

# Informational Meeting

## Scout Clean Energy-Horse Heaven Wind Project

March 30, 2021



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HORSE HEAVEN WIND FARM  
INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
March 30, 2021

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PRESENT AT MEETING:

Chairperson Kathleen Drew

Councilmember Stacey Brewster  
Utilities and Transportation Commission

Councilmember Robert Dengel  
Department of Ecology

Councilmember Michael Livingston  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Councilmember Lenny Young  
Department of Natural Resources

Councilmember Kate Kelly  
State Department of Commerce

Councilmember Derek Sandison  
State Department of Agriculture

Councilmember Ed Brost  
Benton County Representative

Judge Adam Torem  
Public Comment Facilitator

Bill Sherman  
Assistant Attorney General  
Counsel for the Environment

EFSEC STAFF:

Sonia Bumpus, EFSEC Manager  
Ami Kidder, Siting and Compliance Manager  
Amy Moon, Energy Facility Site Specialist & Project Manager  
Kyle Overton, Energy Facility Site Specialist  
Joan Owens, Secretary Supervisor  
Stew Henderson, Senior Policy Advisor

REPORTED BY: Katherine VanGrinsven, WA CCR No. 3415

1 March 30, 2021

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4 CHAIRPERSON DREW: I guess I can call through our  
5 list. Stacey Brewster?

6 COUNCILMEMBER BREWSTER: Hi, I'm Stacey Brewster.  
7 I'm the EFSEC Councilmember for the Utilities and  
8 Transportation Commission.

9 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Keep trying here. Okay. And now  
10 Robert Dengel?

11 COUNCILMEMBER DENGEL: Rob Dengel. I am the EFSEC  
12 rep for the Department of Ecology.

13 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Michael Livingston.

14 COUNCILMEMBER LIVINGSTON: Good evening. My name is  
15 Mike Livingston. I'm with Washington Department of  
16 Fish and Wildlife and I represent Fish and Wildlife on  
17 the Council.

18 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Lenny Young?

19 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Lenny Young representing the  
20 Department of Natural Resources.

21 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Kate Kelly.

22 COUNCILMEMBER KELLY: Hi. I'm Kate Kelly. I'm  
23 representing the State Department of Commerce on the  
24 Council.

25 CHAIRPERSON DREW: And for our Councilmembers who

1 are -- have been appointed to the -- in addition to the  
2 regular Councilmembers for the Horse Heaven Wind  
3 Project, Derek Sandison.

4 COUNCILMEMBER SANDISON: Yeah. I'm Derek Sandison  
5 representing the Washington State Department of  
6 Agriculture.

7 CHAIRPERSON DREW: And Ed Brost.

8 COUNCILMEMBER BROST: Yes. I'm representing Benton  
9 County.

10 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you.

11 If we could have our EFSEC staff introduce  
12 themselves, please.

13 MS. BUMPUS: My name is Sonia Bumpus. I am the EFSEC  
14 manager.

15 MS. KIDDER: My name is Ami Kidder. I am the EFSEC  
16 siting and compliance manager.

17 MS. MOON: Hello. My name is Amy Moon and I am the  
18 energy facility siting specialist and working as the  
19 Horse Heaven Project manager for EFSEC.

20 MR. OVERTON: Yes. And I am Kyle Overton. I'm  
21 another EFSEC site specialist with EFSEC.

22 MS. OWENS: Hi. My name is Joan Owens. I handle the  
23 administrative side of EFSEC.

24 MS. BETTS: My name is Patricia Betts and I provide  
25 support to EFSEC for conducting environmental review

1 under the State Environmental Policy Act.

2 MR. HENDERSON: This is Stew Henderson. I'm a senior  
3 policy advisor with EFSEC.

4 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you, everyone.

5 And we will hear from the counsel for the  
6 environment, who is a party to the EFSEC review of the  
7 application during our formal presentation as well.

8 So we have a few more minutes here if people continue  
9 to make sure, if you want to, you have that website  
10 open to see the presentations, the presentation slides.  
11 We will begin at 5:30.

12 (5:30 p.m.)

13 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Calling our informational meeting  
14 to order.

15 Good evening again, my name is Kathleen Drew and I am  
16 the Chair of the Washington Energy Facility Site  
17 Evaluation Council or E-F-S-E-C, EFSEC.

18 Welcome and thank you for joining EFSEC this evening  
19 for our public informational meeting and land use  
20 consistency hearing for the proposed Horse Heaven Wind  
21 Project. The purpose of EFSEC's meeting tonight is to  
22 share information about the Horse Heaven Wind Project  
23 and EFSEC's review process and to hear public comment  
24 on the project.

25 EFSEC statute RCW 80.40.090 requires EFSEC to conduct

1 a public informational meeting and land use consistency  
2 hearing within 60 days of receipt of an application for  
3 site certification.

4 The applicant, Scout Energy, submitted their  
5 application. Their application is called an ASC, and  
6 they submitted that application to us, the Energy  
7 Facility Site Evaluation Council, on February 8, 2021.

8 At this point I would ask the clerk to call the roll  
9 of the Council.

10 MS. OWENS: Department of Commerce?

11 COUNCILMEMBER KELLY: Kate Kelly present.

12 MS. OWENS: Department of Ecology?

13 COUNCILMEMBER DENGEL: Rob Dengel present.

14 MS. OWENS: Department of Fish and Wildlife?

15 COUNCILMEMBER LIVINGSTON: Mike Livingston present.

16 MS. OWENS: Department of Natural Resources?

17 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Lenny Young present.

18 MS. OWENS: Utilities and Transportation Commission?

19 COUNCILMEMBER BREWSTER: Stacey Brewster present.

20 MS. OWENS: For the Horse Heaven Project, Derek  
21 Sandison?

22 COUNCILMEMBER SANDISON: Derek Sandison present.

23 MS. OWENS: Ed Brost?

24 COUNCILMEMBER BROST: Ed Brost present.

25 MS. OWENS: Chair, there is a quorum for the EFSEC

1 regular Council and for the Horse Heaven Council.

2 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you. We will now proceed to  
3 the Scout Clean Energy presentation. Please remember  
4 to introduce your team. Thank you.

5 They are putting their presentation forward so it  
6 will be just a minute here.

7 MR. LANDESS: Can everyone hear me?

8 CHAIRPERSON DREW: We're getting feedback.

9 JUDGE TOREM: While Mr. Landess gets ready to make  
10 his presentation, can we ask all of you to check to  
11 see, if you're not a speaker, please mute your  
12 microphones. Thank you.

13 (Meeting sign-in prompts)

14 MR. LANDESS: Good evening. Can everyone hear me?

15 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Try again there. We did get  
16 feedback.

17 (Meeting sign-in prompts)

18 CHAIRPERSON DREW: That's good.

19 MR. LANDESS: Hi. Can you all hear me now?

20 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Yes, we can.

21 MR. LANDESS: Okay. I'm going to share my screen.  
22 Sorry about this.

23 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Okay. You're ready? The screen  
24 is visible.

25 MR. KOBUS: So as they say, it worked fine the last

1 time.

2 Chair Drew and Councilmembers, Scout Clean Energy  
3 appreciates this opportunity to present the Horse  
4 Heaven Wind Farm application to the Council.

5 I am Dave Kobus, the project manager, and reside in  
6 Richland, Washington. Earlier in my career I had  
7 developed the Nine Canyon Wind Project, which was built  
8 in three phases.

9 A recent change in our application warrants an  
10 announcement before we get started:

11 Scout Clean Energy has withdrawn our request for  
12 expedited processing of our application for site  
13 certification. We did this to ensure robust  
14 environmental review with the full participation of  
15 stakeholders and local area residents. This change  
16 demonstrates our willingness to pursue an environmental  
17 impact statement and participate in the associated  
18 proceedings.

19 My project team and I will share in this  
20 presentation, although condensed for the limited time  
21 available. Let me first introduce Pat Landess, senior  
22 associate project manager, who supports the project  
23 team from our home office in Boulder, Colorado. Pat  
24 has been a valuable team member for several of Scout's  
25 portfolio of projects in the Midwest and Western



1 regions and worked alongside me in the preparation of  
2 this application for site certification.

3 So, Pat, let's dig in.

4 MR. LANDESS: Thanks, Dave.

5 I'll first go over the agenda. We'll go over a brief  
6 introduction to our company, discuss what is being  
7 proposed, give a discussion of our environmental  
8 analysis, a discussion of the economic benefits to the  
9 state and local community, consultation with  
10 stakeholders and residents of the Tri-Cities region.

11 So Scout Clean Energy is a leading U.S. renewable  
12 energy developer, owner, and operator, headquartered in  
13 Boulder, Colorado. We have a local office in the  
14 Tri-Cities as well.

15 Scout was founded in 2016 and is a relatively young  
16 company, but is made up of a longstanding management  
17 team with an extensive track record for developing  
18 large scale wind projects.

19 So you've met Dave and I. I want to introduce you to  
20 Javon Smith as well. Javon is based in Bellingham,  
21 Washington, and has over 20 years experience in  
22 communications and community outreach for energy  
23 infrastructure projects.

24 For the last 12 years, her focus has been on  
25 renewables, and over the past year Javon has been

1 managing our efforts to engage with the local community  
2 in Benton County.

3 We are supported by a team of consultants that helped  
4 us to prepare the application for site certification.

5 So now I want to turn it back over to Dave, who will  
6 discuss details of what is being proposed here in  
7 Benton County.

8 MR. KOBUS: Thanks, Pat.

9 So the Horse Heaven Wind Farm Project will be located  
10 just south of the Tri-Cities. At the closest point the  
11 project is located approximately four miles  
12 south-southwest of the city of Kennewick.

13 The shaded area represents over 72,000 acres under  
14 wind and solar energy lease and easement agreements  
15 with participating landowners. The project area  
16 consists primarily of private agricultural land.

17 So when developers look for signals of a developing  
18 power market, they then commit capital to develop  
19 opportunities to meet the power supply needs, often  
20 working years in advance to be ready when the market  
21 becomes active.

22 The best approach to mitigate impacts starts with  
23 proper site selection. For wind and solar, the  
24 resource must exist and be commercially viable. In the  
25 Western U.S., the resource is a function of

1 storm-driven climate and higher-elevation topography.

2 You must have adjoining land tracts with the  
3 participating landowners. You seek areas of the  
4 country that promote new clean renewable energy  
5 development, preferably in the time frame when  
6 financial incentives are available to lower the price  
7 of energy produced. And you must have economical  
8 electrical access to power markets. So all of these  
9 factors culminate in reduced environmental impacts for  
10 the landowners and the community.

11 Now I'd like to take a step back and talk about the  
12 regional energy outlook and factors that are driving  
13 the power supply demand. In terms of energy resources,  
14 the Northwest was capacity rich for decades, meaning  
15 the capability to supply load as it varies in realtime.  
16 This created a vast energy export market. But these  
17 conditions no longer exist and, as a consequence,  
18 regional utilities must look for new sources for their  
19 energy needs.

20 Hydroelectric generation is clearly visible in the  
21 region, as the resource is a prominent river system.  
22 But other energy resources are also available within  
23 the region to take advantage of existing  
24 infrastructure.

25 The Northwest Power and Conservation Council has

1 assessed the region's power supply adequacy and it  
2 concluded the region will be facing a huge resource gap  
3 over the next decade.

4 The Council's assessment notes three main reasons for  
5 this gap. One, a booming population in the states,  
6 including Washington, which is boosting demand on the  
7 system; second, climate change is shifting the  
8 production patterns of hydroelectric plants as well as  
9 demand; and third, fossil fuels are being phased out  
10 with early retirements announced and under way.

11 In fact, this assessment determined that 8,000  
12 megawatts of new capacity is needed by 2030 to keep up  
13 with demand in the Pacific Northwest.

14 Some of the generation resources being sought in this  
15 region are clean renewable technologies, such as wind  
16 and solar, as reliability can be enhanced through a  
17 diverse power supply portfolio of all available  
18 competitive alternatives.

19 So Pat will now go over a few broader perspectives  
20 before we get into our project specifics.

21 MR. LANDESS: Thanks, Dave.

22 Renewables have become a source of low cost energy  
23 for Washington and the United States, helping the  
24 nation move towards the goal of energy independence  
25 while reducing pollution and carbon emissions.

1           The cost of wind and solar have declined rapidly over  
2 the last decade, with improved technology and US based  
3 manufacturing making it competitive with traditional  
4 energy sources.

5           Modern wind turbines are more efficient and  
6 affordable than those built even just a decade ago.  
7 Lifecycle analysis shows that a typical wind turbine  
8 has an energy payback of five to eight months and a  
9 carbon payback of one year after operation.

10          Modern wind turbines also have a recyclability rate  
11 of 85 to 90 percent. Most components are metal,  
12 including parts of the foundation, tower, gear box, and  
13 generator, which will be easily salvaged.

14          Turbine blades do represent a specific challenge.  
15 Wind turbine blades are made up of composite materials  
16 that boost the performance of wind energy by allowing  
17 lighter and longer blades. The complexities of this  
18 composite material requires specific processes for  
19 recycling.

20          For turbine blades that do enter the landfill stream,  
21 they are among the most inert and nonproblematic waste  
22 accepted, according to waste managers.

23          Over the last few years, a number of solutions have  
24 been developed to recycle wind turbine blades and a few  
25 established methods for recycling the blades are

1 currently available. Two examples of these blade  
2 recycling programs are Global Fiberglass Solutions, a  
3 Washington based company, and General Electric, GE,  
4 which is using shredded blades to replace raw materials  
5 in cement manufacturing.

6 To ensure the wind farm is removed and a landowner's  
7 property is reclaimed when the project is no longer  
8 operational, the applicant is required to post security  
9 to cover those costs. Details are included in the  
10 preliminary decommissioning plan that is part of our  
11 application for site certification. This means neither  
12 the landowners nor the local government will have to  
13 pay for removing project components.

14 MR. KOBUS: Thank you, Pat.

15 Now I would like to drive into the project details.  
16 The panoramic photo on this slide was taken from Jump  
17 Off Joe Butte facing west. The picture also shows the  
18 existing wind energy project, which is a prominent  
19 landmark feature above the Tri-Cities.

20 There's a lot happening on this side of the project  
21 layout. For those only listening, this is Figure 2.3-1  
22 on page 100 of the materials on the EFSEC website. So  
23 I need to cover several concepts about the map shown  
24 relating to the overall permitting strategy.

25 Regardless of the wind turbine manufacturer model

1       procured, the area of projected impact or the  
2       micrositing remains valid. Micrositing refers to the  
3       corridors which delineate the maximum extent of ground  
4       disturbance while allowing flexibility for  
5       unforeseeable circumstances.

6       We will primarily focus on the Option 1 Wind Turbine  
7       Layout, which is associated with the smaller size range  
8       of wind turbine models anticipated to be available when  
9       the project procurement occurs. This has the most  
10      permitted sites and represents the most impactful full  
11      build-out capability.

12      We will show all potential solar areas, as they are  
13      clustered at the points of interconnection with the  
14      Bonneville grid, thus the impacted acreage evaluated  
15      corresponds to the maximum permitted build-out  
16      potential.

17      There are two points of interconnection with the  
18      Bonneville grid, one in the southernmost or eastern  
19      part of the layout and another on the far western part  
20      of the layout.

