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.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Now we will have staff identify themselves.

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

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

MR. CREWS: Kyle Crews, Assistant Attorney General.

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

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

So with that, I will just say that the purpose of today's meeting is to give you information about the Whistling Ridge Energy Project, our review process,
introduce the Counsel for the Environment, and most of all
get comments from all of you relative to the scoping of the
Environmental Impact Statement. That's one purpose of this
meeting. The second purpose is to get specific comments
that you wish to offer on the application that has been
prepared, and for those of you who don't have a copy of the
application it is on our website.

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

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

If you have materials that you would like me to
consider or if you have comments that you would like to
make, I invite you to either give me a call or better yet
send me an e-mail. In my position I in fact represent the
environment and I don't represent the individual or groups.
I am, however, interested right now in gathering facts and
data information about the project and its impacts, and if
you're pro or con or just have a concern that you'd like to raise, I'd be glad to take a look at it and I appreciate the input.

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

MR. MARVIN: My name is Bruce Marvin, and my e-mail address will be available at the back desk here, but it is for the record brucem1@atg.wa.gov, and that's probably the best way to contact me. My work number is 360-586-2438. I can't guarantee that I will be responding back to a voicemail, but if you provide me with an e-mail, I would be happy to enter a dialogue that way. And I will be around today and tonight if there are individuals who would like to talk to me about the project. Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

MR. MONTANO: Yes.  

CHAIR LUCE: So before we proceed any further, I would ask Council members who are involved in this particular proceeding whether they have any disclosures they
would like to make for the record as to past involvement in Columbia Gorge issues of any kind. I guess I'll start with the left.

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

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

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

MR. BYERS: I have nothing further to say.

MR. TAYER: Nothing here.

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

MS. WILSON: Nothing to report.

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

Mr. Spadaro, the floor is all yours.

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

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

Our approach to resource management has been to
practice sustainable forestry. Our trees are grown on
longer rotations than most commercial industrial
forestlands. As a result we produce high quality lumber,
plywood, and other building products. We also generate
steam and electricity from the byproducts of our forest
operations and the renewable energy at the mill in Bingen
which is biomass energy. And we have been exploring the
potential of our commercial forestland or renewable energy
by wind production since the year 2002. SDS has been in the
Columbia Gorge for a long time. We have been locally owned
for over 60 years. Many of you know -- I see many familiar faces in this community -- we have been committed to this community for a long time and will continue to be. When we're running at normal operation we have 325 employees with a payroll of slightly over 14 million. Our current operations with the downturn in the economy and housing nationwide we're now at 250 employees.

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

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

I said the name is Whistling Ridge. It is named that for a couple of reasons. The first is that wind does actually create a whistling sound on the ridge. The DNR property to the north of us and extending down onto our property the geographic name of that ridge is called
It's set seven miles to the northwest of White Salmon. The ridge line is approximately 2,100 feet in elevation. It is north and west of the Underwood Mountain, and it's in the western end of the Columbia Gorge wind regime.

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

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

The project will help Northwest utilities to meet
the renewable portfolio standard requirements. Those are
the renewable energy standards passed by voter initiative in
the state of Washington. It would interconnect to
Bonneville Power's regional transmission systems on the
site, and we are working with Bonneville and Skamania County
and Klickitat PUDs to enhance local electrical service and
reliability as a result of the project.

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

How we intend to match forest production and wind
ergy is depicted in this diagram. The key with wind
turbines at an elevated point and the blades and the
generator up at the elevation is to have an undisrupted flow
of wind through the blade zone of the turbine. With
forestry trees growing, the trees need to be limited at
heights so they do not interfere with that flow of wind
through the generating zone of the turbine. On a ridge line -- and let me back up. The maximum tree height within a near distance of the turbines is 50 feet tree height in order to not interfere with that wind flow. The topography that is trailing away on the leading edge or the trailing edge of the turbine trees could grow to their maximum potential tree height as is the case on part of our site without any kind of interference or alteration of our forest or management practices. Closer into the turbine there will be alterations of our forestry management practices. We will have to manage shorter rotations; perhaps they're grown for biomass production or alternative forest crop that is grown that stays within that 50-foot tree height limit. And then within a zone from 50 feet out to 150 feet the maximum feet height would be 15 feet. From 50 feet to the turbine base that would be the cleared area that is gravelled and used for maintenance operations. That is a 50-foot radius by the way.

So three zones: 50-foot radius of cleared area, 150-feet radius of 15-foot tree heights, and then out to 500 feet in a quadrant centered on the prevailing wind direction and in the upwind direction and the trailing wind direction out to 500 feet with a maximum tree height of 50 feet. But in most cases we calculated the acreage in most cases trees are allowed to grow given the topography
and siting of the turbine will be allowed to continue to
grow our trees without alteration of forest or management
practices out to that distance.

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

In conclusion, we feel strongly that this is the
right project, in the right place, at the right time. By
that we mean there is wind, there's abundant wind on the
site. We have the potential for practicing forestry and
wind energy. It has interconnection to the Bonneville
transmission system. It is outside the National Scenic
Area. All of those things we believe make it the right
project, at the right place, and certainly at the right time
as we are through voter initiative and other requirements
meeting renewable energy.
We're grateful for the County's support of the project, we're appreciative of EFSEC's process, and we look for public scrutiny and the process that will result and we'll work hard to earn the endorsement and approval by EFSEC and the public.

