BEFORE THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL

In the matter of
Application No. 2009-01  )  Public Hearing Volume VI
WHISTLING RIDGE ENERGY, LLC.  )  Pages 856-927
WHISTLING RIDGE ENERGY PROJECT

A Public Hearing in the above matter was held on Thursday, January 6, 2011, at 6:30 p.m., at the Skamania County Fairgrounds, 710 Southwest Rock Creek Drive, in Stevenson, Washington, before the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council with C. Robert Wallis, Administrative Law Judge, presiding.

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(Whereupon, the proceedings went on the record at 6:34 p.m.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Let's be on the record, please.

This hearing will please come to order. This is an adjudicative hearing of the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council. It's being held at Stevenson, Washington on January 6th of the year 2011.

My name is Robert Wallis, I am the designated Administrative Law Judge for this proceeding. On behalf of the Council I would like to welcome everyone to the session this evening and thank you for taking your time to come out and express your views and listen to your neighbors express their views on the proposal that is now at issue.
We have a number of EFSEC Council members present and staff members. I would like to have each of them introduce themselves to you. Council members beginning on my far left.

MR. HAYES: Hi. My name is Andy Hayes. I'm with the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

MR. TAYLER: I'm Jeff Tayler. I'm with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

MR. MOSS: I'm Dennis Moss with the Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission.

MR. CREWS: I'm Kyle Crews with the Attorney General's Office representing the Council.

MR. LUCE: I'm Jim Luce representing the Governor.

MR. FRYHLING: I'm Dick Fryhling, and I represent the Department of Commence.

MR. SUTHERLAND: I'm Doug Sutherland, the designee from Skamania County.

JUDGE WALLIS: In addition, we have EFSEC staff here, Al Wright who is the manager; Stephen Posner, staff member; Tammy Talburt in the green outfit; and Jim La Spina. If you have any questions about process or about the operations of the Council, please feel free to talk with any of the staff members.

The Council members themselves are sitting as judges in this proceeding and it restricts their ability to
talk with individuals about what is going on and the thing that they're going to have to judge. So instead of talking directly to Council members you can feel very comfortable talking to staff and getting the information that you may need in that manner.

The purpose of tonight's session is for the Council to receive comments on the proposed Whistling Ridge Energy Project. We have been in hearings since Monday morning at the Skamania Lodge hearing room and have been taking testimony from members of the party and receiving evidence on the proposal both for it and against it and about it.

Let me give you a very short summary of what's going on.

On March 10, 2009, Whistling Ridge Energy, LLC, which is a Washington limited liability company, submitted an application for site certification to EFSEC to construct and operate the Whistling Ridge Energy Project which is designed to produce 75 megawatts of electrical wind generation energy.

The proposed project would be located about seven miles north of the city of White Salmon in Skamania County, Washington. The proposed project site is privately owned land currently used for commercial timber harvest. Up to 50 wind turbines ranging in size from 1.2 to 2.5 megawatts and
up to 426 feet tall would be installed for the project.

The project would include an operation and maintenance facility and electrical substation, an underground collector line system, access roads and other facilities required for its operation.

A revised site certification application was submitted on October 12th of 2009, which changed the site by removing use of a forest service road located within the Columbia River Gorge national scenic area.

I would like to tell you that we will also receive your written comments until January 15, 2011, if you want to send those in. You may also email them so that the Council receives them by January 15, and they will also be placed within the adjudicative record of this proceeding.

In addition, Bruce Marvin is here tonight. He is Counsel for the Environment. Mr. Marvin, will you stand up and identify yourself.

MR. MARVIN: Hi. I'm Bruce Marvin, I'm an Assistant Attorney General. I am the Counsel for the Environment which is a statutory position which is created by the legislature as part of the EFSEC process. And my duties are to represent the public and its interest in the environment with regard to the siting of energy facilities.

And in addition to contacting EFSEC staff, if you have issues regarding procedure or process that you would
like to run by me I would be glad to chat with you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you, Mr. Marvin. This is a formal adjudicative hearing. It is like a trial. This is one of the sessions. Other sessions are going on, as I said, this week and will continue for one or two days next week. You see that in front of the Council here is a court reporter who is taking down every word that people say, and that will be transcribed into writing, and that will be part of the official record in this matter.

Because it's important both for the court reporter, for the Council members and for other members of the audience to hear everything that's being said today we're going to ask everyone to be quiet and listen to the comments of the others who are here.

I'm going to be calling three people at a time from the sign-up list. And we have three chairs in front. As we proceed through the list of people we'll keep two or three ahead so that people will be ready to speak and there will be very little delay between individuals.

When we call you to the microphone I will ask you to raise your hand and swear or affirm that the testimony that you're giving today will be the truth. Then we will ask for your name, ask you to spell your last name so we're sure that that's accurate in the record and give your mailing address so that we can put you on the list of
interested persons and make sure that you get information
about the project and its status.

If you have brought written materials I encourage
you not to read them, although you may if you wish. They
may be most effective when you use them as a reminder to the
points that you want to mention.

We will have a time limit tonight of three minutes
for you to present your comments. Again, as I say, if you
think of something later, or if you don't have time to make
every point you would like to make you're very welcome to
put it in writing and submit it to the Council.

Mr. Posner is going to be our timekeeper. You see
that he has a clock in front there. It counts down three
minutes and will buzz at the end of the three minutes. He
will give you a warning when you have 30 seconds to go so
you can wind up your remarks and conclude.

In order to submit your written remarks all you
have to do is give those to one of the EFSEC staff members.
And we are going to ask staff to make sure that a name and
address is on those remarks so that, again, that person can
go on our mailing list.

Very well, I think we're ready to proceed. And
I'm going to read the names on our list to the extent that I
can read them. The first person I believe is Ed, it looks
like Calhoun.
MR. CALLAHAN: You're close, Callahan.

JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. Then, Don Morby and Charles Pace, if you would like to come up now and be seated. Mr. Callahan, you can remain standing. Jim Pytel is the third person after Mr. Callahan.

Very good. Mr. Callaghan, would you raise your right hand.

(Ed Callahan sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state for us your name, spelling your last name.

MR. CALLAHAN: Ed Callahan, C-a-l-l-a-h-a-n.

JUDGE WALLIS: And tell us your mailing address, please.

MR. CALLAHAN: Mailing address is P.O. Box 969, Stevenson, Washington 98648.

JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. Please proceed with your comments.

ED CALLAHAN,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF ED CALLAHAN

I'm a four-term county commissioner in Skamania County, so I'm well-versed on its needs. And I would like
to just comment in regards to we no longer log in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, if we do it's very, very little. This county is in dire need of income. And this project fits it to a "T." There's money for schools as well as county government as well as private payrolls.

I'm all in favor of the project. I can't see why anybody would not be in favor of it. It will create jobs, increase tax revenues. It's completely outside the National Scenic Area. And one of the pictures I've seen in this brochure shows them up on the ridge. If you're driving down 84 at 70-miles an hour you damn well better be looking out front instead of up at the ridge. I don't see how anybody could want to do that, but that's beside the point.

Wind energy is a solution not the problem. And I've already ordered my new electric car, so I'm very interested in having electricity for it. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. Thank you very much.

Mr. Morby.

MR. MORBY: Thank you.

(Don Morby sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name and spell your last name, please.

MR. MORBY: Don Morby. It's M-o-r-b as in Bravo, "Y" as in Yankee.