21      Bonneville has commenced network upgrades for their  
22      Tri-Cities reinforcement project, which impacts the  
23      project's western interconnection, thus the western  
24      point of interconnection has not yet been determined.  
25      Therefore, both alternate locations are shown to assure

1 the aggregate impact is evaluated, which are the green  
2 and red lines, but only one can be chosen.

3 To be prepared for any change in Bonneville's plans  
4 and assure the most impactful option is evaluated, all  
5 alternate transmission lines are included in the  
6 layout. If Bonneville's plans proceed as currently  
7 envisioned, there will be no need for the eastern and  
8 western points of interconnection, which is the blue  
9 lines, to be tied together.

10 Scout Clean Energy has been working to develop a wind  
11 energy project in Benton County since 2016. Scout  
12 recently acquired new interconnection capacity coupled  
13 with new interconnection requests that will allow the  
14 addition of solar and battery storage components that  
15 will scale the project up to a potential 1,150  
16 megawatts of renewable energy.

17 So the project will consist of up to 244 wind turbine  
18 generator locations, with the exact model and number  
19 installed to be determined closer to construction and  
20 based on product availability. We do anticipate the  
21 project is likely to be constructed in phases.

22 Depending on the preferences of an eventual purchaser  
23 of a power sales agreement, or we refer to it as  
24 "offtaker" for the Horse Heaven energy facility, the  
25 relative wind, solar, and battery storage ratios may



1 change, where additional solar is constructed with  
2 correspondingly fewer turbines.

3 In total, the permanent disturbance footprint would  
4 include 6,869 acres for all of the alternatives scoped  
5 in the analysis, representing 1.1 percent of  
6 agriculturally zoned lands in Benton County.

7 The project will also consist of underground  
8 electrical collection lines, communication lines, two  
9 electric substations, along with operations or  
10 maintenance shops and other ancillary facilities.

11 Combining wind, solar, and battery storage systems  
12 helps to mitigate one of the biggest disadvantages of  
13 renewable power, its variability. So design elements  
14 take advantage of the availability resources and  
15 evolving technologies: For winter-peaking wind,  
16 coincident with high load demand and lower watershed; a  
17 summer-peaking solar, coincident with high irrigation  
18 load demand and low watershed, as well as dispatchable  
19 electrical energy storage.

20 Building these components at the same location can  
21 enhance grid reliability by providing electrical  
22 generation during more hours of the day as well as the  
23 ability to store power for when it's needed most.

24 Now I will talk about the equipment technologies  
25 involved in the project, starting with the wind

1 turbines.

2 So modern wind turbines are now more efficient and  
3 the best-in-class models offer superior power  
4 performance. The models being considered will be  
5 required to be certified to international standards and  
6 offer state-of-the-art grid-compatible technology.

7 The project anticipates utilizing the latest  
8 evolutionary technology to achieve the lowest cost of  
9 production, seeking manufacturing and design  
10 initiatives resulting in improved reliability,  
11 optimized maintenance access, reduced down time,  
12 improved performance, as well as lower noise.

13 We anticipate the availability of two size  
14 categories. The 3 megawatt size we refer to as "Option  
15 1," and the 6 megawatt size we refer to as "Option 2."

16 In the application we show this table for Layout  
17 Options 1 and 2 and the project will seek the most  
18 cost-effective model with available manufacturing  
19 production at the time turbine equipment is procured.

20 Including this range of turbine sizing assures we  
21 have analyzed the most impactful case for every  
22 analyzed parameter in the event any evaluated turbine  
23 model becomes unavailable.

24 I should also note that all turbine models evaluated  
25 exceed 200 feet in height and will require Federal

1 Aviation Administration approve the obstruction  
2 lighting, but not every turbine will need to be  
3 lighted.

4 For the solar technology aspect, the project will  
5 optimize a layout that minimizes additional  
6 infrastructure and utilizing best available technology.  
7 Solar arrays will have minimally invasive mounting  
8 systems for efficient maintenance access. A single  
9 axis tracking design supported by steel posts, with  
10 state-of-the-art tracking technology, maximizes energy  
11 productions by following the sun throughout the day.

12 Glare impacts will be reduced to the extent practical  
13 by designing for the installation of nonreflective  
14 materials.

15 The three sites evaluated for solar installations are  
16 located adjacent to the points of interconnection with  
17 the electrical grid. But this land is considered  
18 permanently removed from agricultural production for  
19 the life of the project but can be reclaimed after the  
20 eventual decommissioning.

21 Of the full project impact area previously mentioned,  
22 the solar arrays comprise 294 acres, which represents  
23 less than 1 percent of agriculturally zoned land in  
24 Benton County.

25 I previously mentioned the design objectives for

1 battery storage, which will consist of selfcontained  
2 battery banks that would be placed adjacent to the two  
3 solar project substations and would occupy up to  
4 approximately 6 acres each.

5 Lithium-ion batteries are generally used in  
6 utility-scale installations, with current viable  
7 technology offering four-hour duration. The battery  
8 storage system facilities will be enclosed within a  
9 separate fence.

10 The battery banks are often placed in standard-sized  
11 shipping containers on a concrete slab. Each container  
12 holds the batteries, a supervisor and power management  
13 system, cooling system, and fire prevention system.

14 Now, external inverters and transformers are also  
15 necessary for system operation.

16 By connecting multiple containers, the battery  
17 storage system can be scaled up to the desired  
18 capacity. Containers may also be stacked up to two  
19 levels, with an estimated maximum height of  
20 approximately 40 feet.

21 MR. LANDESS: So over the last four years, our  
22 technical consulting team have conducted a thorough  
23 environmental analysis and reviewed potential impacts  
24 of the proposed project. Mitigation measures for the  
25 natural environment have been developed and are part of

1 our application materials.

2 This review is a culmination of desktop and field  
3 surveys for natural resources, including air, wetlands,  
4 earth, habitat and vegetation, as well as fish and  
5 wildlife.

6 Construction activities that could create fugitive  
7 dust include transportation, clearing and grading, and  
8 trenching or plowing. These activities will be  
9 relatively low magnitude and localized and temporary,  
10 resulting in nonsubstantial air quality impacts and no  
11 exceedances of air quality standards.

12 Operation and maintenance impacts on air quality  
13 would be minimal and result from transportation of  
14 staff to perform standard and routine functions. This  
15 would be limited, intermittent, and localized.

16 Best management practices will be implemented to  
17 control project generated fugitive emissions and dust.  
18 Separate permitting would be required for activities  
19 that produce air emissions.

20 No wetlands or standing water have been identified  
21 within the micrositing corridors or the solar siting of  
22 areas to date. The project design and construction  
23 will avoid impacts to wetlands and other water bodies,  
24 like streams, when feasible. Construction and  
25 operation are anticipated to have minimal to no impacts

1 on groundwater.

2 Now, within the category of Earth, the review and  
3 mitigation plan includes geology, soils, topography,  
4 unique physical features, seismicity, and erosion.

5 Final siting intends to avoid geological hazards. No  
6 impacts expected to areas identified with combined  
7 erosion hazards and steep slopes, landslides, or  
8 liquefaction.

9 Soil erosion and sediment will be controlled during  
10 construction through the use of best management  
11 practices. Project operations are anticipated to have  
12 no impact on soil erosion.

13 Habitats were mapped and verified within the project  
14 lease boundary based on field surveys and desktop  
15 review of National Land Cover Database data. This  
16 mapping effort found that 89 percent of the project  
17 lease boundary was classified as agricultural, planted  
18 grassland, or developed to serve as land cover,  
19 indicating heavy modifications due to historic and  
20 current agricultural and grazing activities. Project  
21 facilities will be cited on previously disturbed areas  
22 to the extent feasible.

23 Regarding fish and wildlife, project-specific surveys  
24 were conducted and coordinated with state and federal  
25 agencies regarding survey methods and results beginning

1 in 2017 through 2020. No wildlife species currently  
2 listed or candidates for listing under the federal  
3 Endangered Species Act are expected to occur at the  
4 project. The project is not located within a priority  
5 area for big game.

6 The results of these studies, in coordination with  
7 wildlife agencies, informed the project engineering  
8 design to mitigate and avoid impacts to wildlife  
9 resources. In addition, a bird and bat conservation  
10 strategy was voluntarily prepared for the project to  
11 proactively address potential impacts to birds and  
12 bats. This includes best management practices for  
13 construction and operations of the proposed project.

14 An adjacent wind project has been operational since  
15 2002 and has demonstrated low impact in  
16 post-construction studies and operational monitoring of  
17 that facility.

18 MR. KOBUS: So significant analysis has been  
19 conducted to assess the environmental health aspects of  
20 the project. Health aspects include identified  
21 sensitive issues, per the State Environmental Policy  
22 Act standards, such as aesthetics, ambient noise, and  
23 shadow flicker, which were analyzed consistent with  
24 standard industry practice.

25 For example, the clip of a shadow flicker simulation

1 demonstrates the zones experiencing this phenomenon  
2 depicted by the hours per year of exposure relative to  
3 a residence.

4 In the spirit of being a good neighbor, Scout  
5 establishes setbacks to address all statutory  
6 requirements and, where not available, implements  
7 industry standards.

8 Viewshed simulations have been done for a reasonable  
9 representative number of vantage points. The viewshed  
10 analysis was performed using latest visual simulation  
11 technology that precisely represents the terrain within  
12 the visual study areas, with clear sky and bare earth  
13 producing realistic renderings to scale.

14 This clip of the two alpha designated viewpoint  
15 offers a perspective for those nonparticipating  
16 landowners and residents living closest to the project  
17 and is facing to the southeast. This represents  
18 Option 1, which are the smaller models with greater  
19 number of turbines, and the closest potential turbine  
20 is approximately 3.9 miles away.

21 Now, the visual simulation map shows vantage point  
22 distance, buffer zones, to identify the number of  
23 turbine locations with some portion of the turbine  
24 being visible, which may only be a blade tip. The  
25 greenish areas depict the fewest visible wind turbines.



1           In this landscape, more turbines are visible from  
2 further away, but the impact diminishes with distance  
3 and obstruction, such as houses or trees in the field  
4 of vision. Scout recognizes that an existing precedent  
5 has been established through the State Environmental  
6 Policy Act for a four-times-blade-tip-height setback,  
7 standard for nonparticipating residences.

8           Pre-survey activities were conducted for agency and  
9 tribal coordination, cultural resource background  
10 research, archaeological surveys, and architectural  
11 inventory. Pedestrian surveys, on the ground surveys,  
12 have been completed with all findings appropriately  
13 logged and reported. Results were consistent with  
14 those expected for the traditional land use encounter.

15           These efforts inform management recommendations for  
16 the project to avoid potentially sensitive areas. If  
17 necessary in some areas, further evaluation may  
18 demonstrate limited impact.

19           MR. LANDESS: In addition to the environmental  
20 benefits of developing renewable energy in this region,  
21 there are also significant economic benefits that will  
22 be generated within the local community. An extensive  
23 economic impact analysis was recently completed by  
24 TetraTech, which details economic impacts of  
25 construction and operation to Benton and Franklin

1 Counties.

2 There are parcels of state school trust land, which  
3 may be able to support up to ten wind turbines plus a  
4 portion of a solar project. The revenue from these  
5 parcels would go directly to the school trust.

6 The project is subject is to state and local sales  
7 and use tax and the State of Washington does offer a  
8 program of up to 100 percent exemption to sales tax on  
9 qualifying equipment, construction materials, and other  
10 items used in construction and operation of the  
11 proposed project.

12 At current levy rates, full build-out of the project,  
13 1,150 megawatts, could generate over \$19 million in  
14 just the first year of operation. Over the 35-year  
15 operating life of the project, that would bring in over  
16 \$260 million in additional tax revenue to Benton  
17 County.

18 Under current allocations, the largest proportion of  
19 those funds would support local schools as well as  
20 increased funding to emergency services and road  
21 maintenance.

22 Now, the results of our economic impact analysis also  
23 identified prospective construction jobs and long-term  
24 jobs. There's a large majority of local construction  
25 labor jobs, given the nature of the project site as a

1 metropolitan area. The low-end conservative projection  
2 for construction at full build-out is 930 jobs, and 56  
3 permanent long-term jobs are estimated for full  
4 build-out of the project.

5 MS. SMITH: Good evening, everyone. Again, my name  
6 is Javon and I'd like to take a few moments to discuss  
7 Scout's outreach efforts in the local community.

8 Over the past year, Scout has been working to provide  
9 the public with balanced and objective information on  
10 the project and potential impacts. We initiated a  
11 variety of public engagement activities beginning in  
12 February of 2020 and our efforts have sought to  
13 cultivate an open and transparent relationship with the  
14 community, where potentially interested parties were  
15 made aware of the proposal, had access to project  
16 details, and were provided opportunities to share  
17 feedback with the development team.

18 The COVID-19 outbreak created a new reality for  
19 public participation. And in adherence to public  
20 health guidelines, we limited in-person meetings and  
21 used a combination of traditional and digital media  
22 tools so that we could continue sharing information and  
23 engage with the local population.

24 Because the Mid-Columbia has a very diverse  
25 population, we also worked to ensure that project

1 information was available to minority communities  
2 through the use of print and social media as well as  
3 Spanish language radio outlets.

4 Scout's engagement with the local community has  
5 included the list you see on the screen here; we  
6 developed a project website; we have a Facebook page,  
7 an email newsletter, paid advertising to local outlets.

8 We've conducted outreach to stakeholder groups  
9 offering virtual or small group presentations, and in  
10 January 2021 we held a virtual open house where over 75  
11 people attended and were able to connect directly with  
12 the project team.

13 We also completed a public opinion survey, which I'd  
14 like to talk about a little bit more next.

15 So in December of 2020, Scout commissioned a public  
16 opinion survey to help determine community sentiment  
17 about the proposal and to help us identify those issues  
18 of greatest interest to the local community. The  
19 survey was conducted by EMC Research, a national  
20 research firm specializing in polling, focus groups,  
21 and public opinion research.

22 EMC was founded in 1989 and has been involved in  
23 thousands of public opinion studies and assisted  
24 numerous cities, towns, and public agencies with  
25 research to determine community and voter opinions on

1 local and regional issues.

2 The live telephone survey of 500 registered voters in  
3 Benton County carries an overall margin of error of  
4 plus or minus 4.4 points. The 95 percent competence  
5 interval is representative of Benton County voters.

6 So the results -- for those of you that can see the  
7 chart on the screen, I'll describe -- found that 80  
8 percent of voters think that government support for  
9 renewable energy is important and 70 percent feel  
10 support for wind energy is important. There was  
11 limited opposition to government support for wind  
12 energy sources.

13 When asked about the Horse Heaven Project  
14 specifically, the researchers found that there is  
15 strong support, both initially and after voters heard  
16 arguments for and against the project.

17 Prior to hearing any messaging about the project,  
18 Benton County voters support the project by a 19 point  
19 margin. And after hearing supporters and opponents  
20 messaging, the support for the project increased to 6  
21 in 10, about 61 percent.

22 Among supporters, the environmental benefits were the  
23 top reason for their support, and the opponents  
24 mentioned that wind farms are not cost-effective and  
25 they also listed aesthetic objections.

