
20 80-foot agricultural buildings, barns and such would still
21 be hidden behind the forest and behind the ridge. I don't
22 think anybody anticipated 400 some foot structures, not just
23 one but up to 50 or even more I think.

24 That may be the letter of the law, but I think it
25 certainly breaks the spirit of the law and the whole intent

1 of the Gorge Scenic Area. So, again, I think the scenic
2 impacts are going to far outweigh the benefits that others
3 have already stated.

4 My other concern also recently brought up concerns
5 of water use and water need. I think Underwood is a unique
6 geographic, proper place in that it has three major drainage
7 systems on three of the four sides. I'm concerned where all
8 the water is going to come from to create all the cement
9 that's going to be needed for this project, again for dust
10 control, all the water needs.

11 Those that went on the site planned visit earlier
12 today went up the road and passed an area where we lost five
13 or six homes in the last year to a wild fire and anyone in
14 the community knows that we were on water rationing. We
15 couldn't use our water trough because we had completely
16 drained the Underwood water system just fighting that
17 wildlife. Wildfires are a very real threat in this area.
18 If they were to have other wildfires while this project is
19 going on, I'm concerned how much water we would have to
20 fight wildfires. I think that's a very real concern that
21 hasn't really been addressed. I just kind of want to
22 reiterate that. Thank you very much for your time.

23 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you for coming here.

24 Mr. Bradford.

25 ///

1 COMMENTS BY DON BRADFORD

2 My name is Don Bradford. I live at 52 Sunrise
3 Road in Underwood. It's B-r-a-d-f-o-r-d.

4 I've lived and worked in the area of the Columbia
5 River Gorge since 1964 and have lived in Underwood for
6 17 years. I am in favor of this project. I believe that
7 there's a campaign of misinformation by opponents that
8 obscure the objective evaluation of the project. We've had
9 statements of the towers are concrete, but they're not.
10 They're steel. We've had statements about water. We've had
11 statements about visual impacts.

12 And this project is outside the scenic area of the
13 National Columbia River Gorge. Hood River is outside of the
14 scenic area of the Gorge. From my residence I watched them
15 build a yellow building three stories tall with a red roof
16 right on the bluff next to a waterfall without any
17 objections because it's outside the Gorge area. SDS owns
18 this property. It's outside the Gorge area. They have a
19 right to the beneficial use of their property.

20 I intend to submit a written document that
21 addresses many of the objections that I have heard and
22 identified, and some objections are valid and they should be
23 looked at objectively, but there's a lot of these comments
24 that are false, misinformation. Thank you for your time.

25 CHAIR LUCE: Appreciate it very much.

1 Frank Backus.

2 COMMENTS BY FRANK BACKUS

3 Good afternoon. I'm Frank Backus. I live at 551
4 Highway 141, White Salmon, and so the scoping hearing this
5 afternoon my comments are my things that I would like you --

6 CHAIR LUCE: Spell the last name.

7 MR. BACKUS: B-a-c-k-u-s.

8 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. The things that I think
9 the group should look at as they go through their evaluation
10 of this is you need to understand Skamania County. Most of
11 Skamania County is owned by the U.S. Forest Service. What
12 private land they do have a lot of it is impacted inside the
13 National Scenic Area Boundary; therefore, Skamania County
14 has very, very little land that they can look to for
15 economic development. So you need to look at that and be
16 aware of that because that's the realities of the county.

17 You need to analyze the importance of the small
18 privately owned companies like SDS Lumber Company, and their
19 need to be able to diversify to stay in business. The
20 economic ties of the wind today are no secret to anybody on
21 how difficult it is for a company like SDS to stay open.
22 They've had to shut down for a month, laid off their people,
23 and the payroll of that company in this area is vital. So
24 you need to really look at that and understand those needs
25 of a small private company.

1 It's been mentioned today you all understand that
2 the State of Washington did pass a referendum requiring
3 utilities to have renewable energy. Fifty-four percent of
4 the people of Skamania County voted for that.

5 Columbia River Gorge Area you need to understand
6 the processes that went in and, Mr. Luce, is I'm sure
7 understanding that better than most. When it started out it
8 was a proposed park. They soon realized that the park
9 didn't work in this setting so they'd come up with some
10 unique process of the National Scenic Area. It's got three
11 distinct areas in it. It's got an urban area that's totally
12 exempt which that was just pointed out, totally exempt from
13 the scenic area regulations. It has a general management
14 area where there was envisioned some regulation and special
15 management areas that was considered for heavy regulation
16 and heavy protection. The founders of this, the creators of
17 this never envisioned that there would not be change. Look
18 at the urban areas. They specifically exempted that so that
19 there could be change in that area and change in the
20 landscape within that.

21 The final thing you need to take away from here
22 are wind turbines are wind turbines and they affect the
23 scenery but the boundary of the National Scenic Area is the
24 boundary of the National Scenic Area. Thank you very much.
25 I'll be here this evening for the other hearing.

1 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. I appreciate that.
2 Mr. Herman.

3 COMMENTS BY KEVIN HERMAN

4 Hello, my name is Kevin Herman, K-e-v-i-n
5 H-e-r-m-a-n. I live in White Salmon, Washington, 1001 N.W.
6 Cherry Hill Road. I'm a graduate from Columbia High School,
7 and, first of all, I want to thank Wally Stevenson and SDS
8 Lumber Company for giving me plenty of opportunities growing
9 up. They've been very beneficial to the community. They've
10 offered, they donated lumber and stuff to my high school
11 growing up to do add-ons and such. I was an employee at SDS
12 Lumber Company. They worked with my schedule and allowed me
13 to get my GED, and so I want to thank them publicly for
14 that.