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. Appreciate that.

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

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

MR. FIKSDAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, my name is Allen Fiksdal. I'm the EFSEC manager. Just a little background on the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council. It was created by the legislature in about 1970. At that time in the state of Washington there were several nuclear power plants that were being proposed to be built in different portions of the state and the legislature created this body to review those applications and determine whether they should be constructed or not through the course of the years. The Council has gained authority over different types of energy facilities. It has authority over thermal energy facilities, anything that generates heat and usually boils water to create steam to generate electricity. They would
have to be 350 megawatts or greater and then they would come under the Council jurisdiction. A few years ago the legislature changed our law and allowed alternative energy facilities -- those like wind, solar, tidal wave, biomass -- to be able to opt into the Council's process. So the wind facilities if they want to the developer could choose to come to the state or they could choose to go through the local county and/or city or whatever is the allocated process.

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

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

One track that we're on is -- I've mentioned there are three -- is the land use consistency. The Council is required to determine if the project is consistent in applying the local land use plans and zoning. Tonight at
6:30 in this room we will be holding a land use consistency hearing and ultimately the Council will have to make a decision whether it's consistent or not.

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

But that process we're taking your comments today. We took them last night. We're asking what you think the Environmental Impact Statement should have in it. You can give oral statements today. We have comment forms in the back. BPA has comment forms, we have comment forms. BPA has a website. You can e-mail it to us. They all will go into one pot basically. We share everything, and so you don't have to make two comments about the same thing, one to BPA and one to EFSEC. You make it to EFSEC or you make it to BPA. We will both see that same comment. So it's all in one group.
Eventually we will develop a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. We will issue that for public comment. We will be back in this area to get your oral comments and receive your written comments. We don't think that's going to happen until maybe this winter. Their company still has some biological studies to do this spring and fall so we aren't probably going to get to that for a while.

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

After we're through with those three tracks -- the land use consistency, the environmental review, and the
adjudicative proceedings -- the Council takes all of that information and will look at all of that information, read all of the transcripts, read all of the comments, read the EISs, and listen to all the testimony, and they will make a determination whether to recommend to the Governor of the State of Washington to approve or deny this project. Ultimately the Governor makes that decision.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can she override an EFSEC recommendation?

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

AUDIENCE MEMBER: And impose different conditions?

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

I think that's it, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR LUCE: I think that's it as well. The only thing I was going to add is one of the reasons that the
Energy Facility Siting Council was established to look at energy projects on a statewide basis, particular energy structures throughout the state. So when we look at a project we look at what's consistent with our policy directives, the benefits to the entire State of Washington.

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

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

We will be calling three individuals at a time. We have two chairs behind the podium or we will have shortly, and we want to make sure everyone has a chance to speak. So after Representative Chandler I would ask Mr. Truitt for Skamania County, John Sherry I believe the Board of Skamania County. All speakers are requested to identify
themselves, spell their name for the court reporter, and
give us your address.

Representative Chandler.

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

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

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

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

REPRESENTATIVE CHANDLER: Thank you.

CHAIR LUCE: Dave, did you want to say anything? Dave says that he'll remain silent. That's interesting. I'm not sure that's an auspicious start for a
new politician but, Dave, whatever works.

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

COMMENTS BY W.D. TRUITT

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

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

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

I just, we're just in support of the thing, of the
project. When I walked in the door a gentleman gave me a
folder about agricultural tourism and how this would impact that. I've seen the people who own the property here change it from orchards. I grew up in Willard. My father worked for a garage door company. Grew up here, lived here all my life. And they've changed from orchards to vineyards, and they own property. They did what they wanted to stay with the economy and the market. That's all SDS is trying to do, and I am in support of the project.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: And your address is?

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

MR. TRUITT: Thank you.

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

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

Those of you who spoke last night, and I believe
Mr. Bronsveld is one of those people, I would ask you not to repeat the comments that you made last night. If you have additional comments that you want the Council to consider within the four-minute rule, I appreciate hearing those.

COMMENTS BY STEPHEN BRONSVELD

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

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

Also in the application you drove up there today and you went by the intersection of Kollack-Knapp and Scoggins roads. There's a bunch of photographs in this application, and none of them show the Rawley's house that's 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
7 And that's the next thing I want to talk about
8 because in the application the applicant states that all of
9 the road use access and haul route issues would be handled
10 under Title 21 of Skamania County, and therefore go through
11 a county approval process for determining if there is in
12 fact a legal route for delivering these items to the
13 proposed site, and I suggest that process be completed
14 before we proceed with this application because it's
15 fundamental. It's a threshold issue whether or not there's
16 a legal route for those items to get up there. So I would
17 request that that issue go before Skamania County as it
18 should and states in the applicant's submission and that
19 those determinations about those routes and as it says in
20 here in the application the applicant says right of way and
21 ownership, right of way ownership and easement determination
22 would be required at those three intersections:
23 Kollack-Knapp Road, Scoggins Road, and the intersection with
24 the private roads as listed in their thing. So why don't we
25 settle those right-of-way and ownership easement
26 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. Mr. Steve Curley.
COMMENTS BY STEVE CURLEY

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

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

But do you know what the real cost of this development? Does anybody really understand what these costs are going to be? The impact on degrading the beauty of the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area is reduction of visitors, the reduction in room tax, the reduction of receipts to potential tourism is something that should be addressed and probably looked at. The reduction of property values. People unwilling to invest here which impacts tax
values, of course, which I think most people are looking at the tax impacts when you put this thing up coming into the county. But what if my property values go down? And who's going to tell me what the costs are or will be?