JUDGE WALLIS: And give us your mailing address,
Thank you. Thank you to the committee. You said I couldn't read this, but I didn't commit it to memory. I wrote it about ten minutes before I came down this way. My name IS Don Morby. I'm a retired Navy chief for 30 years in the military. I'm retired from the state highway department here in the Gorge, so I'm really familiar with the Gorge rules and regulations. I'm a lifetime member of the Underwood area and I was born and raised there. I've attended each and everyone of your meetings, I compliment you guys on being here. I'm sorry you have to be here. Anyway, I'm not a good speaker, so bear with me. I have three minutes, I'm going to try to run through this. Every complaint always includes--that you guys receive about this windmill project--always includes habitat disruption, wildlife, noise pollution, traffic tie-ups,
industrial disasters to mention a few. These are always brought up at these meetings. It appalls me that there's so much money always spent on fighting these issues over and over when that money could be spent on school, education, health and welfare of this community here, and we need it.

It's something that they oppose that they voted for, renewable energy. They talked about the environment being destroyed and habitat and wildlife destroyed. The agriculture industry in Underwood alone over the years -- and I love pears and apples and grapes, don't get me wrong. But they have done just as much to disrupt the environment as any windmill could ever do over the next 20 years.

They talk about the traffic tie-ups that's going to happen during this installation. Then they turn around and tell us what great industry it's going to be to have agri-tourists coming up the road in these diesel snorting buses, you know, millions of people coming to buy wine and by the bus loads.

The windmill offers good jobs for the community, and they're desperately needed jobs. What jobs the agriculture people bring to this community usually involves illegal aliens -- or immigrants, I'm sorry. Aliens are from...

Anyway, this community has suffered enough over the years fighting all these so-called outside friendly
groups, starting with the spotted owl and continuing through
dam removals. In my opinion, they do it for personal gain
and pleasure despite the smoke and mirrors they put out
front.

So I beseech you as a committee to once and for
all put a stop to this nonsense. Approve this plan and
getting it into the installation phase. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Charles Pace. The next name on our list is Carol
Taylor and then Paul Smith. Mr. Pace, raise your right
hand, please.

(Charles Pace sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Would you state your name and spell
your last name.

MR. PACE: My name is Charles Pace. My last name
is spelled P-a-c-e.

JUDGE WALLIS: What is your mailing address,
please?

MR. PACE: My mailing address is P.O. Box 70 in
North Bonneville, Washington, zip is 98639.
Charles Pace, having been first duly sworn on oath, testified as follows:

Thank you, Your Honor, members of the Council. I want to focus on four things.

The first being site specific impacts, avian and mammalian populations. Those are of concern. But my experience both as I hold a Ph.D. in economics and I've also done some consulting on wind for various drives, those are very site specific and they're difficult to pin down in advance. So I think those are things that you need to consider, but they're very difficult to predict in advance.

There's also impacts, site specific impacts on Underwood Hill, traffic and so on. So I think those are things you need to consider.

In terms of the Scenic Act I don't think is particularly relevant. The project is located outside the Scenic Act area, and moreover there has been a great deal of I wouldn't call it mission weep or creep, it's more an explosion in the mission undermining the Gorge Act. So I don't believe the scenic impacts are particularly relevant here or that there is necessarily a sound basis for assigning economic values to things like iconic values.
It's not valued exchange, it's valued use, it's not existence value.

In terms of wind development in particular, this project has a lot going for it. It's part of a vertically integrative production process, and it will be used on site. Part of the wind energy that is produced will be used on site. That distinguishes it from a number of other projects in the basin that are simply exporting power outside the region.

So this is precisely the kind of project that makes sense from a regional energy perspective. It also makes sense in terms of the Gorge. You've probably heard people say "not in the Gorge." I would say absolutely in the Gorge. That wind is one of the types of generating resources and assets that we need to go forward with. This area can lead the way in terms of wind generation, and should lead the way.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. PACE: Finally, the problems that I really see with this project are not problems with this project but rather the integration of wind resources in the basin and the impacts on hydro evaluation. There are some serious issues there. I'm sure that the Chair is aware of those from his experience and Al. But these are things that need to be addressed, but they need to be addressed on a regional
JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Jim Pytel and Carol Taylor and Paul Smith.

Mr. Pytel, raise your right hand, please.

(Jim Pytel sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Would you state your name and spell your last name for us, please.

MR. PYTEL: Jim Pytel, P-y-t-e-l.

JUDGE WALLIS: State your mailing address.

MR. PYTEL: Six Oak Ridge Road, White Salmon, Washington 98672.

JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. If you step a little closer to the microphone we might all be able to hear you better.

JIM PYTEL, having been first duly sworn on oath,

tested as follows:

TESTIMONY OF JIM PYTEL

Test, test. My name is Jim Pytel. Former captain of the 4th Infantry Division, former wind energy technician, currently instructor for the Renewable Energy Technology Program at Columbia Gorge Community College, here to speak
on behalf of Whistling Ridge. I do support this project. I live in Husum, Washington, right by White Salmon River Valley. My points are basically as an increasing population of increasingly affluent people we're forcing ourselves to make some pretty hard decisions.

Energy has to come from somewhere, and our nation's energy must be secured at all costs. What happens to our existing unsustainable energy infrastructure if it begins to crack? We fight more war to keep going for a little bit longer? Do we send your children to fight those wars? Do we impose management for conservation levels? Do we willing give up our position of world influence, state conservation? None of these options make sense to me.

Added to these the predicament of the impending removal of Condit Dam and the closure of the Portland Power Plant.

Energy has to come from somewhere. Here's a radical idea to transition our nation to energy independence with wind turbines where it's windy, solar panels where it's sunny, put biomass fuel production plants where biomass grows.

Know there's no single magic bullet that can solve our problems, but there's a silver buckshot approach that can. Distributed renewable energy generation can become our baseload if our nation becomes serious about it. I'm proud that my community will be contributing toward this effort by
establishing the Whistling Ridge Energy Project.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Carol Taylor and then Paul Smith and Mary Repar.

Raise your right hand.

(Carol Taylor sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last name.

MS. TAYLOR: Carol Taylor, T-a-y-l-o-r.

JUDGE WALLIS: Your mailing address?

MS. TAYLOR: P.O. Box 185, Cascade Locks, Oregon 97014.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed with your comments.

CAROL TAYLOR,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF CAROL TAYLOR

Thank you, Your Honor. Ladies and gentlemen, I am Carol Taylor from Cascade Locks. I want to thank you for this opportunity to express my views on the proposed wind farm.

I do not plan on being politically correct. I don't understand why greed is being couched in green energy.
Not only will this wind farm cause visual impacts, but scar the land forever. The energy would be sent to California as I understand, so build them in California. I have seen Altamont Pass and the many turbines elsewhere in California. They were built in scrub areas, and if you add a few more to their totals it won't matter.

The turbines will be manufactured overseas, so therefore the jobs are overseas. During construction there will be some jobs, but after completion there will be very few, just for maintenance.

This same company promoting the wind farm is promoting a resort project further east in the Gorge. This company is one that mined outside of its boundaries causing a huge slide on Highway 14. This company is the one who purchased land in Cascade Locks Port to use for some other project.

Obviously, this company and their promoters are not interested in the least in protecting the Gorge. Between this proposal, the proposed casino, the proposed water bottling plant and the newest that I just heard about, the proposed development in Dallesport the area will be ruined. The Gorge will no longer be a recreational sanctuary for future generations.