15 For one reason because I think they have been a
16 little bit bullied in their attempt to diversify, and I find
17 that ironic, and I'm stereotyping, but that a certain group
18 of people by opposing the logging have created this
19 atmosphere where they need to diversify, and in doing so
20 when they need to diversify they're also going against that
21 and so I find it very ironic that we're even really having
22 this discussion.

23 I think that this is an opportunity to show that
24 as a community that we can do it right by putting this wind
25 farm up there, showing that they can be compatible.

1 There's a wind farm in Scotland that I don't have
2 my papers with me right now, but there's a wind farm in
3 Scotland where people actually do go and take tour buses to
4 see because it's on the ridge line right next to their
5 community. Okay? And that first for two years in the
6 process of trying to get this wind farm in there the people
7 there in that community were actually opposed to it. They
8 thought it would just ruin their economy and it hasn't. In
9 these times of greater need for energy, we need to weigh the
10 pros and cons. We need to talk about sacrifices. Okay?
11 And in doing that we need to see if there's going to be a
12 short-term sacrifice that we can make in getting this wind
13 farm up to benefit everyone for the long term or because
14 there are going to be heavy trucks coming up from a year or
15 maybe year and a half do we just kill the project altogether
16 despite the fact that this provides for energy needs?

17 Because one gentleman spoke about, you know, the
18 possibility that we might not need wind energy, you know,
19 ever again. Well, I think as human beings we keep
20 procreating. We're going to need energy. It's not going to
21 stop unless people want to go into their house, pull the
22 copper out of their homes, and stop driving. We are going
23 to need energy, and wind energy is a viable, viable way of
24 getting energy to the homes. They use it.

25 Also I want to talk a little bit about the

1 environmental impact, and I read some of the 900 pages that
2 SDS supplied for the website for the Whistling Ridge
3 Project. One of those things that they talked about in
4 there was the fact that there are no spotted owls in the
5 vicinity, in that area where Whistling Ridge Energy is
6 proposed, but they did find two adult gray squirrels. So
7 that coupled with the aesthetics that everyone is talking
8 about and then the residents some of which are here tonight,
9 most of which are probably here tonight, and their
10 inconvenience should we just not do it all now? Now,
11 there's a lot time and effort that goes into studying that
12 or that goes into placing these wind turbines, like is the
13 wind viable. And I think that this is a marriage made in
14 heaven because of the fact that we have BPA's transmission
15 lines. I mean I've been up four wheeling around this area,
16 and I mean not recently, but, you know, I grew up here.
17 And, yeah, not recently, right.

18 But and so what I know that this is a fairly I
19 wouldn't say desolate, but it's not being used for anything
20 right now and maybe that's because SDS intended not to use
21 it and they wanted to use it for this. I don't know. But I
22 don't think that this small area is going to impact this,
23 you know, agri-tourism is what it's called I guess. I don't
24 think that it's going to collapse the economy of the
25 Columbia River Gorge just because of this wind farm, but it

1 does supply power for 20,000 homes is the estimate.

2 You know, I know that wind and energy is variable.
3 Okay? And there are ways around that. I know that water
4 sometimes is hard to come by, but SDS has the equipment and
5 the means to get water to these places. They have the roads
6 already in place. Okay? Two and a half miles of extra, you
7 know, widening of roads or excavating roads those things are
8 not a big deal in my book, you know.

9 So I would hope that you guys would go ahead and
10 recommend this project to the Governor of Washington because
11 I think it's a good idea. It allows me because I'm a
12 student at Columbia Gorge Community College in the renewable
13 energy resources program to not have to move out of the
14 area, and that I would very much appreciate. Thank you.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

16 Mr. Browne, Mr. James Browne.

17 COMMENTS BY JAMES BROWNE

18 Hi, my name is James Browne. That's J-a-m-e-s
19 B-r-o-w-n-e. I would like to start by saying my family has
20 lived here in Oregon for over a hundred years.

21 CHAIR LUCE: Your address?

22 MR. BROWNE: Oh, 106 Pear Street, the Dalles,
23 Oregon, 97058.

24 I would like to start by saying that my family has
25 lived here for over a hundred years. I was born in Portland

1 and lived in Astoria and Le Grande growing up. I'm
2 currently going to school beginning work on a master's
3 degree in electrical and mechanical engineering. I came
4 here about a year half ago. I walked away from a very high
5 paying job on the north slope of Alaska. I came here and it
6 totally changed my lifestyle. I gave up a way of life that
7 I was very happy with because I believe that we are at the
8 crossroads now in terms of power generation, and that the
9 oil reserves of the world are going to some day run out, and
10 the sacrifices that we make now will mitigate that effect in
11 the future. There are communities in Alaska right now that
12 are collapsing the face of \$400 a month electrical bills
13 because the price of diesel fuel. You may not think that
14 that would be in our near future and it's not. It may be
15 30, 40 years down the road, but at some point in time we
16 will move away from the petroleum dependency whether by
17 force or by foresight.

18 I really feel awkward coming in here and telling
19 people that they need to make sacrifices not being from a
20 part of this community, but I am prepared to sacrifice six
21 years of my life to education and 80,000 plus loans, in
22 student loans to make a difference. And I sincerely hope
23 nobody in America has to see the day where they say I wish I
24 could have done more. I know I won't.

25 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much.

1 Loreley Brack followed by Jeannie Rawley, followed
2 by Rob Bell.

3 COMMENTS BY LORELEY BRACH

4 My name is Loreley Brach. It's spelled
5 L-o-r-e-l-e-y, and the last name is Brach, B-r-a-c-h. I
6 live at you can send it to P.O. Box 31, Underwood,
7 Washington. Thank you for allowing the public to come to
8 speak tonight.