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.
Mr. Stevenson followed by Chris Lloyd and James Buckland.

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

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

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

MR. STEVENSON: Is this here okay?

CHAIR LUCE: I think we can hear you well.

COMMENTS BY WALLY STEVENSON

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

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

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

I will look at a couple notes here. Now, we started SDS in 1946. On reforestation I planted my first
trees when I was ten years old. In fact, they've been harvested since that time. And it has been our main thing is the reforesting. We've done that long before it was required, and we have just completed a ten-acre seed farm that's to raise our own seeds. It's sitting right up in the middle of this area, and it's about two years old now so it will be another few years and we will be able to furnish our own seeds.

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

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

MR. STEVENSON: Yes.

CHAIR LUCE: Is Stevenson with a --

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

CHAIR LUCE: And your address?

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much for coming.

Mr. Chris Lloyd.

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COMMENTS BY CHRIS LLOYD

My name is Chris Lloyd, spelled L-l-o-y-d. I live at 81 Scenic Heights Road in Underwood which is right up the road. It's actually a road that's kitty corner to Kollack-Knapp Road where they're going to make the turn with the equipment.

First of all, thank you Mr. Chairman and other Council members, Council persons, for letting me speak. I also think it's very good that you had a meeting here rather than just keeping all the meetings in Stevenson since Stevenson is 30 minutes away on highway. It's quite far from really the zone that's being impacted. I did have to take a vacation day to be here. The times are not great for a lot of people so I hope that will be addressed in the future.

So green energy is good or else that is what it says in the marketing brochure. There is a place for everything. Yes, I'm saying not in my backyard, but really I'm saying not in this part of the Gorge, a place where there is a new economic engine that is thriving, and that is tourism, recreation, and the draw of a better lifestyle.

The application makes it sound like this is one sad and destitute place with no future, and for sure plenty of people are hurting from the current economic slowdown, but this is no reason to trade our long-term economic future
and the future that could be for one that has a short influx in capital and minimal jobs, the most lucrative of which do not come from the local community. The long-term tax revenue from property taxes on depreciating windmill equipment is dubious at best as a significant revenue source for our future. ($150 million to construct) but (87.5 tax base). Basically even if you are for the windmills, our county government is getting hung out to dry on the long-term revenue stream being collected while the huge profits and taxpayer funded subsidies are going directly into the developer's pockets.

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

There are many people here in Underwood and Mill A who commute down the hill everyday to work in Hood River or White Salmon or Bingen so it's impossible to look at the total picture without taking into account all the communities surrounding this site not just Skamania County. This is worth noting since the movement of heavy wide-load
equipment up Cook-Underwood will impact people's ability to
get to their jobs and go about their daily business, as well
as block escape routes in a wildfire like the one that raced
up the bluff only a few short years ago. I actually
personally witnessed all the people being evacuated from
their houses at that time.

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

It also goes on to say that no late-serial forests
are present within the project site. Well, they were
present a few short years ago until SDS decided to remove
the last of them. There are still many species of large
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
regardless of whether the windmills themselves are placed within it. Remember that SDS land was excluded from scenic area rules in order to protect timber jobs and timber resources.

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

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

Next speaker.

COMMENTS BY JAMES BUCKLAND

My name is James Buckland. I live up in Mill A and I don't have much to say about this. Just that everyone talks about the impact and it's going to impact my view everyday. I come down the end of Jessup Road which comes into Cook-Underwood and boom it's right there. I've looked at that mountain for lots of years. It's beautiful watching the sun come up over it now when you're looking up there. It's not going to be the same. The issue of the beacon lights on top of that at night, my sons and I used to lay out in the yard in the evenings, nice dark sky, and watch the meteor showers and stars. It looks like now from what we're hearing there's a chance that we're not going to be
able to see those stars as well just because of the light function. I don't know. I haven't seen that yet, but that's just what we've been told.

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

So if we're going to have to live with these things here, I hope they can see to opening the woods at least so we can enjoy what we used to enjoy. I mean we are going to be impacted by these things. I don't want to see them there. I'm not going to fib to you. I don't want to see them at all, but I just hope they will open the land back up so we can use it. That's all I have to say.
CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

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

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

COMMENTS BY MIKE EASTWICK

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

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

Regarding the environment a lot of people are talking about the visual impact of the Gorge. As it's currently defined the project will be visible from all nationally designated key viewing sites in the mid Columbia region. This would be a horrible inexcusable degradation of our National Scenic Treasure. In addition, as a member of the Skamania County Agri-Tourism Association, I also believe that the turbines sited in the scenic area will have a
negative financial impact to our tourism business. Site the turbines so they cannot be seen from key viewing areas. Also there is a potential for elk and other large animal movement to be modified due to this wall of turbines that is going to span the current corridor for animal movement. Along with the large animals will come predators. We have Cougars in this area. They will be redirected. The question is where will they go? Most likely to the south of the wall of turbines. That means they're going to be now going through residential and agricultural areas. Let me tell you elk and deer cause major damage to agricultural products, not to mention the predators in the residential areas will not be safe for our community. I would suggest that you delete the "A Towers" to allow the corridor for the animals to continue to cross without pushing them into the residential areas.