There seems to be many people promoting all of this development and pretending and spouting that it is for
jobs. Don't be fooled. The politicians promoting and assisting in this development in ruination of the Gorge are only interested in what they hope to gain. What has happened to the integrity and honesty representing people you work for or who elected you. There's just way too much corruption and self-interest. I have planned a family reunion for next summer and asked them all to bring their cameras, because if these developments go in it will be the last time they will see this place without being ruined.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MS. TAYLOR: I ask you to think long and hard about this project, as once it is built there is no turning back. The landscape and environment will be forever ruined. The threat to the birds and wildlife is very real. The harm to humans is real. Please turn down this monster project and protect the Columbia River Gorge. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Paul Smith and then Mary Repar and Dave L'Hommedieu.

(Paul Smith sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last name.

MR. SMITH: Smith, S-m-i-t-h.

JUDGE WALLIS: And your mailing address.
PAUL SMITH,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

1482 Mabee Mines Road, Washougal, Washington.

Thank you for the opportunity to share some of my concerns. First, I'm concerned about EFSEC's ability to be fully impartial and objective. Nothing personal to you all. EFSEC is in charge of conducting a project analysis and then make a recommendation to Washington's governor. In my mind, this is analogous to the BIA in charge of doing an EIS --

THE COURT REPORTER: I need you to slow down when you read. Sorry.

MR. SMITH: Then I'm not going to have time in my three minutes.

JUDGE WALLIS: Then you are certainly welcome to submit your written comments for whatever additional that you aren't able to speak to.

MR. SMITH: Okay.

MR. POSNER: I gave you some time back.

MR. SMITH: So that's analogous to the BIA in charge of doing an EIS for proposed traffic casinos such as the -- and giving a recommendation to the DOI such as the
grand 600,000 square foot off-reservation casino proposal
for Cascade Locks, which would also destroy the majesty of
the Columbia River Gorge.

I feel that both of these agencies are enablers
for the parties they represent. I find it hard to believe
these agencies can be fully transparent and impartial. How
many wind turbine proposals has EFSEC rejected? The
interests of the majority should outweigh the financial
benefits of the few.

This would be the first wind turbine project in a
wooded area in the Northwest, therefore impacts to wildlife
are unknown. This proposal is within a designated special
emphasis area for protection of the Northern Spotted Owl, an
endangered species in Washington state.

These wind turbines will have -- can have
deleterious effects on numerous birds and bat populations.
Stated in the EIS, by the Applicant, under unavoidable
adverse impacts, quote, the project would result in some
ongoing mortality to birds and bats, and that this level is
not expected to be high enough to impact species viability.
The proponent is only speculating on this, there's no hard
science to back this claim.

The Columbia River Gorge is part of the Pacific
Flyway for numerous migratory birds. There's no model to
predict the mortality in such a heavily used flyway. These
wind turbines will be 420 feet tall. The Space Needle is 605 feet tall. The Columbia River Gorge is no place for any manmade structure on top of the beautiful ridge lines. The EIS states the level of visual impact would not be higher than low to moderate at any of the view points examined. Over half of the proposed wind turbines would be highly visible from several designated key viewing areas which is more than moderate negative impact. People come to the Columbia River Gorge to enjoy many recreational opportunities. If they want to see the Space Needle they can drive to Seattle.

Multiple agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service has recommended substantial modifications to this project as it is currently proposed. This project would harm sacred cultural resources as confirmed by two separate professional archaeologists' reports by the Yakama Nation.

In closing, the wind turbines are made by a foreign company with the majority of energy forecast to go to California. The tax credits the proponent will receive will be coming from my tax dollars to fund a --

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. SMITH: -- supposed green energy project that will purchase foreign made materials for energy slated to mostly go to California.
There's no guarantee that the construction jobs will go to locals. And the miniscule eight to nine on-site positions stated in the EIS may also go to outsiders.

Sure there's been a mandate put in place for each state to reach a certain amount of renewable energy, but just because the wind blows doesn't mean you erect several dozen Space Needles in that area, especially in areas so unique in all of America as the Columbia River Gorge. Do we have to ruin all of our scenic places in the name of manmade progress?

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Mary Repar.

MS. REPAR: Hello.

JUDGE WALLIS: Raise your right hand, please.

(Mary Repar sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Please state your name and spell your last name for the reporter.

MS. REPAR: Mary Repar, R-e-p-a-r. 6971 East Loop Road, No. 2, Stevenson, Washington 98648.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed with your comments.

MARY REPAR,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:
It's good to see you all. Thank you very much for coming back. Like some wine and like some stories they may be good, but some stories and some wine turn bad over time. And this story isn't getting any better, and the wine isn't getting any better either.

Whistling Ridge is a bad idea whose time has come to be nixed. So I hope that with all the information that you're getting you will nix this idea. This is a bad project in a bad place. I won't go -- I'll be emailing my comments to you and they're lengthy.

But just for tonight, I want to introduce Northwest Energy Consults White Paper, The Effects of an Increasing Surplus of Energy Generating Capability in the Pacific Northwest. Wind farms are producing too much energy for the existing power lines, and BPA isn't having any fun balancing the capacity load. That's what this draft paper is about.

Most of this energy is going to the energy hog California. I don't think we need to be raking and pillaging our environment to satisfy their need. They need to suck it up.

There's a second article, The Top Ten False and Misleading Claims the Wind Power Industry Makes. And three of those claims are wind plants do not harm wildlife,
industrial wind developers are interested only in providing a public service and wind plants are highly efficient and provide power for significant numbers of homes. Not. Noise. The issue of noise is extremely important. And Neighbors on Wind Farms Cash Out is an article that I will be submitting to you, it was in the Oregonian on January 2nd. These are people at Shepherds Flat who are being bought out or have signed noise waivers because they're interested in their health more than they are in living in an area where they're going to be subjected to wind noise.

So I think this is something that you all have to look at very carefully. Nina Pierpont, Dr. Nina Pierpont had the new book out called Wind Turbine Noise Syndrome, and it's $18, so I couldn't buy it to put in the record, but maybe you all can.

And then I would also like to introduce the articles, True Cost of Electricity From Wind Power, and The True Cost of Electricity From Wind Power Is Always Underestimated and its Value is Always Overestimated by Mr. Glenn Schleede who is an expert in the field of doing cost benefit analyses. And that is something that was not covered in the DEIS.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MS. REPAR: So I would urge us to all go back to
that and do a recent cost benefit analysis.

And, finally, tax breaks have already become so
generous that they, not the alleged environmental and energy
benefits, have become the primary reason wind farms have
been built in the U.S.

So thank you very much. Good luck with your
reasoning and digestion, and hopefully this bad story will
end. Thank you very much.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much. David
L'Hommedieu.

MR. L'HOMMEDIEU: If you don't mind I'll sit here.

JUDGE WALLIS: Let's adjust the mic so you can be
heard.

I'm going to ask you to raise your right hand.

(Dave L'Hommedieu sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name and spell
your last name for us.

MR. L'HOMMEDIEU: Dave L'Hommedieu,
L-'H-o-m-m-e-d-i-e-u.

JUDGE WALLIS: And state your mailing address for
us, please.

MR. L'HOMMEDIEU: P.O. Box 130, Stevenson,
Washington.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much. Please
proceed with your comments.
DAVE L'HOMMEDIEU,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

Council Members, I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I support this Whistling Ridge Energy Project. I've been living in town here for close to 15 years, and I'm very interested in the economy of this county. I'm presently a member of the Economic Development Committee in Skamania County.