9 CHAIR LUCE: Fine. I'm just going to remind you
10 you have four minutes. So if you have anything written
11 specifically to submit in writing and summarize it if you
12 could within the four-minute time frame.

13 MS. BRACH: I could do that, but I'd like the
14 public to hear also what I have to say so thank you.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. You made the record.
16 Please don't read two or three pages to us.

17 MS. BRACH: Okay. Other people have.

18 CHAIR LUCE: We can make that an exhibit.

19 MS. BRACH: I want to introduce we reside at the
20 property nearest the project, about 1,500 feet from the
21 project, and we're surrounded on all three sides by forest
22 that's controlled by SDS Broughton. I'm very concerned
23 about the potential conclusions from the EIS with the
24 fundamental data that's derived and prepared by the
25 applicant. A few examples cause concern for me and I'd like

1 to go over those briefly and that is the bats. That bats
2 are active as early as March in our area. We see them
3 frequently flying along the riparian slope up in perennial
4 stream that goes through our property. Bat surveys right
5 now are only between July and September and so I think
6 they're missing a significant portion of their active
7 season.

8 The other thing is an owl survey, and I would like
9 to read this because I don't want to mess it up and I want
10 people to hear. The applicant claims to have performed owl
11 surveys in 2008 to protect the presence and species of owls.
12 This work may have been compromised from the beginning. In
13 late May, early June owl calls -- this is last season in
14 2008 -- owl calls either they were heard or recorded sounds
15 were heard emanating from Broughton forest immediately south
16 of us, from our property an owl's calling a response.
17 Voices were heard one of which stated get as close as you
18 can. These apparently were people trying to locate the owl
19 not knowing who or for what purposes people were
20 trespassing. We went, searched, and intercepted. As we
21 quietly approached the area where the owl hooter interchange
22 was it quit responding and we were not able to make visual
23 contact with the hooters. But hoots from Broughton
24 continued shortly after that. Then to see information
25 reflecting this encounter does not show up on the data

1 sheets.

2 Additionally we have a photo of a gray horn owl
3 coming into our perennial stream. We frequently hear barn
4 owls and the owls are prevalent and often move back and
5 forth at each other. We have recorded owls from our
6 property in 2008, the nearest neighbor to the project. And
7 we continue to document the presence of owls within audible
8 range, within audible range of our property using
9 specialized distance recording equipment. The design of the
10 applicant's owl survey appears to be void of any calling
11 points within the perennial stream but does not show up on
12 their maps that are adjacent to this project that they want
13 to develop.

14 As of fall of 2008 the area bounded by this
15 perennial stream was permitted by SDS through DNR to be
16 logged with disregard to the stream bottom trees under
17 specially selected rule specially allowed by DNR.

18 Our suggestion is that all further EIS work needs
19 to include extensive independently conducted owl surveys in
20 the area beginning immediately. Coordination of the project
21 applicant will be needed to ensure these studies are carried
22 out prior to removal of the entire habitat area under the
23 terms of the DNR program. Geologically unstable areas you
24 try to visit the top of the slope as you look down to the
25 west you'll notice there is a portion there that still has

1 some trees intact. Well, there's an issue of geologically
2 unstable slopes there. From the DNR permit they weren't
3 allowed to log that for that reason we presume. And water
4 resources of that perennial stream again interestingly is
5 the case there are streams, other streams there that is
6 perennial. It's all year round and that slope in that area
7 goes right down into that drainage. We'd like to see it
8 appear on the maps and be represented.

9 And also I just want to comment on this is kind of
10 emotional for me because this is the National Scenic Area.
11 We need to as a society we need to step back and take a
12 look. What are we getting from this project: some
13 intermittent power? In the long term what does that mean or
14 the scenic area means to our society of increasing
15 population that needs to be able to escape city and
16 industrialized areas, get out and enjoy our resources? This
17 area is spectacular. We need to preserve it. I want my
18 kids to enjoy it wherever they live. I would also like to
19 see other important areas in this nation and this state
20 preserved for future generations. This place is special.
21 Let's keep it that way, please. Thank you.

22 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much. Could you give
23 Tammy your written comments and we'll get it into the
24 record.

25 MS. BRACH: Thank you very much. I'm going to be

1 sending in a lot of material.

2 CHAIR LUCE: Okay. That would be great. We will
3 look forward to reviewing it.

4 Jeannie Rawley followed by Rob Bell.

5 COMMENTS BY JEANNIE RAWLEY

6 Hello. Once again, thank you for listening to our
7 concerns. My name is Jeannie Rawley. It's J-e-a-n-n-i-e
8 R-a-w-l-e-y. I live a 621 Kollack-Knapp.

9 I'm on the corner of Kollack-Knapp and Scoggins
10 Road where they are proposing to do pretty intensive road
11 widening to get the pieces of this project up to the
12 mountain. I have similar concerns to a lot of the other
13 people about the impact, the environmental impact, but I
14 also empathize with the county and SDS on the whole economic
15 blight of this area. But I have to look at this more right
16 now from a personal perspective as well. I do look at it
17 for everybody but right now I'm focusing on the personal
18 perspective.

19 According to the map you have over there and the
20 documents I've seen circles where they are having to
21 severely change the roads and how the trucks will get up
22 basically cuts through our property and possibly through our
23 home. My concern is if it has such a severe impact on our
24 personal property why we have not been notified by SDS, by
25 the county, by anybody that this could have an impact.