1           Unfortunately, there is a great deal of  
2           misinformation regarding our project, and wind energy  
3           in general, which can lead to concern and confusion  
4           about what is being proposed and how the local  
5           community might be impacted. We are always glad for  
6           the opportunity to provide information about the  
7           project and offer full transparency to those who are  
8           interested in learning more.

9           When we do have a chance to connect with local  
10          residents about their questions, we find that most  
11          concerns that are raised are alleviated with facts.  
12          Scout is dedicated to maintaining these current  
13          channels of communication with the local community  
14          throughout this permitting process. You can visit our  
15          website for more background information on Scout and  
16          the project at [horseheavenwindfarm.com](http://horseheavenwindfarm.com).

17          MR. KOBUS: Thank you, Javon.

18          Together we've covered a lot of ground tonight. So  
19          in closing I wish to say thank you to the EFSEC staff  
20          for their effort and facilitation.

21          Scout recognizes this is but the first step in a long  
22          review process and that we stand poised to be  
23          transparent and responsive with details of the various  
24          elements of the project design and analyses.

25          Thank you, Chair Drew and Councilmembers, for this

1 opportunity to present what we proudly believe is a  
2 well-sited, thoroughly evaluated, and appropriately  
3 mitigated clean renewable energy resource for this  
4 region.

5 So this concludes our prepared remarks and we stand  
6 by to respond to any questions from the Council.

7 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you for your presentation.  
8 Are there any questions from Councilmembers?

9 COUNCILMEMBER BREWSTER: This is Stacey Brewster.

10 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Yes.

11 COUNCILMEMBER BREWSTER: I have one question  
12 regarding the -- the tax revenue, you mentioned it was  
13 based on the full build-out of the 1,150 megawatts.  
14 Now, is that based on that sort of energy production?  
15 Because I understand that's not expected to produce at  
16 that capacity.

17 MR. KOBUS: I'll answer that. Appreciate the  
18 question.

19 That tax revenue is related to the property taxes  
20 that will be assessed on the value of the project. So  
21 it's not a production tax, it's a property tax that  
22 will be assessed by Benton County.

23 COUNCILMEMBER BREWSTER: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you.

25 Are other questions from Councilmembers? Okay.

1           Hearing none, we will move on to next on our agenda,  
2           which is the introduction of the counsel for the  
3           environment.

4           Under EFSEC statute, the attorney general appoints a  
5           counsel for the environment to present information on  
6           behalf of people and the environment, and we will now  
7           introduce Mr. Bill Sherman.

8           MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Chair Drew.

9           So again, my name is Bill Sherman. I'm an assistant  
10          attorney general and I'm a division chief for the  
11          environmental protection division of the AG's office.  
12          The AG has appointed me as counsel for the environment  
13          for this project.

14          Under state law, the counsel for the environment  
15          shall represent the public and its interest in  
16          protecting the quality of the environment, and so  
17          that's my role.

18          You are welcome to contact me. My email address is  
19          bill.sherman, s-h-e-r-m-a-n, @atg.wa.gov. I will put  
20          it in the chat thread.

21          Thank you very much, Chair Drew.

22          CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you.

23          Now we will move on to the EFSEC siting process  
24          presentation by Ms. Ami Kidder.

25          MS. KIDDER: Hello. Can you hear me?



1 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Yes, we can.

2 MS. KIDDER. Okay. Great. If you could just let me  
3 know if you can see my screen.

4 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Not yet. It's loading.

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: It's loading. I hope so.

6 MS. KIDDER: Has it loaded?

7 CHAIRPERSON DREW: It has not yet.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible).

9 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Windmills.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: They're what?

11 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Can people please put their  
12 telephones on mute and their audio on mute.

13 Okay. Your presentation is up.

14 MS. KIDDER: Great. Thank you.

15 Welcome, everybody. Thank you all for coming to  
16 participate this evening. My name is Ami Kidder, the  
17 siting and compliance manager with the Energy Facility  
18 Site Evaluation Council. I have a short presentation  
19 to go over the EFSEC process for those who are new to  
20 EFSEC.

21 A little bit of history of the agency. EFSEC was  
22 created in 1970 for the siting of thermal power plants.  
23 The intent was to create a one-stop permitting agency  
24 for large energy facilities.

25 EFSEC is comprised of state and local government

1 members who review each application before making a  
2 recommendation to the governor. This decision preempts  
3 other state or local governments.

4 You can see here that EFSEC is comprised of members  
5 from several different state level agencies. The  
6 chairperson is appointed by the governor, and there are  
7 standing members from five other agencies appointed by  
8 those agencies to sit on the Council.

9 The current Council is made up of Chairwoman Kathleen  
10 Drew, Robert Dengel from the Department of Ecology,  
11 Mike Livingston from the Department of Fish and  
12 Wildlife, Kate Kelly from the Department of Commerce,  
13 Lenny Young from the Department of Natural Resources,  
14 and Stacey Brewster from the Utilities and  
15 Transportation Commission.

16 There are additional agencies that may elect to  
17 appoint a Councilmember during the review of an  
18 application. These agencies are the Department of  
19 Agriculture, the Department of Transportation, the  
20 Department of Health, and the Military Department.

21 For the Horse Heaven Project, the Department of  
22 Agriculture has appointed Derek Sandison.

23 And the local government has also -- local  
24 governments also have an option to appoint a  
25 Councilmember for the review of a project in their

1 area. For the Horse Heaven Project, Ed Brost has been  
2 appointed.

3 When a project is located at or near a port, the Port  
4 Authority may also appoint a member, though this  
5 position is a nonvoting member.

6 As I mentioned previously, EFSEC was created to  
7 oversee the siting of thermal power plants. Facilities  
8 falling into EFSEC's jurisdiction include any nuclear  
9 facility where the primary purpose is to produce and  
10 sell electricity. We also oversee nonhydro, nonnuclear  
11 thermal facilities with the capacity of 350 megawatts  
12 or greater.

13 There is no threshold for alternative energy  
14 resources, such as wind or solar, et cetera, but they  
15 may choose to opt in, as well as transmission lines  
16 over 115 kilovolts.

17 Thresholds for pipelines, refineries, and storage  
18 facilities that would fall under EFSEC jurisdiction are  
19 found in the Revised Code of Washington or RCW  
20 80.50.060.

21 Here is a map of the facilities under EFSEC  
22 jurisdiction. You can see marked in red there are five  
23 operating facilities, including two natural gas  
24 facilities, one nuclear facility, and two wind  
25 facilities.

1           The blue marks indicate the three additional  
2 facilities that are approved but have yet to start  
3 construction, two being wind facilities and one solar  
4 facility.

5           The clear circle is the one facility that is  
6 currently under decommissioning.

7           EFSEC is currently reviewing applications for two  
8 facilities marked in green, including the Horse Heaven  
9 facility, which is, of course, what brings us here this  
10 evening.

11           Here is a flowchart showing the general process an  
12 applicant will go through when they submit an  
13 application to EFSEC. There are three concurrent  
14 processes during an application review. The land use  
15 consistency and adjudicative hearing process, the State  
16 Environmental Policy Act or SEPA process, and the  
17 permitting process for applicable environmental  
18 permits.

19           You can see that there are multiple processes that  
20 happen concurrently when EFSEC is reviewing an  
21 application. One process is the land use hearing and  
22 adjudicative process, one process is the state  
23 environmental policy or SEPA process, and the third  
24 process is that of identifying and preparing applicable  
25 environmental permits. All of these processes

1 ultimately feed into the Council's recommendation made  
2 to the governor.

3 When an adjudicative proceeding is required, a record  
4 is compiled and parties to the adjudication are  
5 identified. In the process of preparing for the  
6 adjudication, sometimes there are stipulations and  
7 settlements that come out between the parties. The  
8 Council looks at all the information and the  
9 adjudication record and then deliberates.

10 Finally the Council draws up their findings and  
11 conclusions from the information provided throughout  
12 these proceedings and incorporate those findings in  
13 their recommendation to the governor.

14 With regards to the SEPA process, when a decision to  
15 prepare an Environmental Impact Statement or EIS is  
16 made, public comments are taken on the scope of the  
17 EIS. After public comments for scoping, the SEPA  
18 responsible official determines the scope of the EIS.  
19 A draft EIS is prepared and issued with a minimum  
20 30-day public comment period, after which the final EIS  
21 is prepared and released.

22 When an applicant requests expedited process, a  
23 review is done to establish whether or not the project  
24 meets the criteria of a Determination of  
25 Nonsignificance, a DNS, or a Mitigated Determination of

1 Nonsignificant, or MDNS. If the SEPA responsible  
2 official determines that a project meets the criteria  
3 of a DNS or MDNS, an EIS is not required.

4 In this process, the determination is noticed to the  
5 public and there is a minimum 15-day public comment  
6 period on an MDNS.

7 To be considered for expedited processing, an  
8 applicant must make the request in writing. The  
9 project must meet two criteria: One, it must be  
10 determined to be consistent with local land use policy;  
11 and two, the SEPA determination must be that of an DNS  
12 or MDNS.

13 In this process no adjudication is required. The  
14 Council prepares their recommendation to the governor  
15 in an expedited time frame under this process.

16 EFSEC is the issuing agency for any applicable  
17 environmental permits a facility may require, which may  
18 include water quality or air quality permits. The  
19 permits are identified and included in the final order  
20 with the Council's recommendation to the governor.

21 At the conclusion of the Council's review of an  
22 application, a recommendation is made to the governor  
23 to either approve or reject the application. This  
24 initiates a 60-day window within which the governor  
25 will then approve the application, reject the

1 application, or remand the application back to the  
2 Council for reconsideration. Any application that is  
3 rejected by the governor is the final decision for that  
4 application.

5 If an application is approved by the governor, EFSEC  
6 then has oversight of the environmental compliance for  
7 the life of the facility. EFSEC has standing contracts  
8 with applicable state agencies that assist in the  
9 monitoring and enforcement of the conditions, either in  
10 the site certification agreement, applicable permits,  
11 or stipulations in the EIS or MDNS.

12 EFSEC's enforcement authority extends to the issuance  
13 of any penalties as they may apply.

14 And that wraps up my presentation for this evening.  
15 Before I end, I'd like to remind everyone how they can  
16 submit comments for this proposal. If you'd like to  
17 sign up to speak this evening, you may call the EFSEC  
18 main line at (360) 664-1345. You may email comments to  
19 our main inbox at efsec. -- or sorry --  
20 efsec@utc.wa.gov.

21 You may also send in written comments by postal mail  
22 to our office at 621 Woodland Square Loop, P.O. Box  
23 43172, Olympia, Washington, 98504-3172.

24 Comments may also be submitted to our online comment  
25 database at <https://comments.efsec.wa.gov>.

1           There are two databases available for the duration of  
2           the meeting, one for general comments and one for  
3           comments specific to land use, and both of these will  
4           be open until midnight.

5           Thank you.

6           CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you, Ms. Kidder.

7           We will now proceed to the public comment period. I  
8           would ask for Judge Adam Torem to now facilitate the  
9           next part of our meeting.

10          JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Chair Drew.

11          We are going to take public comment and I'm going to  
12          ask Ms. Kidder to tell us how many people are signed up  
13          for public comment. It's now 6:30 p.m. We're  
14          allocated another hour for public comments and we'll  
15          see if we need to extend that.

16          Ms. Kidder?

17          MS. KIDDER: Um, I'm actually not in charge of the  
18          sign-up list. I believe we are at 64 speakers signed  
19          up at this moment.

20          MS. BUMPUS: That's correct. This is Sonia Bumpus --

21          JUDGE TOREM: All right. Who's got the list --

22          MS. BUMPUS: -- that's correct.

23          JUDGE TOREM: -- because I don't have that. Maybe  
24          we could put the list in the chat so I know who to call  
25          on.



1           While we're getting that list in the chat, I just  
2           want everybody who's on the line tonight to be aware of  
3           certain ground rules and the way EFSEC wants to conduct  
4           its public hearings.

5           First off, obviously the Council is committed to  
6           providing a full, fair, and safe opportunity for all  
7           voices to be heard in a respectful atmosphere. It's  
8           very clear to me that monitoring the chat tonight,  
9           there are people who favor this project and there are  
10          people who oppose this project. That's fine. We're  
11          going to hear all of you and consider all of your  
12          comments.

13          If we were doing this public hearing in town in  
14          Benton County -- we'd love to but, as you know, we  
15          can't be there tonight due to restrictions with the  
16          coronavirus and COVID-19 -- in town there's a  
17          predilection for people to cheer for things that they  
18          like or boo or hiss for things they don't. On the  
19          phone tonight we're asking you, of course, not to do  
20          that but to keep your microphones muted if you are not  
21          speaking.

22          So here tonight I'm anticipating it will be less  
23          lively than it might be if we were there in town and we  
24          could see the expressions on your faces or maybe see  
25          how you were reacting. But we need to give respect to

1 everybody who's going to talk tonight, even in this  
2 virtual atmosphere.

3 What I want you to understand is everybody's going to  
4 be treated respectfully and be heard. So tonight  
5 that's a little bit easier, I hope, virtually and those  
6 are the grounds rules, so everybody has dignity and  
7 respect and their opinion is heard.

8 What I'm going to do is once we get a list of how  
9 many speakers and the names that are signed up, I can  
10 call on you individually. I'll give you probably two  
11 to three minutes, maybe longer if we have more time.

12 I want you to understand that your comments are  
13 simply that. They may have questions, but tonight this  
14 isn't the forum in which the applicant necessarily, or  
15 the County -- Benton County's deputy prosecuting  
16 attorney will talk later in the land use hearing, but  
17 neither of those potential new parties to the hearing  
18 or members of the Council are going to have the  
19 opportunity to actually respond to your questions in  
20 this forum.

21 Staff will be, as you know, recording this meeting,  
22 and if you identify yourself and provide either a phone  
23 number in the chat or an email address in a written  
24 form of the comment, you have a great chance of hearing  
25 back individually to your question and comment so it

1 can be addressed specifically.

2 All of your questions are going to become part of the  
3 record tonight, but I encourage you to put those same  
4 comments in writing and submit them so that people can  
5 read them. Some people are audio learners, some people  
6 are visual learners. It will help to see that in any  
7 format. And again, repeating those comments in writing  
8 is recommended.

9 Finally, I'm looking at a list that I can't see the  
10 names on, Ms. Bumpus, but I can see there's a list of  
11 20 now in the chat but it's too big in the chat for me  
12 to see the actual names.

13 With 20 different speakers, it's likely that some of  
14 your comments are going to overlap. So if you're  
15 listening tonight and you're later in the commenting  
16 queue and you heard somebody you agree with and they  
17 captured the essence of your comments, please keep it  
18 brief and just say, "I agree with Mr. Smith" or "I  
19 agree" or "disagree wholeheartedly with Mrs. Jones and  
20 here's why." But you don't need to repeat something  
21 that the Council's already heard, unless you have a  
22 specific way of putting it that's in, again, a  
23 respectful manner for the Council to hear your opinion.

24 Chair Drew, is there anything else you want me to add  
25 before I ask for the first speaker to be called?

1 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Thank you. At this point no. I  
2 think those are the first 20 speakers. And if you  
3 expand the arrow, you can expand and see the names in  
4 the chat.

5 MS. BUMPUS: And, Judge Torem, this is Sonia Bumpus.  
6 I just wanted to let you know that Joan Owens does have  
7 the list, she's posted it there, but she is planning on  
8 being the timekeeper for the two minutes.