Regarding land use, as you know Skamania County tried to update the zoning to support industrial facilities in the county. It's called Title 21, and as you know that has been stopped temporarily. It's interesting. It's well documented what the public thought about this zoning draft that they had come up with. If you look at the statistics 80 percent of all comments, all the oral comments made about the zoning said they wanted setbacks for industrial facilities, all kinds of industrial facilities to be greater
than one mile; yet, the county did not listen to this.

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

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

The planned route goes through Underwood and its on residential streets and, in fact, the Cook-Underwood is the main arterial residential street. Figuring seven extra wide trucks per turbine that means that we're going to have approximately 700 trips up and down of these huge trucks through the residential site. If this thing has to happen, I would like to see that there are some controls to we'll call to the traffic window or the trucking window. Right now the application says they're going to be doing this from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. That's ridiculous in a residential
area. You should limit this to times when there is no school bus traffic. You should limit it to times there is no commuting to and from work and you should also limit it to just weekdays. That way the tourism and the scenic area will be less impacted because we do have most of our visitors on the weekends.

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

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

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

Mr. Aramburu, four minutes. Also we don't want to see a lawyer with a poster board. It reminds me of my days
before the court so we will enforce the four-minute rule.

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD ARAMBURU

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

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

Point 2, the project that is being announced today is not in fact the entire project that's being proposed by the applicant. We learned from the applicant's website and from information provided on that website that in fact the applicant is intending and has filed an application with DNR to extend this proposal to the north of the project area on approximately 2,500 acres of DNR property to add an additional 30 turbines to this proposal. That's a proposal
that's been made formally to DNR. We're going to address
this in our comments with you, but we think it's important
that the scope of the EIS be extended to the additional
turbines that are being developed in this area mainly
because the applicant has said that's what they're going to
do and also because the turbines that would be generated in
this location would rely upon the substation which you all
saw this morning for the connection to the BPA transmission
grid. So if this is being developed in this area, it must
attach to the grid at the substation on the 230, 115 kV
lines. That makes this project very much dependent on this
location and would generate additional momentum for this
project. So the EIS needs to include the environmental
aspects of the proposal already made by the applicant to
proceed and develop on the DNR property, Point No. 2.

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

The fourth point -- I'm going to keep to my four
minutes -- is to ask the commission for the period of time
from January 13th to January 22nd of this year when it was so bloody cold all over the Northwest how many megawatts of power came from wind energy? Does anybody know? None. For nine days notwithstanding all this business about installed capacity there wasn't a single megawatt of power that came from wind energy to the Northwest grid when the Northwest grid was running from 9,500 to 11,000 megawatts. That's because all of this depends on the wind blowing. If it doesn't blow, there is no energy. So when you look at this capacity, it's not like capacity from other sources of energy.

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

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

Rebecca Stonestreet.

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

So, Rebecca, you're up.

COMMENTS BY REBECCA STONESTREET

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

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

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

Where I live in Mill A, there's a ridge where
they're proposed. That's where the sun comes up.

Mr. Buckland was saying the same thing in Mill A. That's where the sun rises and where the moon rises, and I would see red flashing tower lights the rest of the time I live in Mill A from where I live, and that would just be the turbine red flashing lights would interfere with the stunning views in Mill A for everyone living there.

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

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

I want to thank SDS for being committed to the local as Jason put on his slides, but I would ask SDS to reconsider its proposal to be open to our money making
projects that are more of a project win-win situation for everyone, and I have one in mind and I would love to meet with you and the county commissioner of your choice so we can go over any plans to make your land viable and economically viable and environmentally viable for everyone. And there's other things out there that could be done out of the box, and that's what we need right now is projects out of the box because we're going down the tubes. Okay. And I think that that's it.

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

MS. STONESTREET: Thank you.

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

MS. BERGERON: You did.

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

COMMENTS BY LYNN BERGERON

Lynn Bergeron, 4491 Cook Underwood Road, Mill A, B-e-r-g-e-r-o-n. I am another co-owner of the farm you just heard about, and I did a lot of soul searching before deciding whether to even get involved in opposing this project because of the not in my backyard thing. And what I decided was that it was a lot of opposition to the visual impact and the aesthetic impact.
So I don't want to look at the towers. I'll tell you that right now. But I think whether or not I want to look at the towers doesn't matter. I live here. I don't like looking at clear cuts. I don't like looking at housing developments and I've gotten used to all of this so I just don't think whether or not I have to look at it matters.