1 We've seen documentation that says it could take out part of
2 our landscaping or it could take out part of our home or
3 complete home. We have found out this week from Skamania
4 County that we are not able to build another home on our
5 property because it is zoned agriculture which means that
6 our current home was grandfathered in because it's 25 years
7 old. So I have some research to do this week which I wasn't
8 able to do prior to coming today to see what that truly
9 means if we lose our home or part of our property. What is
10 that future for us with what we had hoped to be on
11 retirement?

12 As far as the wildlife, I have the same concerns.
13 As far as the owl study I haven't read the complete study,
14 but I would verify we hear owls every single night and
15 sometimes every morning. They are there. They're on the
16 property. They are on the property around us. We can hear
17 them calling all the time so there are owls.

18 I'm concerned for us about the noise and there are
19 studies out there but nothing -- there aren't enough studies
20 to do with how it affects people's homes, and I do have a
21 concern about that long-range piece.

22 I have a really strong concern about the impact of
23 the traffic and the trucks coming around that corner in
24 Underwood at Kollack-Knapp. I don't think it will end with
25 the project when we talk 18 months of huge amounts of truck

1 and traffic coming up. That will not end with the project
2 because there will always be maintenance. There will always
3 be things to take care of up there so that would be
4 something that is given for the rest of time. As long as
5 this project is up and running there will be traffic, there
6 will be impacts back on that corner.

7 We bought that property several years ago for the
8 natural scenic beauty out there and the scenic area. We
9 bought it for the serenity and the peace up here coming out
10 of Portland, and we had hoped to spend the rest of our years
11 with our grandchildren out here and share some of this
12 beauty with family, and I'm feeling right now that it's
13 being taken away from us because of the impact of putting
14 this project in.

15 What I would like you to do is to consider, of
16 course, what everybody has said on both sides, but also I
17 would like some support from you about communication and
18 letting those that are truly physically impacted that we are
19 kept in the loop and communicated to about the impact that
20 it will have on our personal property. Thank you for your
21 time.

22 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

23 Rob Bell.

24 COMMENTS BY ROB BELL

25 Rob Bell, R-o-b B-e-l-l, 4211 Post Canyon Drive,

1 Hood River.

2 This is hard for me today. I have great respect
3 for this Stevenson's. Jan and I are seeking to live in
4 Underwood, and I own property that is Flag No. 15 on that
5 map. Most of the environmental bickering over the years are
6 sort of consecutive disputes. This one strikes me as having
7 a radical discontinuity. I invested over three million
8 dollars and six years of my life on the promise that the
9 Columbia Gorge Scenic Management Area view shed would remain
10 intact. I don't think any reasonable person can dispute
11 that 50 wind turbines sitting 300 feet above that ridge is
12 going to be an absolute visual abomination. It's
13 irretrievable. We won't be able to go back.

14 What has propped up the community on both sides of
15 this river for the last 20 years was a shock for everyone to
16 learn four years ago that weddings and events was the second
17 largest cash prop in the Gorge. The aggregate investment in
18 wineries and vineyards when I bought Fierchinger there were
19 three wineries. There are over 40 now within 25 minutes of
20 me. The aggregate investment in wineries and vineyards is
21 somewhere in excess of 50 million dollars. Talk to any
22 restaurant, any hotel, they'll tell you what's kept them
23 alive.

24 I've been doing this survey for the last four
25 weeks from my wine bar. I've spoken with one hundred

1 people. I've shown them my little cartoon drawing on would
2 you like to see 50 of these over there, and I can report
3 it's 100 to zero so far. I've asked every one of them if
4 they support renewable energy and 85 percent of people do.
5 They just saw that this was an application that is flawed in
6 as much as once again it is visually irretrievable.

7 And the last thing I've hunted for 25 years where
8 the Deschutes River breaks over Rufus, and one of these
9 farms went up there last year. Okay? And I'll tell you
10 what? When you walk around the ridge and you're used to
11 seeing something for as long as I've been lucky to see it
12 nice here like the rest of these people in this room, and
13 those things are sitting there just flickering around in the
14 twilight.

15 And here's the last point I'd ask you to address.
16 This is economically grotesquely flawed. There is no
17 mention made of the 45 to 50 percent government, state, and
18 federal subsidies. That is the only reason that makes this
19 project of any interest to anyone interested in making a
20 profit.

21 Let's talk about wind in the Gorge because when I
22 moved here 35 years ago I built a path over the mountain. I
23 went to the University of Minnesota Wind School for six
24 weeks and let me give you a couple of factoids. I also
25 owned the first wind sailing shop on the Gorge, and you know

1 when the wind blows here? It blows six months of the year.
2 Okay? There's four months of the year that are dead calm,
3 and when it blows the six months of the year we have many
4 days that are called nuclear, and I don't think they found
5 the brake yet to stop one of these things from blowing up
6 once the wind gets over 25 miles an hour which is typical of
7 40 percent of the wind days during the year. You can check
8 it out. Okay? Now, Whistling Ridge it whistles like crazy
9 about 40 percent of the time. The rest of the time it's
10 going too fast for them and the other time there is not
11 enough wind to move them.

12 So to summarize, I would urge you to look at the
13 economic underpinnings of this make to sure that the real
14 deal is equal to the obvious unbelievable irretrievable step
15 which is I counted 150 blinking red lights sparkling away
16 and it's not something that I want to spend the rest of my
17 days looking at. Thank you very much.

18 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

19 Mary Trombly, followed by Jessica Walz, and Jane
20 Nichols.

21 COMMENTS BY MARY TWOMBLY

22 Hello, my name is Mary Trombly and I live at 842
23 Little Rock Creek Road in Mill A. I've been in this area
24 for about close to 20 years.