Historically, Skamania County has relied on revenues from timber harvest to provide necessary services to its residents. The secure rural schools and county funding is declining annually and will end soon. Skamania County must take advantage of each opportunity it has to grow its tax base and move toward physical sustainability.

Skamania County's unemployment rate is currently over 12 percent. This project would provide 143 construction jobs, nine permanent jobs, five indirect jobs for a total of 14 new family wage jobs. In a county with a small work force this is a huge impact. $650,000 annually would generate to support state and local passing districts and the $900,000 in employee generated local spending there would be substantial ongoing indirect jobs and revenue.
I have in my hand, which you will get a copy of, a letter that I received or I took from the Save Our Scenic Area website. This letter is from a Mr. Wirt Maxey, a member of SOSA, to Puget Sound Energy. This letter is full of threats and inaccuracies. It claims Whistling Ridge would be visible from all of Skamania County and all of Hood River. That's untrue. It demands that Puget Sound Energy place a wind farm in the west end of Skamania County. The scenic area goes all the way to the east end of Skamania County to the west end of Skamania County along the Columbia River. Shame on them for using these despicable tactics. I will not list anymore.

I believe that Whistling Ridge energy is the right project at the right time and the right place. The project creates --

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. L'HOMMEDIEU: -- green economic development. It is environmentally prudent. It is located entirely outside the national scenic area boundaries, yet provides needed fiscal resources to support community and tourism in the county.

I urge the Board to support siting the Whistling Ridge Energy Project in its proposed location. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. John
Hubner, Tom Linde and Stuart Emmons are next. It will be
Mr. Hubner, then Mr. Linde, then Mr. Evans.

MR. HUBNER: Good evening.

JUDGE WALLIS: You have your right hand raised.

(John Hubner sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name for us
and spell your last name.

MR. HUBNER: John Hubner, H-u-b-n-e-r. 122 Foster
Road, Carson, Washington 98610.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much, please proceed
with your comments.

JOHN HUBNER,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF JOHN HUBNER

I don't have anything formal here, it's just that
I would like to state that I am definitely against this
project and for several reasons.

One is in particular is the scenic value of the
Columbia River Gorge. I do realize what literature I have
read on it that it is outside of the scenic area. Well, it
could be two yards out of the scenic area, but 450 feet in
the air is definitely visible in the scenic area. And I'm
against it for those reasons.

The scenic thing is people, in my opinion, don't realize that there's very little scenic areas left in our country. We're expanding at a massive rate of development. And I would like to hang and to what little we have. And this is very important for this Columbia River Gorge.

The other thing is I don't see where these eight jobs are that big of a deal. Are the eight jobs going to be Skamania County employees? Are they going to be Klickitat County employees? Nobody talks about this. Or are they going to be out of state? Nobody says.

There's nothing positive about the revenues that are going to come in regards to the employment. And 114 jobs as I heard there, and thank you for that information, to construct them is wonderful. But how long is that? That's definitely temporary. So, beneficially, as far as employment and jobs I don't see where it's of value as compared to ruining the scenic area. There's plenty of other windy areas.

And so when we talk about -- they talked about the economy, that's a good example. They're saying, hey, we're leaving this massive debt to our children. What are we leaving our children for scenic value? What are you going to see 40 years from now? We've got to save something and we have to save some value to this country. Thank you.
JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.
Mr. Posner, would you check that microphone and make sure it's working.
MR. POSNER: This one?
JUDGE WALLIS: Yes. Tom Linde will be the next one.
MR. POSNER: Testing. It's working. I encourage folks to adjust it because everybody is different, up or down maybe.
JUDGE WALLIS: Raise your right hand please.
(Tom Linde sworn on oath.)
JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last name.
MR. LINDE: Tom Linde, L-i-n-d-e. 5312 Wind River Road, Carson, Washington 98610.
JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed with your comments.

TOM LINDE,
having been first duly sworn on oath,
testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF TOM LINDE
I have been following this issue for quite a while, and basically I am a retired forest service employee
who was involved in drafting the recreational plan for the
Scenic Area Gorge and the view shift through the Scenic Area
Gorge.

I see no problem with this project since it does
lay outside the Gorge area. A line has to be drawn
someplace, and no matter where it's drawn somebody's not
going to be happy. This is on private property. I support
private property rights. And I support this project fully.

Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Next speaker is Stuart Emmons, and then Ole
Helgerson and Dean Stevenson.

(Stuart Emmons sworn on oath.)

MR. EMMONS: My name is Stewart Emmons. I'm at
2211 Southwest Park, Portland, Oregon.

JUDGE WALLIS: And spell your last name for us,
please.

MR. EMMONS: E-m-m-o-n-s.

JUDGE WALLIS: And if you tip that mic up and move
close to it. When you hear yourself then everybody else can
hear you.

STUART EMMONS,

having been first duly sworn on oath,
testified as follows:
I'm opposed to the Whistling Ridge windmill project. 426-foot towers, that is really, really tall. This is absolutely the wrong place to put a windmill project. The Gorge is a national treasure. We have the Grand Tetons, the Grand Canyon, places throughout our country that who would think to put a windmill project in. The Gorge is one of those projects.

As the Pacific Northwest, we're all Pacific Northwesterners, and our population is growing, it's going to keep growing. You know, in our city we're looking at, you know, another, you know, million people coming in. And we have to draw the line some place.

And one thing that makes our place unique are these areas like the Gorge, like Mount Rainier that we can go and see what our country was like before we came and developed it.

We've had pipelines. We've had casinos coming into the Gorge threatening the Gorge. We have to draw the line. We have to just say no. I respect our friends from the Gorge who need more jobs. We all need more jobs, but I think there are creative ways to bring jobs without defacing a national treasure. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Mr. Helgerson.
TESTIMONY OF OLE HELGERSON

Thank you, Your Honor. Good evening. I appreciate the Council taking the time to be here tonight. This is an important process.

As mentioned, my name is Ole Helgerson. I have resided in Carson, Washington, Skamania County, for nearly 20 years now. I retired after public service as a forestry
I greatly appreciate the need for clean renewable energy in our society and where energy demand is going; however, I oppose the Whistling Ridge wind farm development at this time for the following biological reasons based on information from the National Wind Coordinating Cooperative, an organization representing the wind power industry. Research on wildlife as noted has so far been limited to wind farms on grassland or shrub-steppe ecosystems. No data appear to be available for Western Forest Coniferous ecosystems. Existing research indicates that raptor mortality is greatest on ridge top areas. This wind farm would be, according to the map I saw, on a ridge top. If the wind farm increases the prey base for raptors such as the Northern Spotted Owl or eagles then raptor mortality would also appear to increase.

The newer turbine designs, the larger ones, seem to reduce raptor mortality; however, their effects on songbirds are uncertain. And according to the little information sheet I saw less is known about bat populations. With this biologic uncertainty to me it doesn't make sense to proceed here and now.

In addition to the ecological concerns it's compounded because of the project's location to the scenic
area which many people have referenced. These things are tall. They're going to be visually apparent to recreationists. This has the potential to reduce recreational revenue to our communities which depend on this.

The visual degradation comes from the sight of the towers, the flashing lights. And there's also the sound aspect which appears ephemeral at this point but could exist.

In comparison, for me as a forester the SDS proposed route mill resort development makes an awful lot more sense both ecologically and economically short and long term.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. HELGERSON: Thank you. That concludes my comments, Your Honor.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much for those comments. Next we have Dean Stevenson. And after him North Cheatham and then Doug Charters.