But this is a scoping meeting, and part of your job as a state agency and part of your job is to look at the bigger picture. So I talked to a power grid interconnect engineer who used to work for Pacific Corps to try and get an understanding of some of the bigger picture. Obviously there's a demand for more power or none of these power projects would even come to be. But my question is, is it a short-term demand or a long-term demand? And is the demand that we're trying to meet in power something that's going to put a lot of money and a lot of benefits in a few pockets and, you know, 25 years from now the picture is entirely changed and we're left with the towers, the roads, the environmental degradation? Also, you know, it's been an issue with me that a lot of the power demands are not met without a whole lot of talk about conserving power. So as part of your scope of what you're looking at I would like you to tap into people who have a long-range vision of power generation in the state because a lot of things that we do just end up to be short-term impacts.
There was one more. Also in talking to this engineer I came to recognize that the proximity of the Bonneville Power Lines and the proximity to where the power is going to be used do make this a good site to consider for wind power. Then there's the big but. Hopefully you will be applying best available science and national science. Organizations that have looked at the impacts of wind projects have said that, you know, sticking them on mountain tops has a lot more challenges and therefore to the environment and therefore they're not a prime choice. So you know that already.

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

And, finally, I've been really bothered by the tight coupling of this energy project and the economic development organizations in our county in the Gorge and the process with the company who is planning zoning ordinances in this county. It just smells fishy. I don't like it. And so I don't know if there's anything here that should be
included in your scoping, but, yeah, for what it's worth.

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. It's about ten to 4:00.

We're going to take a ten-minute break so the court reporter can recover some feeling to her fingers which are probably numb by now and then the rest of us might want the rest break as well. We will resume at four o'clock sharp and we will resume with the next witness. Thank you. We will be in recess until four o'clock.

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

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

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

COMMENTS BY WIRT MAXEY

Yes. My name is Wirt. That's W-i-r-t Maxey, M-a-x-e-y. I live at 8992 Cook-Underwood Road, Underwood. I have a couple of comments about scoping.

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

The other thing that concerns me and it's a theme that you've heard many times and you're going to hear it again is the scenic impacts. You know, the proponents of this project make much about Initiative 937. You all know what that is. It established the renewable energy requirements and proponents are constantly bringing that up. They say we need this project because of 937. Let me just read to you very briefly two lines out of Initiative 937 codified by the RCW 19.285. This is a declaration of policy. Increasing energy conservation and the use of appropriately sited renewable energy facilities, appropriately sited renewable energy facilities. Now, look,
it's pretty windy on Mount Rushmore. I don't think any of us would say that it would be appropriate to site a windmill farm on the next ridge behind Mount Rushmore. It wouldn't be appropriate to site a windmill farm along say the rim of the Grand Canyon or just outside the borders of Yellowstone National Park or for that matter just outside the borders of Mount Rainier National Park. Why? Because these are national scenic treasures specifically set aside by our Congress, and I stress these are national treasures. These are not State of Washington or State of Oregon treasures or in the case of Mount Rushmore the State of South Dakota. They're national treasures, and that's why it's not appropriate to site these here and the same reasoning applies to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

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

I would like to take just a brief moment and rebut something that Commissioner Pearce made much to do about in his speech last night. He spoke at some length about Section 17 of the Scenic Area Act so-called no buffers
provision. Let me read you what it says. It says, I'll paraphrase needless to say.

CHAIR LUCE: That would be helpful.

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

Mr. Tyler, John Tyler followed by Tom Quinn.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

COMMENTS BY JOHN TYLER

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

I have three points that I would like to make.

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

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

Second point, I am concerned about the
irreversibility of this project. Three million dollar or
thereabouts massive concrete towers are not going to be
willingly moved when they become obsolete. They aren't
going to rot and deteriorate. They're going to be here for the duration. What happens if our needs change? A lot of technological advances in the last 25, 50 years as far as power, our alternative sources of power and so forth. I think we can expect it to continue into the future. What if further into the future a few years from now we no longer need wind power, where are they going to go? That's one thing I would like to ask this group. Are there perhaps for removing the towers, a precedent for moving towers of this sort? Who would bear the costs and what can be the impact environmentally of removing towers no longer needed?

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. Appreciate your comments.

Mr. Quinn followed by Cam Thomas.

COMMENTS BY TOM QUINN

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

First of all, I talked to everyone I could talk to. I talked to people in the wind industry, I talked to city planners, I talked to my neighbors, and what we decided was just the visual impacts was just too great. And one thing I think the tour allows is to give you a chance to make your assessment of the visual impact of this project.
There's something called the Sinclair Thomas Matrix. It's just an easy way to common sense decide what the impacts of wind power would be. Essentially it boils down to anything up this five miles is capable of dominating the landscape. So take one of these proposed towers and draw a radius up from that and then see how it will impact the Gorge up to ten miles this same matrix that these towers are clearly visible and intrusive. So now take those same radius drawn out to ten miles and see the impacts. I think my neighbors and I decided after seeing this is that our area of the Gorge was just not acceptable and I don't think this is area acceptable either.

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

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

Cam Thomas, followed Sally Newell, followed by
Glenda Ryan.

COMMENTS BY CAM THOMAS

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

One thing that I haven't heard mentioned here today is that Skamania County PUD will get a huge benefit as will all of Skamania County PUD's customers because the interchange and interconnect to the Bonneville line will provide Skamania County with a circular loop that is not available right now. Approximately two years ago there was an outage that lasted for like three days. The whole PUD supply was out. There wasn't anything the PUD could do to help us at all, and that problem will be prevented in the
future. I was just fortunate enough to be a tourist on the mountain in the last two weeks, and from where I was which was the big tourist area there are wind turbines visible on the ridge about a mile and a half away from the tourist area that I was visiting. They are visible. They are certainly not intrusive. I did not hear any comments at all about the wind turbines in the area. Thank you.