25 CHAIR LUCE: Spell your name, please.

1 MS. TWOMBLY: Oh, sorry, T-w-o-m-b-l-y.

2 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

3 MS. TWOMBLY: I recently moved to Mill A about a
4 year and a half ago mostly for the quiet serene place that
5 it was and is, and the day we signed the papers I heard
6 about the proposed wind turbine facility and really did
7 consider not signing the papers that day. After doing about
8 two hours of research on line and talking to some other
9 folks I decided that it was pretty scary moving into this
10 area, but we decided to do it anyway and really hoping that
11 this project won't go forward.

12 The thing that really stood out -- well, I agree
13 with all the other people that have talked about their
14 reasons for not wanting this project here, the scenery, the
15 economic impacts, wildlife, and birds, water. I really, you
16 know, if you look around you just don't see any 42-story
17 buildings around here or even in the big city to the west.
18 And it's just not consistent with what we're used to seeing
19 here and what we want to see.

20 I think if we're going to make sacrifices everyone
21 in the nation should make sacrifices and start conserving
22 energy. We're not talking about that very much. We're all
23 talking about consuming and money and all these things that
24 really personally I like money too, but I'd much prefer
25 preserving the national treasure that we have here which is

1 the Gorge and that's why I brought my family here in the
2 first place.

3 The other thing is I'm a nurse and a massage
4 therapist and use sound healing and I know a little bit
5 about sound. And I've read a lot about anecdotal studies
6 and there's also a book out by a doctor who's been seeing a
7 lot of people with wind turbine syndrome. It's a very real
8 medical illness that they're really just learning more and
9 more about everyday which affects the inner ear and it's due
10 to the low frequency vibration that the turbines put out and
11 have so far not been able to mitigate. So I really don't
12 think it's fair to place these within a half mile of
13 someone's home and then expect them to just live with the
14 possible consequences which make them unable to even live in
15 their own home.

16 A lot of people have had to just walk away from
17 their investment and move away just to get healthy. And
18 some people haven't even been able to regain their health,
19 and it's really unclear where all this is going, but I much
20 prefer to believe people who are truly suffering than to
21 believe a slick wind farm industry spokesperson talk about
22 how great it is to get. And I really urge you to consider
23 what some of us may have to endure if these are placed
24 hanging over our homes and I just don't think it's fair.

25 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

1 Jessica Walz.

2 COMMENTS BY JESSICA WALZ

3 Hello, I'm Jessica Walz. I'm the conservation
4 director for Gifford Pinchot Task Force. My name is spelled
5 J-e-s-s-i-c-a, last name is Walz, W-a-l-z. My organization
6 is located in Portland, 917 S.W. Oak Street, Suite 410,
7 Portland, Oregon. We are a nonprofit organization with over
8 3,600 people in Washington and Oregon. We support the
9 biological diversities at Gifford Pinchot National Forest
10 and in the Pacific Northwest through protection and
11 conservation of our forest, fish, rivers, and wildlife.

12 Our primary concern is the location of this wind
13 project located near the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
14 As you know most of these turbines are actually located
15 within the boundary but on private land, SDS land near the
16 Gifford Pinchot National Forest. I know many of you have
17 heard about the consequence of this wind farm on the Gorge.
18 We are primarily concerned with the consequence of this wind
19 farm on the national forest, a publicly owned forest.

20 I have reviewed a lot of your studies here for the
21 wildlife consequences. We feel that further NEPA documents
22 need to be done by independent biologists looking at EIS
23 studies here for both the northern spotted owl, the western
24 gray squirrel, and the goshawk. We have done independent
25 research on the locations of the northern spotted owl in the

1 northern GP. Unfortunately we have not had the opportunity
2 to go out and independently research the locations of those
3 spotted owls in southern GP. We do feel that there is a
4 primary habitat in the southern GP that can be affected by
5 this wind farm location. Habitat for the northern spotted
6 owl employ a large habitat. They will go into a -- they
7 stay within a public forest. They will go into private
8 forestland.

9 I do recognize that a lot of this land here has
10 already been cut over, but there is habitat located in these
11 SDS timber lands that can be used by a northern spotted owl.
12 I hope that a preliminary NEPA document will include both
13 the cumulative effects of future projects that are going to
14 be occurring in this area and the cumulative effects that
15 occur on other parts of the area, including some of your
16 timber projects. Some of the timber sales on DNR land are
17 located here. Some of the wind farm projects are going to
18 be going in on DNR land located near this project and some
19 of the other timber cuts will occur on the BPA itself.

20 This is important because we do need to conserve
21 habitat species. When a project like this goes in they do
22 require a lot of land disturbance that can force wildlife
23 out of certain areas. I know you've heard that in previous
24 comments. Habitat loss and fragmentation is the leading
25 cause for the long-term decline in wildlife population and

1 forest health. Putting in roads, putting in turbines, and
2 adding to the overall industrialization of our forest is the
3 primary cause of decline in our forest health. We're
4 extremely concerned about that. I want to make one quick
5 point too about the scientific studies have shown that the
6 edge effect is a lot wider than what's been put into here.
7 We are concerned about that so we'd like to see more
8 information on how the edge effect of this project will move
9 into our public forestlands, also to make sure that the
10 scope of the EIS that is going to be done in the future
11 includes all cumulative impacts. I did mention that before
12 on both wildlife, water, and on the fish habitat down here
13 in the Gorge and up in some of these rivers that are located
14 near this wind farm.

15 Please remember that our public forest is located
16 near this farm and it's not just about the Gorge. It's also
17 about our Gifford Pinchot National Forest that is in total
18 view. Thank you.

19 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

20 Jane Nichols.

21 MS. NICHOLS: I'm right here.

22 CHAIR LUCE: All right. Jane, come on up. Your
23 name and spell it and your mailing address, and after Jane
24 will be Ray Johnston.