(Dean Stevenson sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last name for us.

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

JUDGE WALLIS: And your mailing address.

MR. STEVENSON: 3672 Northwest 124th Place,
1 Portland, Oregon.

2 JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you never much. Please
3 proceed with your comments.
4
5

6 DEAN STEVENSON,
7 having been first duly sworn on oath,
8 testified as follows:

9
10 TESTIMONY OF DEAN STEVENSON
11 Thank you. American Government and American
12 people have made a big commitment to move more towards
13 renewable energy. In the Northwest large electrical
14 companies, PGE, Pacific Power & Light have also made huge
15 commitments to their shareholders, to their customers to not
16 only produce but purchase more renewable green energy that's
17 environmentally friendly.

18 The Whistling Ridge windmills are very low impact
19 on the environment. They bring many jobs during the
20 construction phase. They bring jobs throughout the life of
21 the program, brings in tax revenues for not only the county,
22 the school districts and for many, many years to come.

23 And it seems to me that the major descending voice
24 here is not in my backyard. And it seems that they're, you
25 know, rather than being friends of the Gorge or friends of
26 the environment it's more it's not -- the message that I
he thank against it is not in my backyard. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. North Cheatham. Raise your right hand, please.

(North Cheatham sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last name, please.

MR. CHEATHAM: My name is North Cheatham, that's C-h-e-a-t-h-a-m. My mailing address is 3 East Point, Hood River, Oregon 97031.

JUDGE WALLIS: Please proceed with your comments.

NORTH CHEATHAM,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF NORTH CHEATHAM

First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. Wallis, and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak today. I support this project.

Back in 1996, I was awarded the stewardship award for the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area for my agriculture operation. I have served as Chair of the Gorge Commissions Community Advisory Team throughout much of 2008. And I have lived approximately 300 feet from a 90-kilowatt turbine.
We need more energy. The U.S. Department of energy has forecasts that we need approximately 1.1 percent more energy every year at least through 2030. We have committed to shutting Boardman down by 2020, that's 600 megawatts of power going offline in 2020. We must replace clean power. We must replace it with clean power not no power.

The Whistling Ridge wind site has the highest annual wind speed measured in the state of Washington. It's a primary resource and exploiting it is entirely appropriate under controlled conditions.

I wasn't here 100 years ago so I wouldn't have known the glaciers on Mount Hood have already receded 30 percent if I hadn't read it in a study. I could talk about the Wilkins ice sheet collapsing into the Arctic Ocean last year, ice sheet the size of Lane County in Oregon. But it's a long way away, so let's not worry about Antarctica or the Arctic Ocean. Let's just worry about what's locally appropriate.

The build out of wind energy everywhere we can is critical to prevent brownouts in the future, including areas visible but adjacent to the National Scenic Area. We must stop resisting the erection of wind turbines.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. CHEATHAM: They are the key to keeping our
1 lights on and dramatically reducing our release of
2 greenhouse gases. Thank you.
3
4 JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Our
next speaker will be Doug Charters. After Mr. Charters I
5 apologize for my inability to decipher in it's entirety,
6 it's an S. T. Jones, and then Jules Burton. And then we'll
7 need another list. So, Mr. Charters, raise your right hand,
8 please.

9

10 DOUG CHARTERS,
11 having been first duly sworn on oath,
12 testified as follows:
13

14 TESTIMONY OF DOUG CHARTERS
15 MR. CHARTERS: Doug Charters, C-h-a-r-t-e-r-s.
16 P.O. Box 1655, White Salmon, Washington.
17 I did quite a bit of research on this, and I found
18 myself in support of it. I do work for SDS. I'm a member
19 of the Friends of the Gorge and several other types people
20 in those ranges. I have been here for 50 years of my life.
21 One thing is kind of like Plan B of this project.
22 Plan A had the DNR involved, and it would have had less
23 impact on the visual quality in the Gorge. And,
24 unfortunately, the DNR removed itself from it. So the
25 company had to readjust and do what you have to do to
continue on.

But in the state of Washington we also are going to close down a coal plant, too. And that energy is going to have to be replaced. And this is a good way to replace it.

The birds and the bat thing there, I believe there's a possibility of a high-pitched type noise device that could be applied to these to keep the bats and birds out of -- I call it the death zone, it's the vacuum behind the turbines. They don't impact the turbines, they just get in a certain point in the stream of the thing and it will suck the wind out of their lungs is what happens. That may be able to be overcome.

The thing of the DNR deal here, DNR people have a lot of people laid off. Our whole timber industry isn't in very good shape. And what I kind of find sad is the state of Washington has the educational system using the timber tax dollars and revenues from the timber on DNR controlled lands, and private, and corporate lands the taxes go into the educational system. And we're increasing our populations and we're decreasing our funding for these things. I would like to see more wind turbines across the plateaus of Western Klickitat County above the -- or in the overlay zone area, because the wind is there and the capability is there.
The power lines situation the one lady referred to, I have heard rumor thereof that there may be a third major power line come through here in the future just to meet the demands. But we have to wean ourselves off of oil. We have to wean ourselves off of coal. We have to do the clean things or as a species we will not survive. This is a start. It does have problems, but, you know, do what you can do. These won't be here forever, what is it? Maybe a 50 year lifespan of this project? Whether it gets replaced after the 50 years, who knows, maybe we use logic and reason we can develop something better. But until that it's a major -- and it has great potential and further on, you know, the capacity of this project.

And I really care about the Gorge and I care about its scenic and cultural values, but we need to do what we need to do. Like I say, this won't last forever, but it will help. And oil is a lucrative, not a fuel. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.

Ms. Smith -- or Jones, I'm sorry.

(Sallie Tucker Jones sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Can you state your full name and spell your last name for us.

MS. JONES: My name is Sallie Tucker Jones. And my last name is spelled J-o-n-e-s. I live at 82, and I will spell this for you, Thuja Narrow, T-h-u-j-a, N-a-r-r-o-w.
And my post office is in Washougal, but I live in the west end of Skamania County. 98671 is the ZIP code.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed with your comments.

SALLIE TUCKER JONES,
having been first duly sworn on oath,
tested as follows:

Thank you. As you may or may not remember, I've submitted to you a number of comments about this project. So I decided that I would try to narrow down my focus and present to you my two or maybe three main concerns this evening.

My one concern is that the draft EIS document be fair, accurate and complete. And I'm sure as you're aware, if you do remember any of my comments, I'm very unhappy with the document. I think it's not so as it so stands. I know that you're in the process of revising it and adding to it. I'm hoping that the adjudicative hearings that you've been here all week for are adding and clarifying some of the issues that are involved in the -- will be put into that document.

I guess my second point mainly is that on the
state's renewable resources portfolio requirements to develop alternative sources of power, I think I may be mistaken, but I thought I read somewhere that not only are wind sites suppose to be selected, but at this point in time the best wind project sites are suppose to be selected. And I'm not convinced myself from the information and data that I have researched that this project would qualify as one of the best sites. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you.

MS. JONES: I guess that's just about it. I have cost concerns about this project. I think in the draft EIS were not included certain issues regarding the alternative sources, for instance, or backup sources of power generation that are required for certain wind or for wind power projects. And I think those should be probably included in the cost. I didn't see any mention of them. I may have missed that, but I think those should be included. They were not included.

I guess last I just want to wish you all or thank you all for the efforts you're putting forth. And to wish you well and hope that you maintain your energy and integrity throughout this long and complicated process.