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

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

COMMENTS BY SALLY NEWELL

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

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

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

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

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

MS. NEWELL: Okay.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The folks in the Gorge, especially this part of it, have begun to eat off the scenery. We have tourism and a budding agri-tourism business. We grew a world class aircraft manufacturing business right here in Underwood. That captain that was rescued by the little drone that drone was built in Bingen, Washington but it was invented in a house in Underwood. Pear orchards are coming out and vineyards are going in. We have wineries and wedding bells. My husband's grandpa's old strawberry farm up on Wess Road has grown a final crop of million dollar homes.
One of the reasons those homes can command such prices is the National Scenic Area. You can't just buy a couple acres here and drive your trailer onto it. Right or wrong it does restrict the supply, and demand drives up the price. We have only just begun to eat the scenery here. Please don't yank it out of our mouths.

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

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

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

COMMENTS BY GLENDA RYAN

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

CHAIR LUCE: The spelling of your name.

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

CHAIR LUCE: Well, thank you very much. If you
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
6           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
only person who you haven't heard directly from, and I wanted to emphasize those points.

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

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

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

Point 1, choosing viewpoints in the scenic area should be based on key viewing areas. Several of these were
missing from the discussion; therefore, it is unclear whether they are national scenic areas and resources were adequately captured.

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

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

Page three, the visualizations are important for finding the number and location of the visible turbines but
have limited utility for assessing scenic impacts.

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

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

So I encourage the Council to look at this letter and follow the advice of the Forest Service which is the one of two agencies charged with protecting the resources of the National Scenic Area. Thank you.
CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. We'll look closely at that letter.

Rebecca Maxey.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.

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

COMMENTS OF MATT RYAN

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

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

That may be the letter of the law, but I think it certainly breaks the spirit of the law and the whole intent
of the Gorge Scenic Area. So, again, I think the scenic impacts are going to far outweigh the benefits that others have already stated.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you for coming here.

Mr. Bradford.

///
COMMENTS BY DON BRADFORD

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

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Appreciate it very much.
Frank Backus.

COMMENTS BY FRANK BACKUS

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

CHAIR LUCE: Spell the last name.

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

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

You need to analyze the importance of the small privately owned companies like SDS Lumber Company, and their need to be able to diversify to stay in business. The economic ties of the wind today are no secret to anybody on how difficult it is for a company like SDS to stay open. They've had to shut down for a month, laid off their people, and the payroll of that company in this area is vital. So you need to really look at that and understand those needs of a small private company.
It's been mentioned today you all understand that the State of Washington did pass a referendum requiring utilities to have renewable energy. Fifty-four percent of the people of Skamania County voted for that.

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

The final thing you need to take away from here are wind turbines are wind turbines and they affect the scenery but the boundary of the National Scenic Area is the boundary of the National Scenic Area. Thank you very much. I'll be here this evening for the other hearing.
CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. Herman.

COMMENTS BY KEVIN HERMAN

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

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

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

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

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

But and so what I know that this is a fairly I
wouldn't say desolate, but it's not being used for anything
right now and maybe that's because SDS intended not to use
it and they wanted to use it for this. I don't know. But I
don't think that this small area is going to impact this,
you know, agri-tourism is what it's called I guess. I don't
think that it's going to collapse the economy of the
Columbia River Gorge just because of this wind farm, but it
does supply power for 20,000 homes is the estimate.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

Mr. Browne, Mr. James Browne.

COMMENTS BY JAMES BROWNE

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

CHAIR LUCE: Your address?

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much.
Loreley Brack followed by Jeannie Rawley, followed by Rob Bell.

COMMENTS BY LORELEY BRACH

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

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

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

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

MS. BRACH: Okay. Other people have.

CHAIR LUCE: We can make that an exhibit.

MS. BRACH: I want to introduce we reside at the property nearest the project, about 1,500 feet from the project, and we're surrounded on all three sides by forest that's controlled by SDS Broughton. I'm very concerned about the potential conclusions from the EIS with the fundamental data that's derived and prepared by the applicant. A few examples cause concern for me and I'd like
to go over those briefly and that is the bats. That bats are active as early as March in our area. We see them frequently flying along the riparian slope up in perennial stream that goes through our property. Bat surveys right now are only between July and September and so I think they're missing a significant portion of their active season.

The other thing is an owl survey, and I would like to read this because I don't want to mess it up and I want people to hear. The applicant claims to have performed owl surveys in 2008 to protect the presence and species of owls. This work may have been compromised from the beginning. In late May, early June owl calls -- this is last season in 2008 -- owl calls either they were heard or recorded sounds were heard emanating from Broughton forest immediately south of us, from our property an owl's calling a response. Voices were heard one of which stated get as close as you can. These apparently were people trying to locate the owl not knowing who or for what purposes people were trespassing. We went, searched, and intercepted. As we quietly approached the area where the owl hooter interchange was it quit responding and we were not able to make visual contact with the hooters. But hoots from Broughton continued shortly after that. Then to see information reflecting this encounter does not show up on the data
Additionally we have a photo of a gray horn owl coming into our perennial stream. We frequently hear barn owls and the owls are prevalent and often move back and forth at each other. We have recorded owls from our property in 2008, the nearest neighbor to the project. And we continue to document the presence of owls within audible range, within audible range of our property using specialized distance recording equipment. The design of the applicant's owl survey appears to be void of any calling points within the perennial stream but does not show up on their maps that are adjacent to this project that they want to develop.