9 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Ms. Owens, can you tell me  
10 the names of the first three commenters we're going to  
11 be calling tonight?

12 MS. OWENS: Yes. One moment please. Bill Boyce is  
13 first and Will McKay is second and Greg Wendt is  
14 third.

15 JUDGE TOREM: All right. I only heard portions of  
16 what you said, so perhaps you can put the names in the  
17 chat so I can read them.

18 MS. OWENS: Okay. I also emailed it to you just now.

19 JUDGE TOREM: All right. I'll see what I can do to  
20 pull that up. Bear with me, please.

21 CHAIRPERSON DREW: And Ms. Owens will put on the  
22 Skype screen the time when the speaker begins.

23 Isn't that correct?

24 MS. OWENS: That is correct.

25 JUDGE TOREM: All right. We have our first speaker,

1 his name is Bill Boyce.

2 Mr. Boyce, are you on the line? Mr. Boyce, are you  
3 still present tonight?

4 MS. OWENS: He may need to unmute his microphone.  
5 I'm going to try unmuting everybody that's currently  
6 muting.

7 Is Bill Boyce unmuted?

8 JUDGE TOREM. All right. I'm going to move on to the  
9 next speaker. That is Commissioner, from Benton  
10 County, Will McKay.

11 Commissioner McKay, are you on the line?

12 COMMISSIONER MCKAY: Yes, I'm here.

13 JUDGE TOREM: All right. I'm going to -- hopefully  
14 you can see the two-minute timer and I'm going to give  
15 you your two minutes.

16 Joan, are you ready? There we go.

17 Go ahead.

18 COMMISSIONER MCKAY: Thank you for the opportunity.

19 After detailed review of the submitted application,  
20 February 8th, Benton County commissioners oppose this  
21 project. The location and size and scope of this  
22 project is inconsistent with the County's --

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I can hear it.

24 COMMISSIONER MCKAY: -- goal of preserving rural --

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I can hear him from over there.

1           COMMISSIONER MCKAY: -- character, enhancing natural  
2 resource-based industries, preserving agricultural  
3 lands and long-term commercial significance, and  
4 preserving the natural-setting views and rich history  
5 of Benton County and the greater Tri-Cities area.

6           The County has received over 400 calls and emails  
7 from area residents regarding this project and also  
8 hosted a public townhall meeting. The overwhelming  
9 majority, approximately 90 percent of the people that  
10 provided comments, do not support this proposal.

11           They have wide-range concerns, including loss of  
12 habitat, agricultural, negative impacts to wildlife,  
13 property values decreasing, concerns relating to health  
14 and noise, and impacts to viewsheds related to the  
15 county's natural setting, history, and tourism. People  
16 in Benton County and the Tri-City region are deeply  
17 about preserving their ridges and skylines for future  
18 generations.

19           This project is being proposed to occur only four  
20 miles south of one of the largest urban areas in  
21 Eastern Washington. The 24-mile-long proposal is  
22 situated in an area with unique geological features,  
23 compromised [sic] in natural vegetation, steep slopes,  
24 native habitat, and commercially significant  
25 agricultural land, visual resources.

1           As referred to in the applicant's proposal, the wind  
2           turbines will be visible from up to 87 percent of the  
3           land within a 10-mile radius of the project. The  
4           visual impacts will be significant with the turbines  
5           likely to be able to be seen from the majority of the  
6           incorporated cities and densely populated county  
7           neighbors, as far as Franklin County, Walla Walla  
8           County, and the state of Oregon.

9           The local municipalities --

10          UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you.

11          COMMISSIONER MCKAY: -- utility districts, have not  
12          shown any interest in needing or wanting the additional  
13          energy created by the project. This is why -- these  
14          are -- these and many other concerns are examples of  
15          why we, the Benton County Commissioners, are opposed to  
16          this project.

17          In summary, Benton County finds that this proposed  
18          project as submitted, with it's significant adverse  
19          environmental impacts, is not consistent and does not  
20          comply with the goals and policies of the Benton County  
21          comprehensive plan --

22          JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Commissioner McKay.

23          COMMISSIONER MCKAY: -- the criteria required to  
24          obtain a Benton County conditional --

25          JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Commissioner McKay.

1 (Inaudible) --

2 COMMISSIONER MCKAY: -- use permit, and the  
3 requirements of the Benton County critical area  
4 ordinances.

5 JUDGE TOREM: -- (inaudible) time.

6 COMMISSIONER MCKAY: Further, the public has  
7 overwhelmingly stated its desire to preserve and  
8 protect the region's unique geological features, ridge,  
9 and skyline for future generations.

10 Once again, the Benton County Commissioners wish to  
11 thank you for the opportunity to comment and to let the  
12 Council know that Benton County Commissioners do not --

13 JUDGE TOREM: Okay. I've muted Commissioner McKay's  
14 microphone. His comment time is over.

15 Thank you, Commissioner McKay.

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Oh.

17 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Son of a bitch.

18 JUDGE TOREM: I'm going to ask the others --

19 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I agree with him 100 percent.

20 JUDGE TOREM: I'm going to ask the others to mute  
21 their microphone or we'll ask you to submit your  
22 comments in writing. As I said, we need to have  
23 decorum in this.

24 All right. The previous speaker that we invited was  
25 Bill --



1 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: He said we were allowed to --

2 JUDGE TOREM: -- Bill Boyce.

3 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: -- say that we agree.

4 JUDGE TOREM: When I call on people, you can say you  
5 agree if you're signed up for speaking. If you're not  
6 signed up, this is a great time to mute your  
7 microphone.

8 Is Bill Boyce available?

9 Okay. The next speaker that's signed up, we have two  
10 from the Benton County Planning Office, there is Greg  
11 Wendt, he'll be followed by Michelle Cooke.

12 Mr. Wendt, are you ready?

13 MR. WENDT: ...project does not comply with the  
14 following:

15 One, the Washington State Growth Management Act,  
16 specifically as it relates to the preservation of  
17 agricultural lands;

18 Number 2, numerous provisions in the Benton County  
19 comprehensive plan, specifically goals and policies  
20 that understand the uniqueness of the Horse Heaven  
21 Hills, to protect our agricultural lands, protect  
22 naturally vegetative steep slopes, wildlife, and  
23 habitat; value the county's ridgelines and scenic  
24 views, facilitate tourism, support a robust  
25 agricultural economy, and protect the county's rural

1 character;

2 Number 3, the Benton County zoning ordinance,  
3 including the conclusions required to obtain a  
4 conditional use permit;

5 And No. 4, the Benton County critical area  
6 regulations.

7 Further, it's been determined through this review  
8 that this project is likely to have a significant  
9 adverse environmental impact. At a minimum, the County  
10 would like to see additional studies and analysis  
11 completed for impacts the project will have, including  
12 the following:

13 Commercially significant agricultural lands; the  
14 county's habitat, including our locally important  
15 habitats; streams and water; our aquifer recharge  
16 areas; public roadways; wildland wildfire risks; shadow  
17 flicker; and of course the most important of all,  
18 probably the viewshed and visual impacts, as this  
19 facility is located approximately four miles south of  
20 the Tri-Cities urban area.

21 While this is just a brief overview of our findings,  
22 the County did submit additional information into the  
23 record earlier today with more specific references.  
24 Michelle Cooke, from the planning division, will also  
25 provide additional details this evening.

1 I appreciate your time this evening and thank you.

2 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Wendt.

3 Michelle Cooke, are you on the line?

4 MS. COOKE: I am.

5 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Are you ready?

6 MS. COOKE: I am.

7 Thank you --

8 JUDGE TOREM: Please go ahead.

9 MS. COOKE: -- for your time this evening. I  
10 appreciate your time and attention and would briefly  
11 like to discuss a few highlights from the County's  
12 review of the application as it relates to the  
13 project's adverse environmental impacts.

14 The Horse Heaven Hills are an iconic geological  
15 feature which visually define Benton County. The  
16 expanse of this project would cover over 43 percent of  
17 the entire ridgeline.

18 Additionally, the proposed project would visually  
19 impact over 81 percent of properties within a ten mile  
20 radius of the project site, including the greatest  
21 visual impact to densely established residential  
22 neighborhoods. For this reason, the County maintains  
23 that there would be a significant adverse environmental  
24 impact to the existing neighborhoods, which would  
25 affect an overwhelming majority of local residents.

1           Due to the size and the scope of the proposed project  
2 and the fact that nearly 7,000 acres or 1 percent of  
3 the county's agricultural lands would be permanently  
4 disturbed, the County requests that further studies  
5 analysis, which address the loss of such a considerable  
6 amount of the county's agricultural lands of long-term  
7 commercial significance, should be required.

8           The County has identified shrub-steppe habitat as a  
9 habitat of significant local importance. To date it  
10 appears that only 44 of the proposed 244 turbines sites  
11 and none of the solar sites have been adequately  
12 studied.

13           The County requests that all potential sites be fully  
14 studied and evaluated to identify site-specific impacts  
15 and appropriate mitigation measures for habitat  
16 conservation and wildlife connectivity.

17           The application further states that 149 acres of the  
18 project site is located within the designated critical  
19 aquifer recharge area. This area is equivalent to  
20 roughly 25 percent of the entire Rock/Glade Watershed's  
21 mapped CARA areas for dry land and range land.

22           Such a large impact to the watershed CARAs has the  
23 potential to significantly change the hydrology and  
24 increase groundwater contamination in these areas due  
25 to the degradation or loss of the protection area as

1 well as the significant increase to impervious  
2 surfaces.

3 With this, the County's requesting that a  
4 site-specific study with a hydrogeological evaluation  
5 be conducted to assess the project's impact on the  
6 area's ability to recharge groundwater.

7 Thank you for your time this evening.

8 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Ms. Cooke. I appreciate  
9 your wrapping up quickly.

10 For those listening tonight, I want you to understand  
11 the context of these public comments are just the  
12 beginning of an extensive evidentiary process that will  
13 be collected. This is just the first opportunity for  
14 first impressions on a project that we'll be going  
15 through, as Scout Clean Energy indicated tonight, a  
16 full environmental impact statement. So many of the  
17 things that Commissioner McKay and those in the County  
18 Planning Department are asking for will be extensively  
19 researched and another opportunity for public comment  
20 on those specific environmental aspects will be offered  
21 at a later time, hopefully located right in your  
22 community, not online like we're doing tonight. We'll  
23 see how things go in the months ahead when we can come  
24 safely to Benton County.

25 We're going to call --

1 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible).

2 JUDGE TOREM: -- the next couple of speakers. The  
3 next one is Doug Nordwall, followed by Bill Jenkins,  
4 and then -- I'm sure I'm butchering the name -- Gunnar  
5 Leidel.

6 Is Doug Nordwall ready to speak?

7 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible) connected to Galaxy  
8 S-10.

9 JUDGE TOREM: I'm going to ask only Mr. Nordwall to  
10 please open his microphone if he's ready to speak.

11 All right. I don't hear Mr. Nordwall, so we'll call  
12 you again in a moment. Bill Jenkins is next.

13 Mr. Jenkins, are you available?

14 All right. I don't hear Bill Jenkins either. Maybe  
15 Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Nordwall have submitted comments in  
16 writing.

17 Next is Gunnar Leidel, and then he'll be followed  
18 hopefully by John Christensen and Staci West.

19 Mr. Leidel?

20 MR. LEIDEL: Yes. Can you hear me now?

21 JUDGE TOREM: I can. I'm going to mute my microphone  
22 and ask the timer to start. Go ahead, sir.

23 MR. LEIDEL: All right. My name is Gunnar Leidel. I  
24 live in (inaudible) area. A lot of the things have  
25 been talked up already tonight. I (inaudible), but I

1 would --

2 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just the court reporter, I  
3 cannot hear anything.

4 MR. LEIDEL: I would like to point out that  
5 (inaudible) meeting (inaudible) March, there was a  
6 couple of things brought up as far as the --

7 (Burping noise)

8 MR. LEIDEL: -- allowed the (inaudible), they're very  
9 low, lower than a lot of (inaudible) thought, and just  
10 the fact that the construction, the over (inaudible)  
11 men and women that would be working on this job, that  
12 money will go back into our community. So I would just  
13 say I support this and I (inaudible).

14 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible).

15 MR. LEIDEL: Thank you.

16 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Leidel.

17 Is John Christensen available?

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Place your phone on the table and  
19 leave it alone.

20 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible).

21 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yes, this is John.

22 JUDGE TOREM: All right. And again, I'm going to ask  
23 those of you that may have your phones unmuted to  
24 please mute them. I can hear someone indicating just  
25 to leave their phone on the table and leave it alone.

1 If that household can please mute their phone, that  
2 would help with the sound qualities so we can hear  
3 everybody's opinion.

4 Mr. Christensen, I'm going to ask the timer to start.  
5 Go ahead, sir.

6 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Yes. I'm a long-time resident of  
7 South Kennewick. As a property owner in the Horse  
8 Heaven Hills, I strongly oppose this project. Wind  
9 energy is not good --

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible) the fuck is that?

11 MR. CHRISTENSEN: -- for the Pacific Northwest and  
12 the local utilities have just chose not to support this  
13 project.

14 I support the proposal and it is -- I support the  
15 Benton County's comprehensive plan update and I believe  
16 that this proposal is in violation of that  
17 comprehensive plan.

18 Also, this wind farm proposal is in violation of a  
19 wildlife priority area. This is within the boundaries  
20 of the United States Department of Agriculture's  
21 Ferruginous Hawk SAFE Program. This an area in Benton  
22 County created to address priority national resource  
23 concerns, primarily the ferruginous hawk, whose  
24 populations continue to decline.

25 On the federal level, this is a species of special



1 concern. Washington State considers the ferruginous  
2 hawk as a threatened species, but the Fish and Wildlife  
3 Commission is in the process of changing status from  
4 threatened to endangered.

5 So simply, you should not, you cannot, construct a  
6 kill-zone line of wind turbines in the middle of this  
7 priority area. Any deaths to this threatened species  
8 within this area and attributed to wind turbines would  
9 be completely unacceptable.

10 In conclusion, I cannot mitigate -- you cannot  
11 mitigate to nonsignificance this visual pollution of a  
12 24-mile spinning picket fence of enormous wind  
13 turbines, with nighttime flashing lights and daytime  
14 flickering blades, located within sight of 300,000  
15 community residents.

16 Thank you.

17 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Christensen.

18 Next up is going to be Staci West followed by I  
19 believe it's Jacob LaRivera and Markus Soffer [sic].

20 Ms. West, are you on the line?

21 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible) missing anymore?

22 JUDGE TOREM: Staci West?

23 Is Jacob LaRivera ready go? Mr. LaRivera?

24 All right. Let me go back to the people that we  
25 tried to call earlier. Doug Nordwall? Bill Jenkins?

1 All right. Staci West? Mr. Jacob LaRivera?

2 All right. Moving on then to Markus Soffer.

3 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think all the people are  
4 muted.

5 JUDGE TOREM: Well, they'll take themself off mute if  
6 they're ready to speak.

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I believe the phone bridge --

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I don't believe they can.

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- may also have a mute.

10 (Dog barking)

11 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Does the phone bridge \*6 work to  
12 unmute?