Thank you very much.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much.

MS. JONES: One other thing if I have time, I
1 wanted to submit a document, may I do that?
2           JUDGE WALLIS:  Yes, you may.
3           MS. JONES:  This is a Northwest Power Planning
4 Council position or paper put out on January 3rd, 2011. The
5 Effects of Increasing Surplus of Energy Generating
6 Capability in the Pacific Northwest and the problems that it
7 is creating. If may I submit that?
8           JUDGE WALLIS:  Yes.
9           MS. JONES:  Thank you.
10           JUDGE WALLIS:  Thank you very much. Raise your
11 right hand, please.
12 (Jules Burton sworn on oath.)
13           JUDGE WALLIS:  State your name and spell your last
14 name for us, please.
15           MS. BURTON:  My name is Jules Burton, B-u-r-t-o-n.
16           JUDGE WALLIS:  Thank you. And give us your
17 mailing address, please.
18           MS. BURTON:  I live at 1219 Columbia Street in
19 Hood River, Oregon.
20           JUDGE WALLIS:  Thank you, please proceed.
21
22 JULES BURTON, 
23 having been first duly sworn on oath, 
24 testified as follows:
25 ///
Thank you. Gentlemen, ma'am, thank you very much for going through this process. I think this is an important piece for attaining good balance in the energy battles we're going to have ahead. I would like to say that I do favor wind energy. And I am still observing this process and trying to understand it fully. It's a very complex situation that I think deserves a lot of thought.

I am here for a couple of different reasons. First off, I'm a teacher of environmental science. I struggle to identify and understand the compromises we make daily with regards to going forward in a sustainable way. And I also am hoping to inspire future generations to come to meetings like this and speak their minds if they have something to say. I believe if you're here living in this area you will have something to say at some point. So thank you again for providing the opportunity for these young people who are in the audience right now.

Also, I have been at the meeting in Underwood yesterday, and I do appreciate you all going to Underwood for that meeting. It was important for the people of Underwood to have that recognition because it's so largely going to impact their community. And I noticed many people speaking about human impacts, and that is very important of
course. I would like to echo Ms. Jones' comments about the wildlife issue with the Environmental Impact Statement that was completed for this project. And I'm sure is being revised for the changes that will go on in this process.

I am concerned a lot about bats, and I know that this is something you are all concerned about. And you are looking into ways of mitigating the impact on bats, all of the bats in Washington and Oregon, and there are two notable species of concerns Townsend's big-eared bat and long-legged myotis bats that inhabitate that particular area in the forest. And as everyone has said, we don't have very many analog studies about what happens when you put a wind situation in the middle of a forested area.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MS. BURTON: Thank you. I have two pieces to submit to you. One of which you may have already seen. It's a partial report about mixed coniferous forest and mitigation for bat movement through it by changing the speed of the windmill.

And I would like to remind you of the Department of Fish and Wildlife statement that mentions that you need to pay specific attention, please, to the environmental impact of the bats. Thank you very much.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much. You can give those to staff.
We have four additional people signed up. We'll go through these names and then ask if there are any others in the audience who have not signed up who would like to speak. Gary West is next and then Jacki Dunkin. Raise your right hand, please.

(Gary West sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Please state your name.

GARY WEST,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

My name is Gary West, last name W-e-s-t. Mailing address Post Office Box 1229, Carson, Washington.

I've been a resident of Skamania County for 31 years. I am in favor of the wind turbines; however, I would like to thank the Friends of the Gorge for assuring discernment regarding any development near the National Scenic Area.

Environmentally speaking, I am on both sides of this issue. The Gorge with all its natural beauty needs to be protected; however, this country needs to be weaned off oil, especially mid-Eastern oil. The truth is we can have it both ways. The small impact on the National Scenic Area
is insignificant when one considers the greater cause. No one in this room will live long enough to see this country or the world weaned off of oil. We have been held hostage for far too long by the politics of oil. I cringe every time I fill up the gas tank of my car. Times are changing. People are wising up. You can now buy a plug-in electric car. I dream of the day when oil is not worth the sand it is found under in the Middle East. Only then will the world be a better and safer place.

Whistling Ridge can be a part of this great transformation. When the wind turbines are turning we can all look up and know that on a local level we all played a part in this fight to regain independence from our dependency on mid-Eastern oil.

Skamania County does not have an argument worth of being exempt from this responsibility. I am thankful SDS has the ability, desire and insight to contribute and lead this area in this great cause. To me providing much needed jobs and tax revenue to our area is icing on the cake.

SDS, the Friends of the Gorge and the residents of this area can show the world together we can successfully engineer local and global environmental responsibility. It's time to move past discussion and begin construction.

Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Jacki
Okay. I haven't been living in the Gorge but for a couple years. And when I drove out here from Texas and I saw these windmills I was fascinated by the beauty and the majesty of them. And I mean when I heard about this project in the paper I just thought what a beautiful way to provide clean air to the people of this area.

And I support this because I feel like it will not have any significant negative impact on any special status wildlife species. And in preparation for Whistling Ridge SDS has conducted extensive wildlife studies. And none of these special status avian species such as Northern Spotted...
Owls, Goshawks and Bald and Golden Eagles were found to be endangered by the wind farm.

And also I read where this thing is -- if this is true, this is wonderful. How can anyone not want this? But in a single year of operations the project will displace 114,000 barrels of crude oil, 132,000 tons of CO2 which is equivalent to taking 22,500 cars off the road. So it's kind of like if you feel like you have got lemons somewhere out in this project then I feel we could make lemonade out of them looking at these things providing jobs.

I see all these empty buildings in Stevenson and Carson that once was a thriving business that are no more. And I would love to see businesses reopen and taxes -- just the economy thrive again. And I feel like this would be a beautiful way to do that not only -- when you see these things turning maybe you could think of something that is -- every time it turns around in its majestic beauty you could think about all the wonderful clean air it's producing and all the jobs and the healthy economy that it could help with this too. So I definitely support it.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much. Jamie Tolfree and Dave McKenzie, are you in the audience and still wish to speak? Now is the time to step forward.

MS. TALBURT: Jamie stepped outside, sir.

MR. MCKENZIE: I can go ahead.
JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Raise your right hand.

(Dave McKenzie sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Please proceed. State us your name, spell your last name.

MR. MCKENZIE: Dave McKenzie, M-c-K-e-n-z-i-e.

JUDGE WALLIS: Your mailing address.

DAVE MCKENZIE,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF DAVE MCKENZIE

P.O. Box 461, big town of Stevenson here, 98648.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today. I appreciate you being here in Stevenson. I do support the Whistling Ridge Energy Project for the following reasons. Skamania County's ability to grow its economy and develop renewable energy projects is very limited. The Whistling Ridge Wind Energy Project is proposed for a site that is privately owned and consistent with land use requirements. It is located entirely outside the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; and, therefore, no development restrictions are imposed on this site by that legislation.

But speaking of the Gorge Scenic Act that was
passed in '86 the Federal Government has purchased more than
20,000 acres of private land in Skamania County removing
this land from the county's tax roll and to be set aside for
scenic protection, which is great. But also within that
scenic area was passed -- we still have timber harvesting in
the Gifford Pinchot, but that is pretty well all but dried
up in subsequent years.

Let me share briefly what percentage of Skamania
County land base is available for development. Total
acreage in Skamania County is about one million acres,
roughly 80 percent of that is in the Gifford Pinchot
National Forest. Another eight percent is in the Columbia
River Gorge National Scenic Area where development is
severely restricted. Six percent is in state forestland.
And four percent is in private forest commercial resource
land.