25 ///

1 COMMENTS BY JANE NICHOLS.

2 Jane Nichols, J-a-n-e N-i-c-h-o-l-s, and my
3 address is 930 Oak Street in beautiful downtown Hood River,
4 Oregon.

5 Thank you everyone here for doing this. This is a
6 substantial project, and I think it's going to have a
7 tremendous affect upon visual effects on Hood river. From
8 looking at the drawings, A Tower ridge is going to be
9 visible from Hood River, and if there were any way to turn
10 that into solar, it would be awesome because solar is not
11 going to jump 420 feet up in the air. The spirit of the
12 Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area a gentleman
13 earlier said that the wind farm has every right to do that
14 and that's true. But I think the spirit of the National
15 Scenic Act is really trod upon, and again I agree with Mike
16 Eastwick, Mr. Quinn, the first speaker after the break, the
17 U.S. Forest Service letter, Matt Ryan.

18 You guys have a heck of job. Do it wisely and
19 thank you.

20 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much.

21 Ray Johnson.

22 MR. JOHNSTON: Rex Johnston?

23 CHAIR LUCE: It looks like Ray Johnston.

24 MR. JOHNSTON: It's probably my spelling.

25 CHAIR LUCE: It is Rex. Okay. It could show as a

1 Y instead of X. I shouldn't have guessed.

2 MR. JOHNSTON: I should have been thoughtful
3 thought when I wrote it so you could read it.

4 CHAIR LUCE: Yes.

5 COMMENTS BY REX JOHNSTON

6 My name is Rex Johnston, I live at 516 Northwest
7 Country View Road, White Salmon, Washington.

8 I am a Klickitat County Commissioner, I'm on the
9 Renewable Energy Board, and also on the Columbia Economic
10 Development Board. I'd just like to say that in Klickitat
11 County we not only support wind energy development, but we
12 went to the trouble of creating an energy overlay zone to
13 facilitate its development, not only because of the obvious
14 tax advantages to the county and to the sub taxing districts
15 in the county but also because of the jobs created in the
16 county which Skamania County obviously needs both the tax
17 and the jobs. That's all I want to say. Thank you very
18 much.

19 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. I appreciate you coming.

20 Brian Short, S-h-o-r-t-t.

21 MR. SHORTT: That's correct.

22 CHAIR LUCE: Thanks. Come on up followed by Scott
23 Cook, then Laszlo Regos.

24 COMMENTS BY BRIAN SHORTT

25 There is one advantage to coming toward the end.

1 You get to hear everything. My name is Brian Shortt, 2791
2 Hood, Prospect River. One of the reasons I came over here
3 was to learn and listen to what was being discussed and what
4 the regional impacts would or would not be. For the last
5 20, 25 years I've evolved the Urban Rule, linking language
6 programs for developing jobs in rural areas. I can state
7 fairly factually that directly or indirectly I've created
8 about four or five hundred jobs in rural areas. Obviously
9 it's not an easy thing and I have watched SDS off and on for
10 the last 20 years and applaud their commitment to constantly
11 press the fold and looking for diversity and opportunities.

12 However, being a Northwest resident for most of my
13 life and I'm looking at the names of the locations that
14 everybody comes from, I'm sure many of you have driven down
15 I-5 late in the afternoon as the sun is going down and look
16 at Mount Rainier near Olympia and said, "Wow, look at that
17 mountain with that glow going on. That is why I live in the
18 Northwest."

19 And in the last year I have taken trips out to
20 Colfax. I have been involved in alternative energy programs
21 since 1982, and I wanted to know more about this wind energy
22 activity, What was taking place. And the thing that
23 concerns me the most, and I understand the biological or the
24 wildlife issues, is the western landscape aspect that we are
25 sacrificing. It's as simple as that. The western landscape

1 that's what we enjoy the most. That is what brought us
2 here. That is what's allowed our economies to continue to
3 survive the way they have. It's what brings hundreds of
4 millions of dollars of tourism trade and helps sustain not
5 only the Gorge but the Northwest economy. It gives us
6 diversity and I feel like we are looking at the sixties and
7 the seventies when Plumb Creek a subsidiary of Burlington
8 Northern finally broke over the ridge lines into a
9 harvesting practice, general harvesting practices on I-90
10 along Snoqualmie Pass area and said, "Guess What? We don't
11 care. We're from the East Coast and we're going to harvest
12 your timber and sell it and that's the way it's going to
13 be."

14 So now today I'm coming out today and I'm coming
15 out to say, "You know what? I'm going to fight back a
16 little bit." I've watched this growth of wind turbines from
17 the Idaho border come back this way like a virus. It's not
18 a lot of thought. It's just going with rapid pace by large
19 utility companies that are saying here's this clean energy
20 program, but, folks, you are giving up your western
21 landscape. Thank you.

22 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Appreciate you
23 coming.

24 The next speaker will be Scott Cook.

25 ///

1 COMMENTS BY SCOTT COOK

2 Thank you for having us. My name is Scott Cook.
3 That's S-c-o-t-t C-o-o-k. I live at 1403 Cross Creek, Hood
4 River.

5 I'm the author of the local guide book. I make
6 pretty much a hundred percent of my income on guide books
7 and the scenic beauty of this land, and so I'm here to talk
8 a little bit about the visual spots and the visual
9 subordination of these things. I'm an avid photographer,
10 and I do a lot of night photography so I have studied the
11 way our eyes work, our eyes perceive the world, and that's
12 what I wanted to speak about a little is the nature of how
13 our eyes see things and about peripheral vision.