13 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

14 JUDGE TOREM: Markus Soffer?

15 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: People, you can put --

16 MR. STAUFFER: This is Markus Stauffer. Can you --

17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: -- \*6 to unmute yourself.

18 MR. STAUFFER: -- hear me?

19 JUDGE TOREM: I'm sorry. Did I hear Markus Soffer,  
20 please?

21 MR. STAUFFER: Yes. My name is Markus Stauffer. Can  
22 you hear me?

23 JUDGE TOREM: I can hear you, Mr. Soffer. We're  
24 going to start your time now. We'll call back to the  
25 other people again.

1           Go ahead, Mr. Soffer.

2           MR. STAUFFER: I started the website a year ago, it's  
3           called save-our-ridges.org, and I did that to collect  
4           information about this huge project and to share it  
5           with others.

6           I live in Pasco in Franklin County. I would like to  
7           point out that tourism is big business in our region.  
8           We've got a lot of people here to go to the vineyards  
9           and sample wine at Red Mountain, play golf here, or  
10          some even retire here when they're tired of the rain on  
11          the West Side.

12          I talked to the tourism office, Tri-City Visitor  
13          Bureau, and they told me in 2019 tourism brought in  
14          \$560 million in revenue and created 6,370 jobs with  
15          54 million in taxes. So the Scout numbers pale in  
16          comparison to that. People don't come here to look at  
17          giant industrial operations on the horizon.

18          We don't need the electricity. We already produce --  
19          UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible) comment. Why don't  
20          you let people know how to unmute themselves?

21          MR. STAUFFER: We produce about 40 percent of all  
22          electricity in Washington state, and much of that goes  
23          to the West Side. We don't need it here.

24          I'd like to leave you a final image here that you can  
25          relate to. Picture a panorama of the Seattle skyline

1 with the Space Needle. Then imagine 244 space needles  
2 lined up from Seattle all the way to Tacoma. That's 25  
3 miles as the crow flies. So this is the scale of the  
4 Horse Heaven Hills Wind Farm Project, 25 miles of 500  
5 to 670 foot towers. We don't wish that on Seattle, so  
6 please don't do that to the Tri-Cities.

7 Thank you.

8 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Stauffer.

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible) rocks (inaudible).

10 JUDGE TOREM: I've seen some comments and questions  
11 in the chat and I've heard a few of you pipe up and ask  
12 for how to unmute yourself. If you're on Skype, at the  
13 bottom of the screen, there should be some visual cues  
14 there as to a microphone or a video. No, we don't need  
15 the video tonight, but your microphone can be showed --

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible) --

17 JUDGE TOREM: -- as muted or unmuted.

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: -- (inaudible). Sit on your  
19 bottom, please.

20 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Most people are on phone, so  
21 how do we --

22 JUDGE TOREM: Those people that are on phone --

23 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: -- unmute ourselves? Yes.

24 JUDGE TOREM: Those people that are on telephone  
25 tonight and have some reason we can't hear you, you

1 can't unmute, I encourage to you hang up and call back  
2 in. That should reset your microphone.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible).

4 JUDGE TOREM: I'll call those people who may have  
5 been missed because of a mute issue again shortly.

6 The next, moving on for time tonight, Tom Blakney and  
7 then Scott "Lee-vy" or "Le-vy," followed by Brent  
8 Strecker.

9 Is Mr. Tom Blakney available?

10 MR. BLAKNEY: I am here.

11 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Blakney, thank you very much. I'm  
12 going to ask for your timer to start and we'll go from  
13 there. Go ahead, sir.

14 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I need to (inaudible) --

15 MR. BLAKNEY: My name is Tom Blakney. I am a --

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: -- (inaudible), but I can't get  
17 it to go off.

18 MR. BLAKNEY: -- retired person that has long roots  
19 in Benton County, and also Sherman County, Oregon. My  
20 families were pioneers of both states. My great  
21 grandfather was John Golden, who founded Goldendale,  
22 which in 1980 became the site of the first Boeing Mod-2  
23 developmental wind turbines.

24 I currently have farming interests in Benton County,  
25 where Scout intends to build the Horse Heaven Wind

1 Farm. As a result, I am all for using wind for power  
2 generation. As the farming friend said, "We have  
3 become so used to cussing the wind, it would be a great  
4 change to be able to encourage it to blow."

5 The technical aspects of generating wind power are  
6 well understood, however the social aspects are fuzzy  
7 because of a lot of bad intentions and mistaken  
8 assumptions. I believe the fears of towers falling,  
9 the flicker and the noise of the blades as they turn  
10 and the flashing of required airport lights are blown  
11 completely out of perspective, as well as saying that  
12 turbines will ruin somebody's viewscape.

13 The Horse Heaven Wind Project will be located on the  
14 south side of the Horse Heaven Hills and is miles away  
15 and barely viewable from the Kennewick and Prosser  
16 areas. Without a doubt these fears are largely  
17 manufactured to support a presumed right of a private  
18 individual who wish to have their way and would like to  
19 micromanage their neighbor's property use.

20 Most property owners have mineral rights going very  
21 deeply underground. I believe that property rights  
22 also include using the airspace above the property for  
23 almost anything, including fruit trees, buildings, and  
24 wind power.

25 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Martha, would you stop?

1 MR. BLAKNEY: That's all. Thank you.

2 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Blakney.

3 Next is Scott "Le-vy" --

4 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I can't start the car.

5 JUDGE TOREM: -- or Scott "Lee-vy."

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I don't (inaudible).

7 MR. LEVY: Yeah, Scott Levy here. Is this -- am I --

8 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Mr. Levy, go ahead. We'll  
9 start --

10 MR. LEVY: -- audible?

11 JUDGE TOREM: -- your timer. Yeah, I can --

12 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: What do you want me to do? I  
13 can't start it.

14 JUDGE TOREM: -- hear you just fine.

15 I'm going to ask others to please self-mute their  
16 microphones. If I can figure out how it is, we'll do  
17 that.

18 Can you restart the timer for him?

19 Go ahead, Mr. Levy.

20 MR. LEVY: Yeah. My name is Scott Levy and this -- I  
21 was looking at the viewsheds and things like that and  
22 the ones I saw, there is some -- that the turbines were  
23 somewhat close. And if you guys find that you have to  
24 get rid of some of the turbines because of viewshed --  
25 I mean, like the previous caller was talking about, you

1 know, most of these are totally out of sight because  
2 it's on the other side of the hill there -- but if you  
3 have to get rid of some, I would suggest that the  
4 megawatts be replaced with expanding your solar. The  
5 size of the project's wonderful.

6 And when you do those solars, I think that you should  
7 be pointing them east or at least have a fair amount of  
8 them pointing east, maybe the ones that are replacing  
9 the wind turbines should be pointing east.

10 The western --

11 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: There's the dog, right there.

12 MR. LEVY: -- or the WAC, whatever it's called,  
13 western grid, could really use some more of that early  
14 sunrise, that dislocation --

15 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I can't get the car to start.

16 MR. LEVY: -- (inaudible) providing.

17 I won't be able to start your car, but thanks --

18 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible) get the car  
19 (inaudible).

20 MR. LEVY: -- for taking my comment.

21 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Levy, thank you very much.

22 Brent Strecker is the next speaker.

23 MR. STRECKER: Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

24 JUDGE TOREM: Yeah. If you'll speak up a little bit  
25 more and project, that will make it so the Council can



1 hear you as well. Go ahead, Mr. Strecker.

2 MR. STRECKER: Okay. Now can you hear me okay?

3 JUDGE TOREM: That's better, sir. Go ahead.

4 MR. STRECKER: Okay. Thank you. Yeah. This is Brent  
5 Strecker. Benton County's been my home for over 50 years.  
6 I enjoy the outdoors and have hiked and biked the Horse  
7 Heavens my entire life.

8 I totally oppose the Horse Heaven Hills wind farm being  
9 pushed on us by Scout Energy. Just last year I was able to  
10 spot two large owls in one of the canyons. I witness  
11 hundreds of sandhill cranes flying directly into the path of  
12 the proposed wind turbine area year-round. The seemingly  
13 thorough Horse Heaven wind farm bird and bat conservation  
14 strategy does not reflect reality regarding the number of  
15 birds in this migratory byway.

16 With regards to the massive 500 foot, hundred-mile-an-hour  
17 blades, this is a much different situation in location and  
18 size than the nearby Nine Canyon turbines. It will be a  
19 meat grinder. The (inaudible) wind turbines are not a  
20 novelty or a celebrated symbol of the environment virtue to  
21 many of us here in Eastern Washington who live -- or to have  
22 to live with them as an intruding presence along every path  
23 we travel in our -- of our community and as our backdrop to  
24 our favorite fishing, hunting, hiking --

25 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Here, here.

1 MR. STRECKER: -- and sightseeing destinations. While  
2 Governor Inslee continues to promote rapid and widespread  
3 wind and solar power development in hydro-rich, already  
4 clean Washington, I question whether this would be the case  
5 if the sprawling wind farm with over 240 structures nearly  
6 as tall as the Space Needle are -- and covering 25 miles of  
7 the horizon were being built in his backyard.

8 The idea that my wife (inaudible) to live with the --  
9 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Baby crying and dog barking).

10 MR. STRECKER: Some people can't get it, can they?

11 CHAIRPERSON DREW: Person with the dog, mute your mic.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Jesus Christ.

13 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Strecker, I apologize for the  
14 interruptions tonight. There's only so much control that I  
15 have on the virtual environment here. I --

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Unbelievable.

17 JUDGE TOREM: -- encourage you again because I want to  
18 hear what you have to say to submit your comments in writing  
19 or summarize them and put them into the portal tonight that  
20 was described earlier.

21 For those of you again that are in a car or you're on your  
22 phone, if could you self-mute your microphones that will  
23 help. I'm trying to police this as best I can with the  
24 technology.

25 Greg Gales is the next speaker. And then we'll hear from

1 Kayne Segura and then from Mike Wingfield I believe it is.

2 Is Greg Gales on the line? While we wait for Mr. Gales,  
3 I'm going to go back and ask is Bill Boyce on the line? We  
4 missed you earlier. Last call for Bill Boyce. All right.  
5 Mr. Boyce, if you're on the line and you're muted for some  
6 reason, please submit your comments in writing. I'm not  
7 going to call your name again.

8 MS. CAPRIO: Hey, real quick?

9 JUDGE TOREM: Who's this?

10 MS. CAPRIO: Hey, real quick?

11 JUDGE TOREM: Hey real quick, who's this?

12 MS. CAPRIO: I just wanted to let you guys know --

13 JUDGE TOREM: Please identify yourself.

14 MS. CAPRIO: Hi. This is Christina. And I just wanted to  
15 let you know that it's --

16 JUDGE TOREM: Christina?

17 MS. CAPRIO: -- you can't --

18 Caprio (phonetic).

19 -- that you can't submit online on your portal. So I just  
20 wanted to let you know because you're asking people to  
21 submit comments written, and so I just wanted to let you  
22 know it's not working.

23 JUDGE TOREM: I'll -- EFSEC staff will look at that. I  
24 don't control the portal, Ms. Christina Caprio, so I'm going  
25 to ask them to take a look at that and see what's going on.

1 MALE SPEAKER: It's working just fine.

2 MS. CAPRIO: Thank you.

3 JUDGE TOREM: Ms. Owens is indicating that email would  
4 work. The address to send those email comments if you're  
5 having problems with the portal is E-F-S-E-C, EFSEC, at  
6 U-T-C, Uniform-Tango-Charlie, dot W-A, dot G-O-V,  
7 efsec@ufc.wa.gov. We can get your emails there as well.  
8 Please use the subject line of "Horse Heaven Wind" in the  
9 subject line --

10 MALE SPEAKER: Can you take your (inaudible) off?

11 JUDGE TOREM: -- and "Public Comment." We'll know where  
12 to direct your email.

13 All right. Our next speaker Greg Gales. Are you on the  
14 line? All right. I'm going to go back. Doug Nordwall,  
15 last call for Doug Nordwall.

16 Bill Jenkins. Last call for Bill Jenkins.

17 Last call for Staci West.

18 Last call for Jacob LaRiviera.

19 And last call for Greg Gales.

20 All right. Kayne Segura, you're No. 16 on the signup  
21 list. Are you on the line?

22 MR. SEGURA: I am here.

23 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Two minutes will begin now. Go  
24 ahead, sir.

25 MR. SEGURA: Thank you, Chair Drew, and the entire

1 Commission for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you  
2 all this evening. My name is Kayne Segura, and I'm the  
3 business manager of Laborers Local 348 in Richland,  
4 Washington. I represent over a thousand hardworking men and  
5 women in the Central Washington area, including  
6 Benton County. I'm here today to fight for the workers of  
7 Benton County.

8 Myself and other members who attended the previous town  
9 hall meeting were approached by Mr. Barry Bush in regards to  
10 his stance on the project. He summarized that he is all for  
11 local jobs but this county does not need the power and it  
12 won't create many jobs.

13 Unlike Mr. Bush's assumptions about the detriment of the  
14 project and while we question Mr. Bush's loyalty to the  
15 community as he was in favor of the Nine Mile Canyon Wind  
16 project, we are in favor of the level of economic support  
17 this project will bring to the community in all aspects.

18 To go further, in the environmental study produced,  
19 Scout Energy discusses tax revenues going to schools and  
20 fire districts. Phase I of this project would be paid to  
21 schools with 32 percent of the total directly paid to local  
22 school districts. Fire districts account for the next  
23 largest share of revenues at 14 percent, followed by roads  
24 at 12 percent.

25 In dollars terms, Phase I during the first year of

1 operation would generate approximately 6.1 million in  
2 school-related tax revenues with 3.4 million of this total  
3 paid directly to local school districts.

4 It is clear that this project isn't just about providing  
5 local jobs to local workers. It is about providing funding  
6 to our fire districts that serve this community and to the  
7 parents and children that learn and work in these school  
8 districts in this community.

9 We ask the commission to consider approving this proposal  
10 and permit for the people of Benton County, for the members  
11 and workforce of Benton County, for the first responders,  
12 and for our children and their families of Benton County.  
13 Thank you for your time, sir.

14 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Segura.

15 Next is going to be Mike Wingfield followed by Pam Minelli  
16 and Mike Minelli. And, Ms. Minelli, we have you on the  
17 signup list twice. We're not going to let you have four  
18 minutes of time. We'll give everybody the same two minutes.  
19 So Mike Wingfield followed by Pam Minelli and Mike Minelli.

20 Mr. Wingfield, are you on the line? I'll call you again  
21 in a moment.

22 Pam Minelli, are you on the line? Mike or Pam Minelli,  
23 are either of you on the line?

24 UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN: (Baby crying).

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh, Jesus.

1 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Next is Sydnie Roberts. Sydnie  
2 Roberts?

3 And then Francisco Elguezabal.

4 Last call for Mike Wingfield.

5 Last call for Pam Minelli. Last call for Mike Minelli.

6 Again, the next speakers following that are Sydnie Roberts,  
7 Francisco Elguezabal, and then Mary Dye and Jason Lohr.