Now, in doing the math, that leaves us
three percent to develop within Skamania County, that's the
total land base available for residential, commercial,
business, industrial development. And, obviously, the
figure includes land that has already been developed. So
you really don't even have the total three percent to be
able to develop.

Historically, Skamania County has relied on
revenues from timber harvest to provide necessary services
for its residents. The secure rural schools and county's
funding is declining annually and will end soon.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. MCKENZIE: Skamania County must take advantage
of each opportunity. I believe Whistling Ridge energy is
the right project at the right time and the right place.
The project creates green economic development that is
environmentally prudent. As I stated before, it is entirely
located outside the National Scenic Area boundaries, yet
provides needed fiscal resources to support community and
tourism in Skamania County. I urge you to support siting
Whistling Ridge at its current location.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Jamie
Tolfree. Raise your right hand.

(Jamie Tolfree sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last
name.

MS. TOLFREE: My name is Jamie Tolfree,
T-o-l-f-r-e-e. P.O. Box 768, Carson, Washington 98610.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed with
your comments.

JAMIE TOLFREE,

having been first duly sworn on oath,
tested as follows:
Thank you for another opportunity to hear the citizens of Skamania County about this issue. I am a former Skamania County Commissioner, very recently former Skamania County Commissioner. I moved to the Columbia River Gorge because of its beauty. I came to Skamania County over 30 years ago as a college intern.

I consider myself a realistic environmentalist, one that looks at the environment from a global perspective and acts on it. I support the Whistling Ridge Energy Project for numerous reasons.

In 2006, Washington voters approved by ballot initiative measure I-937 to insure that Washington state has 15 percent of its renewable energy by the year 2020. This shows the majority of Washington voters want to see an increase in the development of additional renewable energy resources.

They also see the need to address climate change and move away from fossil fuels. So do I. In order to do so we need to embrace various types of alternative energy resources. Whistling Ridge Energy Project is such an opportunity. It will also help create local backup when there is a longterm electrical outage as occurred a few years ago.

On an economic level only three percent of
Skamania County's land is developable as Dave stated. He gave you much more detail, so I won't even go into that portion of it. Dave just spoke and talked about how limited our development area is because of the National Scenic legislation and environmental mandates that have occurred on Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

A point I want to make that has not really been brought up very much when you look at visibility is the fact that the Whistling Ridge Energy Project is located entirely on private property outside of the National Scenic Area on a mountaintop that is far from pristine.

JUDGE WALLIS: Maybe if you tip the mic down a little.

MS. TOLFREE: There, is that better?

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you.

MS. TOLFREE: Other ridges adjacent to the Gorge would be highly inappropriate for wind turbines; however, the proposed project is a single strand of turbines running up a ridge of a previously disturbed environment. Underwood Mountain has been inundated with private property developments in the form of orchards, vineyards and houses that are highly visible for many miles away for over 100 years.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MS. TOLFREE: This is not a pristine site.
1 Turbines will do little to further detract from this
2 developed area.
3
4 The project received a lack of objection
5 recommendations from the environmental protection agency.
6 And although they raise a few concerns about bats and birds,
7 I trust that SDS will comply with requirements imposed on
8 them by various agencies to address these potential
9 concerns.
10
11 Ultimately, Whistling Ridge project will be
12 beneficial to Skamania County, the state of Washington and
13 the world as a whole. I encourage you to support the
14 project. Thank you very much.
15
16 JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments.
17 Let me ask if there are any other people signed
18 up?
19
20 MS. TALBURT: There's no one else signed up.
21
22 JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. Are there people in the
23 audience who would like to speak? I see a lady in the back.
24 Would you step forward.
25
26 MR. POSNER: I believe she was next.
27
28 JUDGE WALLIS: We have three chairs up here for
29 people that would like to get in line. Come on and step up
30 here, please. Raise your right hand, please.
31
32 (Britney Aker sworn on oath.)
33
34 JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name and spell
your last name for us.

Ms. Aker: Britney Aker, A-k-e-r.

Judge Wallis: Thank you. What is your mailing address?

Ms. Aker: P.O. Box 1968, White Salmon, Washington 98672.

Judge Wallis: Please proceed with your comments.

Britney Aker,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

I came here with my environmental science class. This is my first public meeting. I didn't know a lot about this issue until I came here. And from things people have said I feel like we shouldn't have the wind turbines here. Because I've lived here for ten years, and ever since I've moved here I've really loved the views and the hiking and the nature.

And I feel like the animals shouldn't have to adapt to these wind turbines and have their habitat disrupted for us. Because I've heard like other energies that we're getting from the dams and stuff, a lot of it is going to California. So instead of sending it all the way
there, why don't we just use that extra energy for us. And so that's all I have to say.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much for your comments. Next person. Raise your right hand, please.

(Loreley Drach sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you pull that microphone closer, tip it up and see if you can hear yourself when you speak.

MS. DRACH: Is this better?

JUDGE WALLIS: Much better.

MS. DRACH: Thank you very much.

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name?


JUDGE WALLIS: Very good. Could you raise your right hand.

(Loreley Drach sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Now, this is a test. Your mailing address, please.

MS. DRACH: Oh, mailing address. P.O. Box 67, Underwood.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much.

THE COURT REPORTER: Could you please spell your last name.

///
LORELEY DRACH,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

D-r-a-c-h. I actually pulled my information from the Secretary of the State website. So I hope it's correct, because I'm basing my conclusions on this.

So I wanted to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to come hear the public. I think it's great that everybody has showed up. But I want to also make note there's about two million people from the state of Washington that are not here tonight, most of them don't even know this is going on.

It's the voice of this public, the voters of Washington state that I want to talk about tonight, recognizing that the millions of Washington voters weighed in on the general issue of renewables, but they just don't know yet.

In 2006, Washington voters passed Initiative 937, not resoundingly as some tend to claim, but actually by a slim margin. This much touted initiative was only -- wasn't passed by 48 -- over 48 percent of the votes. Compare this, for example, to a 2010 resolution that passed 84 to 15 percent. Now, that is a resounding endorsement.
The first sentence of I-937, Section 2 reads, the very first sentence, this is what people saw when they read this, increasing energy conservation and the use of a appropriately sited renewable energy facility builds on the strong foundation of low cost renewable hydroelectric generation in Washington state that will promote energy independence in the state and the Pacific Northwest region. That's what the people voted for, or thought they were voting for. They voted for energy conservation. They voted for appropriately sited renewable energy. They voted for energy independence within Washington state, not California.

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MS. DRACH: They voted -- I'm sorry. Apply these words to EFSEC and WRE and we do not have to get bogged down in rhetoric or the representations. When determining whether WRE will be appropriately sited logical minds can only reach one conclusion, it will not pass the definition. This project will harm wildlife. It will harm iconic views. It will harm the Gorge tourist industry and businesses serving tourism founded on breathtaking scenery, not industrial landscapes.

Anyway, I just want to finish by saying it doesn't take votes, polls or rocket science to understand it. Thank you very much for coming.

JUDGE WALLIS: If you want to submit your written...
I would like to start by saying that I am a lifelong resident who has never lived anywhere else but Skamania County in my whole entire 36 years. I am in support of -- in resounding support of the Whistling Ridge Energy Project. SD&S have been good
stewards of the land who have been more than generous in
providing access to their land for recreational purposes.
They have managed it effectively, efficiently and in
environmentally friendly ways.