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

Our suggestion is that all further EIS work needs to include extensive independently conducted owl surveys in the area beginning immediately. Coordination of the project applicant will be needed to ensure these studies are carried out prior to removal of the entire habitat area under the terms of the DNR program. Geologically unstable areas you try to visit the top of the slope as you look down to the west you'll notice there is a portion there that still has
some trees intact. Well, there's an issue of geologically unstable slopes there. From the DNR permit they weren't allowed to log that for that reason we presume. And water resources of that perennial stream again interestingly is the case there are streams, other streams there that is perennial. It's all year round and that slope in that area goes right down into that drainage. We'd like to see it appear on the maps and be represented.

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

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

MS. BRACH: Thank you very much. I'm going to be
sending in a lot of material.

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

Jeannie Rawley followed by Rob Bell.

COMMENTS BY JEANNIE RAWLEY

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

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

According to the map you have over there and the documents I've seen circles where they are having to severely change the roads and how the trucks will get up basically cuts through our property and possibly through our home. My concern is if it has such a severe impact on our personal property why we have not been notified by SDS, by the county, by anybody that this could have an impact.
We've seen documentation that says it could take out part of our landscaping or it could take out part of our home or complete home. We have found out this week from Skamania County that we are not able to build another home on our property because it is zoned agriculture which means that our current home was grandfathered in because it's 25 years old. So I have some research to do this week which I wasn't able to do prior to coming today to see what that truly means if we lose our home or part of our property. What is that future for us with what we had hoped to be on retirement?

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

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

I have a really strong concern about the impact of the traffic and the trucks coming around that corner in Underwood at Kollack-Knapp. I don't think it will end with the project when we talk 18 months of huge amounts of truck
and traffic coming up. That will not end with the project because there will always be maintenance. There will always be things to take care of up there so that would be something that is given for the rest of time. As long as this project is up and running there will be traffic, there will be impacts back on that corner.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

Rob Bell.

COMMENTS BY ROB BELL

Rob Bell, R-o-b B-e-l-l, 4211 Post Canyon Drive,
Hood River.

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

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

I've been doing this survey for the last four weeks from my wine bar. I've spoken with one hundred
people. I've shown them my little cartoon drawing on would you like to see 50 of these over there, and I can report it's 100 to zero so far. I've asked every one of them if they support renewable energy and 85 percent of people do. They just saw that this was an application that is flawed in as much as once again it is visually irretrievable.

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

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

Let's talk about wind in the Gorge because when I moved here 35 years ago I built a path over the mountain. I went to the University of Minnesota Wind School for six weeks and let me give you a couple of factoids. I also owned the first wind sailing shop on the Gorge, and you know
when the wind blows here? It blows six months of the year.
Okay? There's four months of the year that are dead calm, and when it blows the six months of the year we have many days that are called nuclear, and I don't think they found the brake yet to stop one of these things from blowing up once the wind gets over 25 miles an hour which is typical of 40 percent of the wind days during the year. You can check it out. Okay? Now, Whistling Ridge it whistles like crazy about 40 percent of the time. The rest of the time it's going too fast for them and the other time there is not enough wind to move them.
So to summarize, I would urge you to look at the economic underpinnings of this make to sure that the real deal is equal to the obvious unbelievable irretrievable step which is I counted 150 blinking red lights sparkling away and it's not something that I want to spend the rest of my days looking at. Thank you very much.
CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.
Mary Trombly, followed by Jessica Walz, and Jane Nichols.

COMMENTS BY MARY TWOMBY
Hello, my name is Mary Trombly and I live at 842 Little Rock Creek Road in Mill A. I've been in this area for about close to 20 years.
CHAIR LUCE: Spell your name, please.
MS. TWOMBLY: Oh, sorry, T-w-o-m-b-l-y.

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.

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

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

I think if we're going to make sacrifices everyone in the nation should make sacrifices and start conserving energy. We're not talking about that very much. We're all talking about consuming and money and all these things that really personally I like money too, but I'd much prefer preserving the national treasure that we have here which is
the Gorge and that's why I brought my family here in the first place.

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you.
COMMENTS BY JESSICA WALZ

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

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

I have reviewed a lot of your studies here for the wildlife consequences. We feel that further NEPA documents need to be done by independent biologists looking at EIS studies here for both the northern spotted owl, the western gray squirrel, and the goshawk. We have done independent research on the locations of the northern spotted owl in the
northern GP. Unfortunately we have not had the opportunity to go out and independently research the locations of those spotted owls in southern GP. We do feel that there is a primary habitat in the southern GP that can be affected by this wind farm location. Habitat for the northern spotted owl employ a large habitat. They will go into a -- they stay within a public forest. They will go into private forestland.

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

This is important because we do need to conserve habitat species. When a project like this goes in they do require a lot of land disturbance that can force wildlife out of certain areas. I know you've heard that in previous comments. Habitat loss and fragmentation is the leading 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 ///
COMMENTS BY JANE NICHOLS.

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

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

You guys have a heck of job. Do it wisely and thank you.
Y instead of X. I shouldn't have guessed.