8 Sydnie Roberts? Last call for Sydnie Roberts.

9 Francisco Elguezabal.

10 MR. ELGUEZABAL: Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

11 JUDGE TOREM: I can hear you just fine, sir. Your two  
12 minutes are starting. Go ahead.

13 MS. ROUSE: How do (inaudible) comment?

14 MR. ELGUEZABAL: All right. Like I said, my name's  
15 Francisco Elguezabal. You did a pretty good job. I want  
16 to --

17 JUDGE TOREM: Bear with me just a minute. Hold on,  
18 Mr. Elguezabal. I have someone interrupting you.

19 MR. ELGUEZABAL: Okay.

20 MS. ROUSE: I want to say can I make a comment. You're  
21 not telling us how to be able to make a comment.

22 JUDGE TOREM: Ma'am, I can clearly hear you. What is your  
23 name, ma'am?

24 MS. ROUSE: My name is Lori Rouse (phonetic). I live at  
25 the base of Cold Creek Canyon.

1 JUDGE TOREM: Sure. Ms. Rouse, are you on the signup list  
2 or do you want me to add you?

3 MS. ROUSE: No, I just wanted to let everybody know that  
4 you're not letting anyone know how to make a comment, and --

5 JUDGE TOREM: Ms. Rouse, you're clearly able to make a  
6 comment. We have a signup process. You're interrupting the  
7 process tonight. Can you please mute yourself?

8 MS. ROUSE: I understand that, but you're not letting  
9 these people know how to get online to make a comment.

10 JUDGE TOREM: All right. I'm going to ask EFSEC staff to  
11 come on again and explain the process briefly one more time.  
12 Then we'll come back to you, Mr. Elguezabal.

13 MS. ROUSE: (Inaudible) know they have to hit star 86 to  
14 make a comment.

15 MS. MINELLI: And this is Pam Minelli.

16 JUDGE TOREM: Oh, great, Ms. Minelli. We'll come back to  
17 you here in a moment. Thank you for announcing yourself.

18 Ms. Rouse, I'm going to ask staff to do -- one more time  
19 to explain how to do it. I can't tell you how to unmute  
20 your phone any better than you know how to operate it. I've  
21 said already before, if you think that somehow you've been  
22 muted by Skype, hang up, call back in and you'll have a  
23 fresh microphone.

24 Mr. Elguezabal, I'm going to take your comments now. Go  
25 ahead, sir.



1 MR. ELGUEZABAL: Yeah, I'm still here.

2 JUDGE TOREM: Go ahead. We'll start your time again. Go  
3 ahead.

4 MR. ELGUEZABAL: All right. I just want to thank you for  
5 giving me the opportunity to speak tonight. I'm a  
6 Benton County resident. I live in Plymouth, Washington,  
7 just over the hill from where this wind project's going to  
8 go. I am in favor for this project. It will provide a lot  
9 of great paying jobs and boost our economy.

10 Plus, this is private land. I think it should be up to  
11 the land owner if they want to have wind farms, wind mills  
12 on their land. I recently just built a home over here in  
13 Plymouth. They just built an onion processing plant about a  
14 half mile from my house. I wasn't happy to see it, but  
15 still, like I said, it's not my land. So I am definitely in  
16 favor of this project. That's all I've got to say.

17 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Elguezabal.

18 Pam Minelli, you came on the line here. Are you still  
19 there?

20 MS. MINELLI: Yes, I am. Thank you.

21 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Let's have your comment now. As  
22 soon as -- let me get the timer reset here. Bear with me.

23 MS. MINELLI: Okay.

24 JUDGE TOREM: All right. It's reset. Go ahead,  
25 Ms. Minelli.

1 MS. MINELLI: Okay. Thank you for this opportunity. I  
2 oppose the Horse Heaven wind farm project for a long list of  
3 reasons. My comments here tonight will be limited to three  
4 concerns. My first concern is Stout's request for an  
5 expedited process, even though they've now withdrawn that  
6 request. It raises several red flags.

7 More time is needed to determine the true impact of this  
8 wind farm in our area. Examples of my concerns include much  
9 of the data included in the applications paid for by  
10 Stout Energy. Third party experts need to be added. Their  
11 input needs to be added to this application. And an  
12 environmental impact study needs to be done by a neutral  
13 third party.

14 Most local (inaudible) contacted knew absolutely nothing  
15 about the Horse Heaven wind farm. More time is needed to  
16 inform residents, local businesses and industries, city  
17 governments, developers, and more of this nonsense project.

18 In the public opinion survey included in Stout's  
19 application showing local support is unbelievable.  
20 Information showing local opposition to the Horse Heaven  
21 wind farm gathered by Benton County Commissioners showed 336  
22 against the 36 supporting the project as of March 22nd. And  
23 we have an online petition that has 156 signatures showing  
24 opposition. There are letters from City Council's elected  
25 officials for other surveys that need to be added to Stout's

1 application to document strong local opposition to this wind  
2 farm.

3 An additional (inaudible) showing visual impacts of the  
4 wind farm from nearby neighbors such as Summit (inaudible)  
5 have not been provided, even though we've requested. And  
6 there are no nighttime photos showing the red flashing  
7 lights along 24 miles of our areas (inaudible).

8 And there's no mention of the ADL, aircraft detention  
9 light (inaudible) system as an option to control (inaudible)  
10 lights.

11 JUDGE TOREM: Ms. Minelli, time has expired. Can you sum  
12 up, please?

13 MS. MINELLI: Okay. I'm just saying that I am totally  
14 opposed to this wind farm. Thank you.

15 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, ma'am.

16 Is Mike Minelli available?

17 MS. MINELLI: Yes.

18 MR. MINELLI: Yes, I'm here.

19 JUDGE TOREM: All right. We'll start your time as soon as  
20 you're ready, sir. You go? Ready?

21 MR. MINELLI: Yeah, I'd like to share some of my questions  
22 that I have in my own mind, and Pam has covered some of them  
23 so I'll skip over those or briefly talk about them. And the  
24 first one is the ADLS. And I'm wondering why Scout has not  
25 discussed and committed to their installation. These would

1 provide reduced lighting or no lighting unless there's an  
2 approaching aircraft.

3 Expedite. Why has Scout been studying the Horse Heaven  
4 Hills for the past several years, and immediately upon  
5 submitting the application Scout requests an expedited  
6 approval? What was the initial thinking of the request?  
7 What was the hurry? Why has Scout decided the Tri-Cities'  
8 people and commissioners lose the opportunity to communicate  
9 and educate the people who are the most affected?

10 For or against. Very few Tri-Citians know about the wind  
11 farm. If they have heard about it, they don't know the  
12 details. Scout has recognized this in their study on the  
13 public opinion. Quote, of those who say they are familiar,  
14 most only recall general information.

15 I personally handed out about 200 flyers at hiking trails,  
16 at various supermarkets. And the biggest comment that I get  
17 once they tell me that they haven't heard about it is,  
18 "You've got to be kidding. Where? What?"

19 A survey for or against, there was a huge difference, as  
20 Pam has said. Scout shows 35 percent against and the  
21 Benton County survey shows 90 percent against. Why is that?

22 There are legal issues. Why did Scout choose Tetra Tech,  
23 a company with a long list of failed documented legal issues  
24 such as --

25 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Minelli, your time's up. Can you sum

1 up, please?

2 MR. MINELLI: Yes. Fuzzy photos. The thoughts of 244  
3 towers stretching for 24 miles. Because so few people in  
4 the Tri-Cities area know what's going on, once the monstrous  
5 towers start going up and polluting our skyline and the 24  
6 miles of red lights are turned on, there will --

7 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Mr. Minelli, I've got to cut you  
8 off there. Mr. Minelli, you have a lot of questions. I'm  
9 going to encourage you to put them in writing and submit  
10 them either by email or if you can get the portal to work,  
11 that way.

12 MR. MINELLI: Okay.

13 JUDGE TOREM: I appreciate that we were able to get you  
14 tonight. Thank you, sir.

15 MR. MINELLI: Thank you.

16 JUDGE TOREM: Mary Dye and Jason Lohr are the next  
17 speakers.

18 Mary Dye, are you on the line? I saw you on the attendee  
19 list.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DYE: Yes, I am. Thank you.

21 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Go ahead, ma'am. Two minutes.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DYE: Thank you. Thank you, Chairwoman  
23 Drew and members of the Committee. My name's Mary Dye. I'm  
24 a State Representative for the 9th Legislative District. I  
25 want to thank you for having this hearing.

1           The Horse Heaven Hills is unique. It boasts of about  
2           15,532 acres of (inaudible) high-value vineyards, and it  
3           represents 27 percent of Washington's total grape  
4           production. And it is the source of only five 100-point  
5           wines produced in the state.

6           So the American -- or Horse Heaven Hills American  
7           viticultural area produces some of Washington's most coveted  
8           and expensive wines, and it's a unique and irreplaceable  
9           microclimate that some of the state's most state of the art  
10          viticulture is employed to produce some of the finest and  
11          most unique wines.

12          The proximity to the Columbia River and also the sandy  
13          loam soils and the south-facing slopes are optimum for this  
14          wine production region and it's unique in probably the  
15          nation and the world. And it accounts, the entire wine  
16          industry in the Tri-Cities and others, accounts for  
17          \$8.4 billion of economic impact.

18          So why? What would happen with a large wind farm? Wind  
19          farm turbines in West Texas were studied by Nature Climate  
20          Change, and it was evaluated to find that they create a lot  
21          of turbulence raising temperatures .72 degrees on average  
22          but really changing the microclimate of the land.

23          And I'm very concerned about the impact that this change  
24          could make. It could devastate some of the areas's most  
25          important wine production areas. So I would urge you to

1 really consider this when you're doing your studies and when  
2 you're looking at the EIS, that you protect this  
3 viticulture, this microclimate of the viticulture in the  
4 area around Horse Heaven Hills.

5 I appreciate your consideration this evening. Thank you  
6 very much for giving me the time.

7 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Representative Dye. Right on the  
8 nose, two minutes. I knew you were professional at this.

9 REPRESENTATIVE DYE: Thank you.

10 JUDGE TOREM: Jason Lohr, a name that I think we all  
11 recognize. Mr. Lohr?

12 MR. LOHR: Hello. Thank you for your time. My name is  
13 Jason Lohr, and I'm an electrician living here in Kennewick.  
14 I'd like to bring up that this project is estimated to  
15 employ over 900 people, and not just provide millions in tax  
16 revenue to our schools but also millions of dollars back  
17 into our local economy from the good paying local jobs.

18 I think a lot of people on here might not understand that  
19 construction follows, by about six months or a year,  
20 developments in the overall economy. We are just now seeing  
21 the slowdown from COVID because our jobs were already in  
22 process when it happened.

23 Construction, though our jobs are temporary, we make up a  
24 great deal of this local economy. A large infrastructure  
25 project right outside of town will provide hundreds of

1 people millions of dollars to support their families and  
2 provide a great deal for our local economy.

3 I simply do not understand how we can trade food on  
4 hundreds of people's tables for the view out of a few  
5 people's windows of land they do not own. Thank you for  
6 your time.

7 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Who was that guy?

8 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Lohr.

9 Barry Bush and Clark Stolle or Stolley (phonetic) will be  
10 next and then Michael Novakovich.

11 Barry Bush?

12 MR. BUSH: Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

13 JUDGE TOREM: I can hear you just fine. Two minutes. Go  
14 ahead, sir.

15 MR. BUSH: Okay. The proposed Scout Clean Energy project  
16 is in the middle of the Pacific Flyway. For those of us  
17 that live near the Horse Heaven Hills Wind Project, we can  
18 attest to the fact that tens of thousands of geese, Canada  
19 geese, fly through the site every year while migrating  
20 south.

21 We do not need the energy. These turbines and solar  
22 panels will generate energy, but none of the four utilities  
23 in this area are looking to take even one kilowatt. The  
24 fact is the local utilities need energy when it's coldest  
25 and hottest outside, and that's exactly when this site will



1 not produce energy.

2 We support President Biden's desire to build more offshore  
3 wind projects. These projects are generally not viewable  
4 from land and can be built much closer to where the load is  
5 needed. The energy in our region is already carbon-free.  
6 At Benton PUD we currently have a low profile that is 93  
7 percent carbon-free.

8 A wind solar project of this magnitude should never be  
9 built by such a large population base. The Tri-Cities has  
10 over 3,000 people. Energy Northwest in Richland was just  
11 picked as one of the two locations by Department of Energy  
12 to build two small modular nuclear plants. This base load  
13 of power will generate 98 to 99 percent of the time, unlike  
14 the 30 percent of the time that we get in -- that you will  
15 get out of this proposed project.

16 I'm not aware of a single local elected official,  
17 government agency, city, or county board from the Tri-Cities  
18 area that has come out in favor of building this project. I  
19 can, however, count 36 city, county, state and federally  
20 elected officials and community organizations that have come  
21 out against this project.

22 And finally, a disproportionate share of wind turbines are  
23 being placed in Southeast Washington state with almost none  
24 in Western Washington or coastal waters. The fair treatment  
25 goal of environmental justice means no group of people

1 should bear a disproportionate share of the negative  
2 environmental consequences resulting from industrial,  
3 government, and commercial operations or policies. Thank  
4 you.

5 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Bush. Appreciate you  
6 wrapping up.

7 Clark Stolle or Stolle.

8 MR. STOLLE: Yes. Clark Stolle. I'm here.

9 JUDGE TOREM: Clark Stolle. Your two --

10 MR. STOLLE: Can you hear me?

11 JUDGE TOREM: Yeah. You're No. 26 on my list. Just so  
12 everybody has an idea, we're at now 7:20 p.m. We have a  
13 total of 45 people signed up and a 46th person, the Mayor  
14 Don Britain who wants to be last. If we keep going at the  
15 rate we're going, we'll probably be going another 30  
16 minutes.

17 So for those of you tuning in for the land use consistency  
18 hearing, I believe we're going to go ahead and start after  
19 the 7:30 start time that's been advertised and noticed. So  
20 just stay on the line. Be patient with us, please.

21 If you're interested in the land use consistency hearing,  
22 again, that will be starting I'm guessing closer to eight  
23 o'clock. That will include, again, some comments and  
24 presentations by the applicant and the Benton County  
25 prosecuting office focusing on land use.

1           We're still in the public comment hearing and will be for  
2           a little while tonight. We're on Speaker No. 26 out of at  
3           least 45 that have signed up. I'm going to ask staff to see  
4           if they can close the signup so that we can stop at a  
5           reasonable hour. It is a Tuesday night. And I know that  
6           Gonzaga Bulldogs have already won their game, so many of you  
7           are tuning in now. But we're going to go ahead now and pick  
8           back up with Clark Stolle.

9           Mr. Stolle, your two minutes now begins.

10          MR. STOLLE: Thank you very much. I'm opposed to the  
11          Scout proposal. Scout has represented this project is being  
12          in the interest of the greater Tri-Cities community.  
13          However, rather than submitting the project to Benton County  
14          for review, they circumvented the existing processes and  
15          went directly to EFSEC and Governor Inslee to make them --  
16          ask them to make this decision. I don't think that's  
17          appropriate.

18          Skipping through some of the words that have already been  
19          spoken, I just want to point out that at 500 to 670 feet  
20          tall, these enormous towers in a stretch, they're taller  
21          than the Space Needle. They're going to stretch across 24  
22          miles of our most prominent ridge line in Benton County.  
23          That is the equivalent of going from the capital building in  
24          Olympia south to Centralia or east to Tacoma. I think  
25          that's both significant and impactful.