Their proposal for the Whistling Ridge project
isn't being presented without exhaustive planning and
consideration for the communities it will effect. As with
every other development project there are too many
bureaucratic and emotional barriers to rational management
that would benefit the economy of Skamania County and
Washington state as a whole.

I am in support of the Whistling Ridge project and
submit that we cannot wait for science to catch up with the
immediate economic needs of a community who has been held
back by the red tape and uncertainty of what could happen.

I would encourage the Council to proceed
positively with the approval of this project. And thank you
for your time this evening.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Next
person. Raise your right hand, please.

(Peter Cornelison sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last
name, please.

MR. CORNELISON: My name is Peter Cornelison,
C-o-r-n-e-l-i-s-o-n. I live at 1003 Fifth Street, Hood
1 River, Oregon.

2 JUDGE WALLIS: Please proceed with your comments.

3

4 PETER CORNELISON,

5 having been first duly sworn on oath,

6 testified as follows:

7

8 TESTIMONY OF PETER CORNELISON

9 Thank you. I didn't have anything prepared so
10 this is off my memory. But I want to refute the testimony
11 of Tom Watson, who I believe you heard on Tuesday. He was
12 the visual guy on the proponents side. He stated that at
13 most you could see turbines at the distance of 10 miles. I
14 think that's patently false. I can see turbines from the
15 top of Mount Hood meadows which is easily 60 maybe more
16 miles from the turbines that are located out around
17 Goldendale. You can see turbines from Crown Point which is
18 on the historic Columbia River Highway in between Mosier and
19 the Dalles -- not Crown Point but -- I can't remember the
20 name of it. But anyway, I'll give that to staff.
21
22 So I think the impact of a spinning turbine really
23 catches the human eye. We're predators, we're designed to
24 see movement. I hope that's included in your visual
25 studies.

26 I don't know if you've been on your field trip
yet, but I think that's really important that you go to Goldendale and see the turbines out there.

Second point is not a dollar, not a single dollar has been set aside for mitigation when the useful life of these turbines ends. These towers could be sitting out there for perhaps hundreds of years by creating this visual impact of the scenic area, and I think that's wrong. It's not planning ahead. In effect, none of this energy production that's happening, which I'm in favor of wind energy production, but it hasn't been integrated, it hasn't been thoughtfully put together in a plan which I know you're aware of. But it just speaks to the fact that we need a bigger framework to put this into in terms of our energy portfolio.

Finally, I think it's really important for you to consider the impact, and I know you have a lot going on your shoulders, and you're going to be making the recommendation to Governor Gregoire. On this project it's going to be sort of like the Cape Cod project in terms of --

MR. POSNER: Thirty seconds.

MR. CORNELISON: -- impact nationally. It could be the first project that has been turned down, or one of the first projects that has been turned down on official grounds. So I think it's a very important decision. Thank you.
JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Next
person. Raise your right hand, please.

(Zachary Halpern sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: Could you state your name and spell
your last name, please.

MR. HALPERN: My name is Zachary Halpern,
H-a-l-p-e-r-n. P.O. Box 1296, White Salmon, Washington
98672.

Please proceed with your comments.

ZACHARY HALPERN,

having been first duly sworn on oath,
testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF ZACHARY HALPERN

So I've lived in the Gorge for nearly all my life,
and I love the area. I care a lot about the Gorge, and I
care a lot about the environment.

Initially, I didn't favor this, putting in the
wind farms, obviously, because of the harm visually. You've
heard scenic value of the Gorge, but people that are saying
that you can see it from a long ways away, you can also see
the huge smoke plumes that are created from the oil industry
and other various things like that. So pollution, man.

Also I feel that the sacrifice that will have to
be made locally is small compared -- in fact it's
infinitesimal compared to the problems that we may see if
the country doesn't wean off of -- wean itself off of oil.
And to the people that have said, you know, we're
putting the wind farms in here and the energy is going to
California, why isn't the energy going to us, we're the ones
that have to sacrifice for us? Well, ask yourselves does it
really matter who gets the energy as long as it's making a
difference somewhere, what's it matter where it's going to?
It helps, it doesn't matter where it is. It's not our
energy. We're providing for someone else. We're providing
for the nation as a whole. It's about thinking globally and
acting locally. And that's all I have to say. Thanks.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much. Next person.

Raise your right hand, please.

(Scott Pineo sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last
name.

MR. PINEO: Scott Pineo, P-i-n-e-o.

JUDGE WALLIS: Your mailing address.

MR. PINEO: 5302 Wind River Road, Carson,
Washington 98610.

JUDGE WALLIS: Please proceed with your comments.

///

///
SCOTT PINEO,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT PINEO

Thank you for persevering tonight. You've heard a lot of testimony. I'll try not to repeat a lot of the testimony that other people have given in favor of the project.

I'm an elected board member of the Stevenson Carson School District and as such have had the opportunity to witness what importance the economic development of Skamania County has. We have declining school enrollment. We have declining fiscal resources as well. This project is absolutely essential for the economic likelihood of Skamania County.

As a school director I've had the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C. at least half a dozen times to educate our congress on secure rural school's legislation and the importance of the economy of a timber dependent county.

In discussion with congressman what we hear all the time is, yeah, we can still support you with secure rural school's funding but what are you doing for yourself? How are you developing your economy? This project is
I certainly one of the ways that we can help to develop our
own economy. And I thank you for hearing our testimony
tonight.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you very much.

MS. HOLLIS: I'll be brief, I promise.

JUDGE WALLIS: Raise your right hand, please.

(Angie Hollis sworn on oath.)

JUDGE WALLIS: State your name and spell your last
name.

MS. HOLLIS: Angie Hollis, H-o-l-l-i-s.

JUDGE WALLIS: Your mailing address?

MS. HOLLIS: P.O. Box 913, Stevenson.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you. Please proceed.

ANGIE HOLLIS,

having been first duly sworn on oath,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF ANGIE HOLLIS

I'll be brief, I know everybody wants to go home. I'm definitely in support of the project. I'm also in
support of private property rights.

Main thing I wanted to say is there are wind
turbines in Maui, and I've been there three times. I knew
they were there the first time I went, I knew they were
there the second time I went and I knew they were there the
third time I went. I rented the same condo. I didn't
complain about them. It didn't really ruin my vacation or
obstruct any views. I drove past them from one beach to
another. No matter where you put them someone is going to
complain. Thank you.

JUDGE WALLIS: Thank you for your comments. Is
there anyone else who would like to speak this evening? I'm
looking around and I don't see anybody who spoke and failed
to survive. So I think you would certainly live through the
experience if you decide to comment. If you have some
thoughts and would like to express them that's why we're
here, and we very much would like to hear your comments if
you have them. In addition --

(Audience member asks a question.)

JUDGE WALLIS: If you have questions about the
project please address those to staff.

In addition, I'll remind you once more that you
are very welcome to submit your comments in writing. We
will receive those until January 15th at the end of the day.
And, again, you can talk to staff about that. You can look
at the EFSEC website and find information there about the
project and about how to submit your comments. Thank you
again for attending. And this session is concluded.

(Whereupon, the hearing adjourned at
8:10 p.m.)
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In re: Whistling Ridge Energy Project

AFFIDAVIT

I, Tami Lynn Vondran, CCR, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript prepared under my direction is a full and complete transcript of the proceedings held on January 6, 2011, in Stevenson, Washington.

TAMI LYNN VONDRAN, CCR 2157