14 And so I believe a windmill even if it's 450 feet
15 tall it's the nature of the spinning, the movement of it
16 will make us look at it. Our eyes are programmed out of the
17 corner of our eyes to notice movement and blinking. We
18 can't help but look at it, and such that a windmill even if
19 it's small on the ridge is going to draw our eyes. The
20 movement just naturally pulls our eyes over there.

21 And so I think it makes a much bigger impact on
22 the visual landscape than just its simple height against the
23 measure of trees or say a cell tower or a power line.
24 Things that are static and still like a clear cut, a power
25 line, a cell tower our brains can sort of not look at them.

1 We can choose not to look at them, but something that blinks
2 and something that moves we tend to see it very clearly and
3 we'll have to look over.

4 So I think it adds to the pollution of the scene
5 and will degrade it in a much bigger scope than just simply
6 how big it is sitting there on the ridge. And as an example
7 like if you're looking at a dark night sky and you see a
8 satellite going or a blinking plane your eye immediately
9 sees those things. Even though there's a whole sky of
10 stars, you'll see that little blinking thing go across. You
11 can't help but look at it. Another example is when you turn
12 on the web and you turn on Yahoo or something and they put
13 those little progressive ads over there where they show the
14 women dancing crazy and you're just, oh, stop that. You
15 can't help but look at it, but they know your eye is drawn
16 to that movement. And sadly that's what we're going to get
17 with the windmill.

18 And I remember standing with Rob Bell in his
19 winery Fierchinger which is now Cathedral Ridge and he told
20 me at the very hillside of Underwood tells me about five
21 years ago and he explained to me about the grapes growing
22 over there and the view and the weather pattern, but that's
23 when he goes and he made that investment so he could be
24 there with his customers and explain, you know, how the
25 grapes are growing over there and what the weather pattern

1 is and between rain. And those windmills are going to sit
2 there and they're going to be spinning right next to that
3 and all of his customers are going to ask about those
4 instead. And so are my four minutes up yet?

5 CHAIR LUCE: Pretty much. If you want to
6 summarize, that would be great.

7 MR. COOK: The nature of this increase in power
8 back in the thirties, in the late thirties we had hydropower
9 come to the west, and we had the Army Corps of Engineers and
10 the Bureau of Reclamation battle for who could site all the
11 dams on the river and they battled each other for this new
12 source of power. It was very, oh, there was a lot of pork
13 barrel involved. Everybody wanted a dam near them to employ
14 people.

15 Now, we've got wind power coming the same way. We
16 have landowners saying, well, here's the new power. It's
17 clean green energy. Let's put them here and here. So how
18 many of these dams are we trying to remove right now? How
19 many do we worry that they've had other impacts on fisheries
20 or water purity or what have you? And in this new green
21 rush of wind power I think we're going to have problems just
22 like we had when we were building dams back in the thirties,
23 forties, and fifties.

24 CHAIR LUCE: Laszlo Regos, followed by Glen
25 Holmberg, and David Neikirk.

1 COMMENTS BY LASZLO REGOS

2 Yes. My name is Laszlo Regos spelled L-a-s-z-l-o
3 R-e-g-o-s. I live at 9292 Cook-Underwood Road, and I wasn't
4 even planning to talk today, but I thought I would add my
5 voice to what's being said here. And I think maybe the most
6 important point is remember where we are sitting right now.
7 We are sitting in the National Scenic Area, and scenic is a
8 key word. Those of us who live here have certain
9 obligations and certain rules that you have to live by. For
10 instance, in my house I was told by the Scenic Area Gorge
11 Commission that I could not even have a porch light on my
12 porch that don't go pointing down and has no visible light
13 because the possibility that someone on I-84 driving across
14 the river at night might look up and see my porch light
15 somewhere on the ridge, and that is part of what living here
16 means. And we gladly live with these rules because we enjoy
17 the scenery and we love the beauty that living here affords.
18 So to subvert the scenic area in such a way and to disregard
19 the prime reason it is a scenic area I think is perhaps
20 short sighted.

21 I'm not against renewable power. I think most
22 people here are in favor of responsibly sited renewable
23 power projects. I think this project could be mitigated to
24 avoid the largest number of objections by moving probably
25 only seven of these windmills, the A towers, and that would

1 probably eliminate about 95 percent of the scenic impact
2 that we're dealing with, that we're talking about here.

3 So my views are that if this project was mitigated
4 and taken into consideration the scenic impact then it would
5 be much more beneficial to everyone involved. Thank you.

6 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much.

7 Glenn Holmberg.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He left.

9 CHAIR LUCE: He left.

10 All right. David.

11 COMMENTS BY DAVID NEIKIRK

12 My name is David Neikirk. I live on Wasco View
13 outside of Mosier. My address is Post Office Box 142,
14 Mosier, Oregon.

15 CHAIR LUCE: Could you spell your last name.

16 MR. NEIKIRK: N-e-i-k-i-r-k.

17 CHAIR LUCE: Thanks. Continue, please.

18 MR. NEIKIRK: I would like to speak to some things
19 I haven't heard mentioned today. One is that the grid is
20 full. It seems to me 6,000 megawatts is the number these
21 days. The proposed projects on both sides of the state on
22 the river have far exceeded the number of megawatts which
23 fill the grid. Until the infrastructure is redone getting
24 the power to people is a real problem. I know I attended
25 almost three years of EFSEC meetings in Oregon. I have

1 listened to all of the wind farms and I have listened to
2 contractors and what have you. They all keep pushing it
3 forward. Well, when we have enough members of farms we'll
4 get the infrastructure. Now they're talking about taking
5 people's lands for the power lines. All of these things are
6 in progress of being discussed and still the grid is full.