1 Scout contracted to have various studies prepared to  
2 justify the project that repeatedly cite minimal or no  
3 impact to land, humans, birds, animals, tourism, property  
4 values, et cetera. I've read lots of EISs, and I know how  
5 they're written. These studies appear to be strongly biased  
6 toward the project and they warrant greater analysis. I'm  
7 glad to see we're doing an EIS now.

8 Although I haven't seen it published, it's highly likely  
9 that the power generated is not going to stay in Washington  
10 state. Be aware that several California counties, including  
11 Los Angeles, San Diego and San Bernadino, have been pushing  
12 back hard on new wind farms and have passed restrictions  
13 discouraging or outright banning developmental large-scale  
14 commercial wind farming.

15 The state of Vermont itself has established strict  
16 regulations that effectively halt any new wind farms on  
17 ridge lines. This is largely due to the strong backlash of  
18 negative community sentiment and environmental impacts. As  
19 a result, wind farm developers are now looking to  
20 project-friendly states. Is that what Washington is?

21 My family's been in Benton County for over 70 years, and  
22 like many others, we feel that the Horse Heaven Hills are a  
23 special scenic area that are there to be enjoyed by our  
24 community and its visitors. Why should it be valued any  
25 less than other notable sites in our state. There will be

1 prominent around our ridge lines where the (inaudible)  
2 cannot hide them. The negative impacts to our view shed and  
3 the scenic vistas that are so important to the quality of  
4 our life will be lost forever if they're approved.

5 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Stolle.

6 MR. STOLLE: The tradeoff for short-term jobs and  
7 (inaudible) places is a legacy of negative anesthetic and  
8 environmental impacts for our community that --

9 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Stolle, I have to cut you off.

10 MR. STOLLE: -- (inaudible). Thank you very much.

11 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you.

12 MR. STOLLE: I'm done.

13 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, sir.

14 Next is Michael Novakovich and Chris Wright and then Brent  
15 Kirby.

16 I want to interject just for those of you that are using  
17 the comment thread to question other speakers or toss  
18 comments back and forth. It's really not what the comment  
19 thread is here for in this public comment hearing. I want  
20 everybody, as I said in the beginning, to give dignity and  
21 respect to each of the opinions.

22 And this is not a forum for you to have an argument.  
23 We're not in a thread where we have comments on a newspaper  
24 article. This is a recorded meeting. It's for the Council  
25 to hear what each speaker has to say. And I'd just ask you

1 to refrain from those things.

2 If you agree with somebody, you can put, "I agree." If  
3 you disagree, that's fine. But let's keep the questioning  
4 and some of the other comments that are bordering on uncivil  
5 and consider how you'd want to be treated.

6 All right. Let's press on with our Speaker No. 27 on the  
7 list is Michael Novakovich.

8 Are you there, sir?

9 MR. NOVAKOVICH: Can you hear me? Yes, I am.

10 JUDGE TOREM: I can. Go ahead, sir. You're on.

11 MR. NOVAKOVICH: Thank you, Chair Drew and Council. I'm  
12 Mike Novakovich, President and CEO of Visit Tri-Cities. The  
13 Visit Tri-Cities board of directors is in opposition to the  
14 proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm Project.

15 Our concern is the installation will have significant  
16 adverse impacts on our half-billion-dollar-a-year tourism  
17 economy. A competitive advantage in our region is our wine  
18 industry. Visitors to the Tri-Cities are literally in the  
19 heart of Washington wine country.

20 Our Red Mountain American Viticultural Area is home to  
21 rolling vineyards and estate wineries with incredible views  
22 of the Horse Heaven Hills. The beauty of our region and its  
23 rugged dessert hills are a significant tourism draw from  
24 wine lovers to visitors whose interests lie in exploration  
25 and understanding of the great Missoula floods. The Horse

1 Heaven Hills provide a wealth of leisure opportunities which  
2 drive visitor spending and associated significant  
3 quality-of-life impacts.

4 The proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm is expected to have  
5 adverse impacts on our tourism economy for years to come.  
6 The towering wind turbines that rob our region of its scenic  
7 beauty while creating a perception of a windy destination  
8 translating into a loss of visitation. Repeatedly, a  
9 downturn in our tourism economy translates to a loss of  
10 permanent jobs, businesses, business investments, and the  
11 quality-of-life activities impacts that are our activities  
12 fund.

13 As an example, I recently spoke with a hotel developer  
14 that terminated the development of a hotel project due to  
15 potential construction of this wind farm and its  
16 line-of-sight views. Tourism helps small businesses survive  
17 and supports roughly 6,000 jobs in our community, the over  
18 50 million taxes in revenue that's generated by visitor  
19 spending helps to fund emergency services like police and  
20 fire, schools and teachers, maintenance of our roads,  
21 beautification of our parks and more.

22 In short, visitor spending helps to fund a safe community,  
23 educated community, employed community, and a beautiful  
24 community filled with many amenities for all community  
25 members to enjoy.

1 Any adverse impact to our tourism economy as a result of  
2 Scout Clean Energy's Horse Heaven wind farm will reduce the  
3 economic activity that provides for these quality-of-life  
4 benefits, and we would respectfully ask that you reject  
5 their application. I truly appreciate this opportunity to  
6 comment.

7 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Thank you, Mr. Novakovich.

8 It's now 7:30. I would have normally taken a break in  
9 between the two hearings. And because we have a court  
10 reporter that you can't see but is equally subject to the  
11 call of nature that all of us are, we're going to take a  
12 brief break. It's going to be until 7:40 p.m., so on my  
13 clock that's 13 minutes.

14 When we come back, the court reporter will let us know  
15 when she's ready to go on the record. And then it will be  
16 Chris Wright, Brent Kirby and Rey Espinoza. So for those of  
17 you listening, you can put your phones down for the next 12  
18 minutes. And at 7:40 I'll reconvene this public comment  
19 hearing.

20 For those waiting for the land use hearing, that will  
21 start at approximately 8:30 if we hold everybody to two  
22 minutes at a time. We're going to recess the meeting now.  
23 We're off the record. Go ahead and take a break. We're  
24 going to ask you all to mute your microphones. We'll be  
25 back at 7:40.



1 (Recess)

2 JUDGE TOREM: This is the land -- sorry, this is the  
3 public comment hearing in the Horse Heaven Wind Farm  
4 Project. Again, today is March 30th. It's now 7:40 p.m.  
5 We were off the record for ten to 12 minutes so everybody  
6 could take a break. We've been going pretty much since  
7 five o'clock with our information open house and some  
8 questions there and this public information meeting that  
9 went starting at 5:30 p.m.

10 The 7:30 p.m. land use consistency hearing has been  
11 deferred until we can complete public comment tonight. We  
12 estimate currently that will begin at 8:30 p.m.

13 And again, my name is Judge Adam Torem. I'm an  
14 Administrative Law Judge presiding over these comments  
15 tonight. We're limiting speakers to two minutes. I'm  
16 waiting for the two minute clock to come back up on the  
17 screen so that folks can see where we're at.

18 I'm not sure who on the EFSEC staff is trying to load  
19 that. Joan, is that you?

20 MS. OWENS: It is. Can you not see it? I can see it on  
21 my screen.

22 JUDGE TOREM: Mine is still loading. But if you --  
23 Mr. Wright, can you see it on your screen?

24 MR. WRIGHT: Yes, sir.

25 JUDGE TOREM: That's all that really matters.

1 Joan, you can start the clock for Mr. Chris Wright.

2 Go ahead, sir.

3 MR. WRIGHT: All right. My name's Chris Wright. I live  
4 in West Richland, Washington. I find Scout's position on  
5 using EFSEC rather than Benton County to permit this project  
6 interesting. At the March 15 public meeting with the  
7 Benton County Commissioner, Scout's project manager stated,  
8 quote, we are seeking approval through EFSEC rather than  
9 Benton County because the project is too complicated and  
10 required too many resources.

11 I find that funny since in Benton County we currently work  
12 with a nuclear reactor, a hydroelectric dam, an airport, a  
13 large potato plant, a uranium processing facility, some  
14 production wineries, and the world's largest nuclear waste  
15 site.

16 Scout has recently stated they wish to have more public  
17 participation. I believe they could do that by withdrawing  
18 their application to EFSEC and asking Benton County to be  
19 the lead agency.

20 The wind farm impact. The proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm  
21 is amazingly inefficient. Scout states it will generate  
22 power 27 percent of the time. This from a footprint 23  
23 miles long. It will also generate 6 to 9 million pounds of  
24 nonrecyclable waste each time the turbine blades are  
25 changed. That's about every ten years. So we're looking at

1 18 to 27 million pounds of waste.

2 And Scout's reclamation plan in the application is  
3 somewhat vague about where it will go. But as Scout will be  
4 long gone and the project owned by an LLC from Delaware, I  
5 don't think they care. Gigantic, inefficient and wasteful,  
6 and for these reasons the Horse Heaven Wind Farm should not  
7 be approved.

8 I'd also note that natural gas is going for 6.5 cents a  
9 kilowatt hour. In my opinion, it's not a wind farm or solar  
10 farm. It's a tax credit and emission credit farm, and I  
11 think it's disgusting.

12 And on the March 28th editorial, Scout stated most of the  
13 people who disagree with this wind farm are those with  
14 direct views of it. I would agree with that statement. And  
15 using Scout's estimate, that's between 175- and 150,000  
16 people in the Tri-Cities. So Scout is proposing 250 towers  
17 500 feet tall with aircraft anticollision lights on top of a  
18 ridge line that's 1500 feet above the surrounding terrain  
19 and Scout is downplaying the impact.

20 And in addition, in November Scout stated that a wind farm  
21 component would generate eight jobs --

22 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Wright?

23 MR. WRIGHT: -- for the project. One second. Not 800 but  
24 eight. That's laughable. Scout's application should be  
25 rejected. Thank you.

1 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you. I appreciate the determination  
2 some of you have to put three minutes of comments into two.  
3 The court reporter is, frankly, suffering it, and the rate  
4 of speed sounds much more like the end of a Federal Express  
5 commercial.

6 So just out of some mercy for the court reporter -- I know  
7 many of you have a lot to say -- we'll take all of your  
8 comments in writing. We can read those at a leisurely pace.  
9 But if you're speaking so fast that it's difficult for those  
10 that might have hearing problems or otherwise to hear you  
11 and the court reporter to hear every word you're saying and  
12 make a clear record, it's difficult.

13 And I understand we have a limit of two minutes. This is  
14 only the first of what will become many opportunities for  
15 public comment. The best way for us to hear every word you  
16 want is to type them up and then summarize the best two  
17 minutes or perhaps three if we have more time when we come  
18 to your community in person. And give us the highlights but  
19 submit all your comments, whether they're at the portal, in  
20 an email, or if you want us to hear your voice tonight, all  
21 those comments are considered equally and given equal weight  
22 based on your concerns.

23 Brent Kirby's been waiting. And I'm going to ask you,  
24 Mr. Kirby, again to pay attention to the timer on your  
25 screen. You have two minutes. Go ahead, sir.

1 MR. KIRBY: Hello. My name is Brent Kirby. I'm a  
2 resident of Kennewick. I'm speaking in strong support for  
3 the project. I especially appreciate the inclusion of  
4 energy storage, which is critical to including more  
5 renewables on the grid. The climate change crisis demands  
6 an all-of-the-above strategy for carbon-free energy.

7 The size of this project, over one gigawatt, is of the  
8 scale necessary to have a significant impact on carbon  
9 emissions as we displace fossil energy.

10 Modern large wind turbines spin slowly enough for birds to  
11 avoid them. The impression that wind turbines kill birds  
12 are based on older, faster spinning designs. Bird death is  
13 not a major issue with these turbines.

14 For those opposed to on esthetic grounds, we need to allow  
15 projects such as these, even at small personal sacrifice, to  
16 avoid catastrophic effects of climate change across the  
17 state, nation and planet. Thank you.

18 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Kirby.

19 The next three speakers are going to be Rey Espinoza,  
20 David Fritch, and then Dr. D Joshua Miller.

21 Mr. Espinoza, are you out there?

22 MR. ESPINOZA: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

23 JUDGE TOREM: All right. I can. Sir, go ahead. Your two  
24 minutes is starting.

25 MR. ESPINOZA: Thank you, Chair, and the entire Commission

1 for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you this  
2 evening. My name is Rey Espinoza, and I'm the assistant  
3 regional manager for the Laborers International Union in  
4 North America. I am also a lifelong resident of the  
5 Tri-Cities and I have a strong support for the communities  
6 here.

7 I'm here today to speak in favor of this project. The  
8 workforce that would benefit from this project is more than  
9 a few, as many have continued to state. If we look at the  
10 work forecast for the Horse Heaven Hills project,  
11 construction of Phase I of the project is estimated to  
12 support 458 total direct, indirect and induced jobs in  
13 Benton and Franklin counties and approximately 37 million in  
14 labor income with total economic output of approximately  
15 70.6 million.

16 During Phase II, project construction is estimated to  
17 support approximately 472 to 539 total jobs and  
18 approximately 37.6 million to 41.9 million in labor income  
19 with a total economic output of approximately 73 million to  
20 85.7 million.

21 On the Rattlesnake Ridge project just north of here in  
22 Adams County, a local workforce and support from elected  
23 officials created a successful renewable project with a  
24 project labor agreement. Workers were working 12 to 15  
25 hours per day including getting double time on Sundays.

1 They brought in an average of 2700 to 3,000 per week after  
2 taxes. And according to the business manager in Local 348,  
3 members brought in a year's worth of pay in six to seven  
4 months. This is just an overview of what renewable projects  
5 would bring to communities like this.

6 The numbers seem to be clear. Renewable jobs provide not  
7 only a paycheck for local workers, they provide a good  
8 career for themselves and their families as well as the  
9 opportunity to give back to the communities that they live  
10 in.

11 Thank you, Commission, and thank you to the land owners.

12 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Espinoza.

13 Next is David Fritch followed by Dr. Miller and then  
14 Andrew Schmitt and Jermaine Smiley.

15 Mr. Fritch, are you on the line? We'll come back for  
16 Mr. Fritch.

17 Dr. Miller? Dr. Miller?

18 DR. MILLER: Hello? Can you hear me?

19 JUDGE TOREM: I can now. Go ahead, sir.

20 DR. MILLER: Perfect. Hi. My name is Dr. Josh Miller.  
21 I'm a resident of the Tri-Cities area, and I wanted to say  
22 that I'm strongly opposed to this proposed project.

23 One of my biggest concerns is I have not seen any kind of  
24 plan for decommissioning these turbines. As is commonly  
25 seen throughout the literature, these turbines have a

1 limited lifetime usually, depending on what you look,  
2 somewhere between eight and 25 years. There's no plan that  
3 says what will happen when these turbines are no longer  
4 functional.

5 When a turbine is nonoperable, what will happen  
6 particularly if the company managing these is no longer  
7 financially solvent. So if, for example, Scout sells this  
8 to another company or Scout itself goes out of business or  
9 declares bankruptcy, who will take care and care for these  
10 turbines? Who will decommission them? And who will  
11 deconstruct them when they are no longer viable?