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

CHAIR LUCE: Yes.

COMMENTS BY REX JOHNSTON

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you. I appreciate you coming.

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

MR. SHORTT: That's correct.

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

COMMENTS BY BRIAN SHORTT

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

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

And in the last year I have taken trips out to Colfax. I have been involved in alternative energy programs since 1982, and I wanted to know more about this wind energy activity, What was taking place. And the thing that concerns me the most, and I understand the biological or the wildlife issues, is the western landscape aspect that we are sacrificing. It's as simple as that. The western landscape
that's what we enjoy the most. That is what brought us here. That is what's allowed our economies to continue to survive the way they have. It's what brings hundreds of millions of dollars of tourism trade and helps sustain not only the Gorge but the Northwest economy. It gives us diversity and I feel like we are looking at the sixties and the seventies when Plumb Creek a subsidiary of Burlington Northern finally broke over the ridge lines into a harvesting practice, general harvesting practices on I-90 along Snoqualmie Pass area and said, "Guess What? We don't care. We're from the East Coast and we're going to harvest your timber and sell it and that's the way it's going to be."

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

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

The next speaker will be Scott Cook.
COMMENTS BY SCOTT COOK

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

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

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

And so I think it makes a much bigger impact on the visual landscape than just its simple height against the measure of trees or say a cell tower or a power line. Things that are static and still like a clear cut, a power line, a cell tower our brains can sort of not look at them.
We can choose not to look at them, but something that blinks and something that moves we to tend see it very clearly and we'll have to look over.

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

And I remember standing with Rob Bell in his winery Fierchinger which is now Cathedral Ridge and he told me at the very hillside of Underwood tells me about five years ago and he explained to me about the grapes growing over there and the view and the weather pattern, but that's when he goes and he made that investment so he could be there with his customers and explain, you know, how the grapes are growing over there and what the weather pattern
is and between rain. And those windmills are going to sit there and they're going to be spinning right next to that and all of his customers are going to ask about those instead. And so are my four minutes up yet?

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

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

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

CHAIR LUCE: Laszlo Regos, followed by Glen Holmberg, and David Neikirk.
COMMENTS BY LASZLO REGOS

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

I'm not against renewable power. I think most people here are in favor of responsibly sited renewable power projects. I think this project could be mitigated to avoid the largest number of objections by moving probably only seven of these windmills, the A towers, and that would
probably eliminate about 95 percent of the scenic impact that we're dealing with, that we're talking about here.

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thank you so much.

Glenn Holmberg.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: He left.

CHAIR LUCE: He left.

All right. David.

COMMENTS BY DAVID NEIKIRK

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

CHAIR LUCE: Could you spell your last name.

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

CHAIR LUCE: Thanks. Continue, please.

MR. NEIKIRK: I would like to speak to some things I haven't heard mentioned today. One is that the grid is full. It seems to me 6,000 megawatts is the number these days. The proposed projects on both sides of the state on the river have far exceeded the number of megawatts which fill the grid. Until the infrastructure is redone getting the power to people is a real problem. I know I attended almost three years of EFSEC meetings in Oregon. I have
I listened to all of the wind farms and I have listened to contractors and what have you. They all keep pushing it forward. Well, when we have enough members of farms we'll get the infrastructure. Now they're talking about taking people's lands for the power lines. All of these things are in progress of being discussed and still the grid is full.

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

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

Moving on talking about the scenic problems. Where I live in Wasco Butte I drive down into the Dalles, I look out over the face and down the river. I can see a line of windmills from the Washington side across the river all
the way up to the big projects up by Wasco. This is almost 40 to 60 miles away from the surface, and it stands out as clear as a bell. In sunny days you can even see the props spin. That's at 45 to 60 surface miles away.

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

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

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

   CHAIR LUCE: Thank you very much.

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

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

   COMMENT BY GARY WEST

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

   My property is directly adjacent to theirs. I received a letter one day that they were going to be cutting
some trees and they had a surveyor come up and shot a line, and they felt some of those trees were on my property because the fence had long deteriorated. And as far as I was concerned all those trees belonged to SDS Lumber, and they informed me that when they shot that line that some of those trees were mine and that they would cut those trees and harvest them and pay me for them. Because if they just left my trees standing they were a danger. They were going to blow over on the building and stuff because the wind would be there. As a matter of the fact, I'm right on the east side of the Whistling Ridge up there, and so I said, yeah, by all means go ahead and cut those trees and so forth.

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

Another point I would like to make is I sympathize with the people as far as well from my backyard and my business and there seems to be a lot of my personal interests in this and I think we all need to look at what's
good for the whole in the long run. I remember living in this Gorge and there was a petition that people wanted to get signed to force the State of Oregon to plant trees along the Columbia river so that residents in the state of Washington would not have to see Interstate 84 in the scenic area. I mean where do you draw the line? Where do you draw the line? And I think the line has already been drawn, and SDS is on the right side of the line.

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

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

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

* * * * *

(Whereupon the public meeting was adjourned at 5:32 p.m.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Public Comments</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I N D E X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PUBLIC COMMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>W.D. TRUITT</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>STEPHEN BRONSVELD</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>STEVE CURLEY</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
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In re: Whistling Ridge Energy Project

AFFIDAVIT

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