7 This gentleman with this project said this is a
8 project that's timely for its time. It's just not true.
9 First, you need an infrastructure to deliver the
10 electricity.

11 Second, you need to consider what one gentleman
12 said the wind does not always blow. The timing factors
13 using the dams to backup the electricity that's not being
14 able to be supplied by the wind farms. At times the wind
15 does not blow puts an extra load on the dam system. The
16 dams have to call around and computerize around in order to
17 dig up power from other places to replace that commitment
18 because simply the wind did not blow. I think a lot of this
19 has not been well thought out. I think they're jumping the
20 gun. I think that money drives a great deal of this, all of
21 these incentives, what have you.

22 Moving on talking about the scenic problems.
23 Where I live in Wasco Butte I drive down into the Dalles, I
24 look out over the face and down the river. I can see a line
25 of windmills from the Washington side across the river all

1 the way up to the big projects up by Wasco. This is almost
2 40 to 60 miles away from the surface, and it stands out as
3 clear as a bell. In sunny days you can even see the props
4 spin. That's at 45 to 60 surface miles away.

5 We're talking about putting this next to the
6 scenic area. It seems ridiculous. When we were fighting
7 the UPC in the Dalles I read their whatever you call it the
8 brochure, the application thoroughly. It got so ridiculous
9 at one point that they said that they might be overlooked.
10 The towers will be right behind you obviously but no one
11 would notice them because they would be so taken by the
12 river they would only look at the river, and yet you had a
13 500-foot tower proposed to be standing right behind the Hood
14 River. That's like the Statue of Liberty waving her arms.
15 It's nuts.

16 And I've seen these things. I've gone to these
17 meetings. I think it's poor planning. I think a lot of the
18 newer projects need to be held down until you get a system
19 of delivery in place where you can actually use the power
20 we're making. Because at this point they just sit out there
21 and spin on their electricity. In my case it's the Wasco
22 County Co-Op they sell power to the wind farms to keep the
23 props running during this time when there's no wind. They
24 said, the lawyer in the back said the wind companies up by
25 Wasco is one of their largest customers for electricity

1 because they simply need to keep running.

2 Anyway I oppose this project. I think that it's
3 poorly thought out and I think the scenic area is really a
4 poor place to have these. I know the law says the line runs
5 here. You can't build within the line in the scenic area,
6 but the towers are almost five hundred feet tall. If you
7 drive out by our Arlington all up 84 at night it's very
8 distracting. You got these things standing everywhere
9 spinning blinking red lights going on all over. I won't be
10 surprised if someday they don't have a major traffic
11 accident out there. But anyway that's all I have to say,
12 and thank you very much.

13 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

14 Mr. Neikirk is the last speaker who signed up. Is
15 there anyone else who wishes to testify today?

16 Yes, sir, come forward. Give us your name, spell
17 your name, give us your post office mailing address, and
18 four minutes is the rule.

19 COMMENT BY GARY WEST

20 My name is Gary West, West like the direction.
21 I've lived on Underwood Mountain for 30 years. I came here
22 actually in 1980 and SDS Lumber has been my neighbor that
23 whole time, and I want to cite one specific instance.

24 My property is directly adjacent to theirs. I
25 received a letter one day that they were going to be cutting

1 some trees and they had a surveyor come up and shot a line,
2 and they felt some of those trees were on my property
3 because the fence had long deteriorated. And as far as I
4 was concerned all those trees belonged to SDS Lumber, and
5 they informed me that when they shot that line that some of
6 those trees were mine and that they would cut those trees
7 and harvest them and pay me for them. Because if they just
8 left my trees standing they were a danger. They were going
9 to blow over on the building and stuff because the wind
10 would be there. As a matter of the fact, I'm right on the
11 east side of the Whistling Ridge up there, and so I said,
12 yeah, by all means go ahead and cut those trees and so
13 forth.

14 I guess I would like to say that I think it's
15 important to note that SDS is a company with good integrity
16 and that's hard to find nowadays. And Mr. Stevenson sat
17 here and said if we're going to do this job, we'll do it
18 right. And I think that's important to note because this is
19 a man of integrity and a company of integrity and people who
20 can be trusted to follow through with the way things are
21 suppose to be done.

22 Another point I would like to make is I sympathize
23 with the people as far as well from my backyard and my
24 business and there seems to be a lot of my personal
25 interests in this and I think we all need to look at what's

1 good for the whole in the long run. I remember living in
2 this Gorge and there was a petition that people wanted to
3 get signed to force the State of Oregon to plant trees along
4 the Columbia river so that residents in the state of
5 Washington would not have to see Interstate 84 in the scenic
6 area. I mean where do you draw the line? Where do you draw
7 the line? And I think the line has already been drawn, and
8 SDS is on the right side of the line.

9 And I'd like to say one other thing. One person
10 mentioned Mount Rushmore, and they said just picture wind
11 turbines in the background of Mount Rushmore. I'd like to
12 point out that if today they came up with an idea that they
13 wanted to carve heads in the side of a mountain they'd never
14 get it done. And that's all I have to say. Thank you very
15 much.

16 CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Is there anyone
17 else who wishes to testify, offer comments on scoping or
18 otherwise? Going once, going twice?

19 We will have a land use hearing later in about an
20 hour. This particular hearing is adjourned.

21 * * * * *

22 (Whereupon the public meeting was adjourned at
23 5:32 p.m.)

24

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In re: Whistling Ridge Energy Project

A F F I D A V I T

I, Shaun Linse, CCR, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript prepared under my direction is a full and complete transcript of proceedings held on May 7, 2009, in Underwood, Washington.

Shaun Linse, CCR 2029