12 And that has a massive impact on the environment, both in  
13 the deconstruction but also if these are no longer  
14 functional, you have these large fields of nonoperable  
15 turbines being a blight to the environment and a blight to  
16 the view.

17 And this is one area that I've not heard anybody talk  
18 about, and I don't see anywhere in the proposal specifying  
19 what they will do particularly if the company is no longer  
20 solvent. And I would request that there be some type of  
21 escrow account set up where the company will be forced to  
22 capitalize the entirety of the decommissioning prior to them  
23 building to make sure that they can be taken care of  
24 appropriately if they are built.

25 I appreciate everybody's time and I appreciate your



1 patience. This has I'm sure been frustrating and difficult  
2 for you in managing this, particularly at a virtual setting.  
3 Thank you.

4 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Dr. Miller. I appreciate that.  
5 I'm doing the best I can, and I appreciate your comments as  
6 well.

7 Is David Fritch available yet? I'm going to call you  
8 again. If not, we're going to go to Andrew Schmitt and then  
9 Jermaine Smiley and then Richard Sargent.

10 And, Mr. Sargent, I know you were able to speak up  
11 earlier, so hopefully by the time we get to you you're ready  
12 to unmute.

13 David Fritch, last call?

14 All right. Andrew Schmitt, are you out there?

15 MR. SCHMITT: Yeah. Can you hear me?

16 JUDGE TOREM: I can.

17 MR. SCHMITT: Okay.

18 JUDGE TOREM: Go ahead, sir.

19 MR. SCHMITT: Okay. Well, I think so far I am the only  
20 person with the direct experience to speak and directly  
21 involved in this project. So many of the things that people  
22 have said I could refute on their comments that they just  
23 have no knowledge on.

24 We own or operate a large part of where this project is  
25 going. And like many of the things -- if you look at the

1 map that was put up earlier, if you've ever been up there to  
2 Horse Heaven -- which I'm not sure many of you actually  
3 have, I'm up there every single day on every single piece of  
4 property that this project is proposed on -- you would  
5 realize that very few of these turbines are actually going  
6 to be seen. And the solar arrays, they're never going to be  
7 seen unless you actually drive up there and drive down the  
8 roads.

9 In response to disturbing these lands and the habitats, we  
10 disturb them every single day. It's not -- if it's not  
11 farmable land, it's not good land for turbines or solar.  
12 There's no loss of habitat. All the habitat that they  
13 talked about for wildlife is in the canyons, it's in the CRP  
14 programs, it is safe from this stuff. Everything that this  
15 is going on is farmed and tilled up every day.

16 I deal with SEPA a lot. I have a lot of experience. And  
17 so everybody knows that the SEPA determination for this is  
18 of nonsignificance. So that's just pretty much a moot point  
19 in this project.

20 A small fraction of people that have no direct interest  
21 are trying to put a thorn in the side of their neighbors.  
22 The economic impact as has been said is huge and is not just  
23 for the farmers up there. It trickles down, as they've  
24 said, to all the workers. It's estimated to be over  
25 \$700 million over this project, which for this economy or

1 for this community, it's just great. The construction jobs  
2 could be the jobs of your neighbor out there. And that's  
3 pretty much it. I'm fine.

4 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Thank you, Mr. Schmitt.  
5 Jermaine Smiley, you're next.

6 MS. ROUSE: Can I say something?

7 JUDGE TOREM: No. If you're not on the speakers list and  
8 I didn't call your name, thanks for interrupting.

9 Jermaine Smiley.

10 All right. Richard Sargent, are you out there?

11 MR. SARGENT: Yeah, I'm still here. Can you hear me?

12 JUDGE TOREM: I can hear you, Mr. Sargent. You're up  
13 next. Go ahead.

14 MR. SARGENT: Great. Thank you. My name's Richard  
15 Sargent. I am a life-long Columbia Basin resident, and I  
16 currently live in Richland. I'll minimize my complete  
17 comments.

18 This is an extremely large project, a thousand megawatts,  
19 and far beyond the energy needs for what the localized area  
20 needs, which questions me: Where is this energy going? Who  
21 are the off-takers? Is this energy even being used in our  
22 region? Is it being used in Washington? Could it be used  
23 for the energy imbalance market coming up, which will  
24 basically transfer it to California?

25 The applicant has discussed the future needs of energy and

1 the needs of energy adequacy in our region and quoted the  
2 Northwest Power Conservation Council. All true. And,  
3 however, the energy deficiencies that are coming to our  
4 region are caused mostly by the loss of base load facilities  
5 and not necessarily because of the growth.

6 The energy adequacy benchmark is called a loss of load  
7 potential or probability. This calculates in forecasts when  
8 energy resources fail to meet the highest demands of our  
9 region.

10 The generation profile of wind is one of the worst types  
11 of generations to improve this adequacy or to reduce the  
12 loss of load probability. It won't do much. To use wind to  
13 minimize adequate concerns and the loss probabilities would  
14 require a tremendous amount of overbuild of wind generation  
15 that would dramatically increase the cost of energy  
16 throughout this area. It would be, quite frankly, extremely  
17 wasteful.

18 Our area already has enough wind. We have an  
19 overabundance of wind at time. It -- what it does is it  
20 creates other facilities to moderate their generation and --  
21 including the dams and CGS -- and this project will  
22 exacerbate those issues. Thank you.

23 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Sargent. I appreciate your  
24 brevity there.

25 Jermaine Smiley, last call.

1           Okay. The next speakers are going to be Bruce McAllister,  
2 I believe it's Jim Atkins, and Patrick D. Grengs II.

3           Jermaine Smiley, last call.

4           All right, moving on. Bruce McAllister, are you there?  
5 Bruce McAllister, are you there?

6           MR. MCALLISTER: Can you hear me?

7           JUDGE TOREM: Now I can hear you, sir. Can you again  
8 state your name, make sure we've got the right speaker?

9           MR. MCALLISTER: Yes. I'm Bruce McAllister. I'm a  
10 resident in the Benton City area.

11          JUDGE TOREM: All right. Go ahead, sir. Two minutes.

12          MR. MCALLISTER: I have a front row seat here to all of  
13 these towers. I'd like to make a strong reminder to  
14 everyone, Scout Energy is a for-profit company. And you  
15 take any other company in the world that says, Hey, I want  
16 to build this up on the ridge, I think we'd have a lot of  
17 bigger uproar, because of the touting of the clean energy.

18          It was brought up by a speaker just a moment ago that was  
19 a concern of mine is where is this power going?  
20 Scout Energy doesn't want to invest a bunch of money in a  
21 project of this size without having a known market. They  
22 know what the market is. It is not Washington.

23          And a little bit -- one of the things I wanted to point  
24 out, it's probably around 85 percent to 90 percent of the  
25 county's population and most of (inaudible) Franklin

1 County's population is going to have a 180 degree view of  
2 windmills.

3 The bird kill, the study that was done near the wind farm  
4 that's near Biggs, both in Oregon and Washington, and they  
5 claim that the average is about five birds per tower. So  
6 you take five birds per tower times the amount of towers,  
7 that's a lot of birds.

8 And the people that I see (inaudible) that are for this  
9 are people that are going to have a short-term income  
10 benefit. But others are going to suffer long term, which is  
11 our wineries, quality of life, and tourism. And thank you  
12 very much for having me and having this forum for us. Thank  
13 you.

14 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. McAllister.

15 The next speaker is going to be Jim Atkins. Mr. Atkins,  
16 are you there?

17 Patrick Grengs, II?

18 MR. GRENGS: Yes, hello? Can you hear me? This is  
19 Patrick Grengs.

20 JUDGE TOREM: All right, sir. I'm going to let you go  
21 right now. Two minutes.

22 MR. GRENGS: All right. Greetings. I'm a 30-year  
23 resident of the Tri-Cities, and I offer my comments.

24 Each of these wind turbines requires approximately 2500  
25 tons of concrete for the foundation. The amount of the CO2

1 generated to produce this concrete is enormous. The rate of  
2 CO2 production in terms of windmill installations around the  
3 world would place this among the top CO2 producing countries  
4 were it made measured as such.

5 Insisting that windmills are somehow green is a blatant  
6 scam. The turbine blades wear out due to stress fractures  
7 and must be replaced over their operating lifetime, anywhere  
8 from 15 to 30 years. The blades are similar to airplane  
9 wings. They develop microfractures during use --

10 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Grengs, can you slow it down just a  
11 little bit? Thanks.

12 MR. GRENGS: I will do that, sir. There are no current  
13 cost effective methods for recycling the wind blades in  
14 spite of the quote from Cynthia Langston of Casper, Wyoming,  
15 Solid Waste Management. Some may find the appearance of the  
16 turbines to be attractive, thinking only of the  
17 instantaneous electricity produced. Others look at the  
18 turbines as pollution, destroying the clean, open spaces.  
19 The Columbia River Gorge has already been desecrated with  
20 these eyesores.

21 Wind turbines change the wind velocity to such an extent  
22 that the larger wind farms, the rows of turbines on the  
23 trailing end move much more slowly. And as a result, the  
24 momentum of the wind being significantly dampened, those  
25 turbines out in the front of the wave. In short, the actual

1 amount of power produced is often significantly less than  
2 the calculations from the models.

3 When you have over 260,000 wind turbines around the world  
4 that directly change the climate via significant reduction  
5 in surface convective air currents which dampen invective  
6 atmospheric mixing and nobody from the Sierra Club, Earth  
7 First, the IPCC, or the Friends of Global Progress is even  
8 bothering to waive a flag of concern, then you can be  
9 assured that climate change alarmism is less a matter of  
10 science and more a matter of politics and taxpayer financed  
11 corporatism. I am fully opposed to the project. Thank you  
12 for our opportunity to comment.

13 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Grengs.

14 Jim Atkins, calling again. Are you there?

15 MR. ATKINS: Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

16 JUDGE TOREM: I can hear you now, Mr. Atkins. Go ahead.  
17 Your two minutes starts now.

18 MR. ATKINS: All right. Thank you. I have sent an email  
19 previously, and I will send another one after this. I am  
20 opposed to this project, and I am in agreement with the  
21 Benton County Commissioners and Dr. Miller. I would also  
22 like to know who paid for the Tetra Tech draft habitat  
23 mitigation plan.

24 And this project was held pretty quiet until last fall  
25 when it kind of got out and people started getting in an



1 uproar about this. Also, Tetra Tech -- I mean, excuse me --  
2 Scout Energy in their comments, they said they did  
3 extensive, thorough environmental analysis the last four  
4 years. Well, how come now they need to do an environmental  
5 impact statement? I would think that if they really cared  
6 that much, they would have already done that.

7 And then furthermore, the -- I understand that people are  
8 concerned about jobs, but they haven't said if it's union or  
9 nonunion work for those guys. But the moneys that  
10 Scout Energy throws out there, they're just -- they're not  
11 specific. They're not a firm number. It like, Okay, we'll  
12 throw this money out there and then maybe they'll jump on  
13 it. Here's \$30 million.

14 Here's -- we're not going to -- we're going to pay for  
15 property tax money but we're not going to give you  
16 production money, you know, that the -- so they're going to  
17 make millions and millions and pay us a pittance of the  
18 money they make off of these projects, which, as is  
19 previously stated, it's all about government subsidies.  
20 Thank you very much.

21 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Thank you, Mr. Atkins.

22 The next speakers are going to be Frank Klierer or Cliver  
23 (phonetic) -- I apologize if I'm butchering your name -- and  
24 Dennis Simmelink and then Michael Ritter.

25 Frank, with a K, Klierer or Cliver.

1 MR. KLIEWER: Yes. That's okay. You're not the first to  
2 butcher it.

3 JUDGE TOREM: Help me out here.

4 MR. KLIEWER: That's all right, Judge. Your doing great.  
5 And this is an insurmountable task you've got, and I  
6 appreciate what you're trying to do.

7 JUDGE TOREM: Let me give you your two minutes, and you do  
8 what you need to here. Go ahead, sir.

9 MR. KLIEWER: All right. So I've got a long background in  
10 planning and building and all of the mitigations and  
11 conditional use permits and so forth. And I find this  
12 process to be mind-boggling to see how the local  
13 authorities, who are very competent, very capable of  
14 managing these environmental studies in managing the  
15 planning and the building process are being short-circuited  
16 and have been ignored basically.

17 I mean, they're -- tonight we had a couple of minutes from  
18 one and a couple minutes from another. And I realize,  
19 Judge, you said that there's going to be more and more  
20 comments. That was not believed to be the case before the  
21 withdrawal of the expedited permit.

22 And I question this whole process. It needs to be brought  
23 here locally. Obvious from tonight and all of the comments  
24 that have been made, there's a huge, huge opposition. There  
25 are many things that need to be studied and looked at more

1 carefully. This whole job notion, which is I think the best  
2 support it gets, the construction is a short-term job  
3 opportunity. And then very few people will do the long-term  
4 maintenance.

5 The bigger opportunity for jobs is the unique aspect of  
6 the Horse Heaven Hills. And it got touched on by a couple  
7 of people in terms of the winery aspect. We have the Horse  
8 Heaven Hills AVA which denotes the special soil that we have  
9 here. It's better than France. It's better than  
10 California.

11 And if the governor, dear Governor Inslee, would just  
12 promote with those land tracts that have been identified as  
13 being the premier development tracts to the wine industry,  
14 we could get wineries up from California, we could get  
15 expansion of the vineyards. That land is precious. It's  
16 unique because of the geologic conditions that we have.  
17 That's why it's superior to the other wine areas. And I  
18 could get into the facts and statistics on that, but it's  
19 true.

20 JUDGE TOREM: I'm going to ask you --

21 MR. KLIEWER: The long-term jobs --

22 JUDGE TOREM: I'm going to ask you, sir --

23 MR. KLIEWER: Yeah.

24 JUDGE TOREM: If you would -- and I know the interest you  
25 have in wine. After hours I'm going to have a similar

1 interest. But let me ask you to submit those comments, the  
2 data you have in writing.

3 MR. KLIEWER: Yes.

4 JUDGE TOREM: Or in a (inaudible) form if you can mail it.  
5 But I'm going to ask you to stop your comments there.

6 MR. KLIEWER: I will do that. And I would invite you to  
7 come up to the Horse Heaven Hills and enjoy the best wine  
8 there is in the world. And that industry will -- it will  
9 create thousands of jobs long term.

10 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, I appreciate --

11 MR. KLIEWER: Thousands of jobs.

12 JUDGE TOREM: -- it. We'd love to have a site visit.  
13 This is a wind farm, not a wine farm. I know we're just one  
14 letter away, but I've got six more commenters to squeeze in  
15 here. I appreciate your courtesy.

16 MR. KLIEWER: Thank you for your time, Judge. I  
17 appreciate it.

18 JUDGE TOREM: Dennis Simmelink, are you out there? All  
19 right. Mr. Simmelink, I'm going to call you again.

20 Next is Michael Ritter followed by Steve Simmons and  
21 Rylan -- I think it's Grimer (phonetic) or Grimmer  
22 (phonetic). I've seen your name in the comments string.  
23 You're going to be up in a few people.

24 Michael Ritter, are you there?

25 MR. RITTER: Yes, I am. And here I go. Are you ready?

1 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Ready.

2 MR. RITTER: All right. Hey, this is Mike Ritter. I'm  
3 with the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, and I'm  
4 the statewide technical lead for wind and solar development,  
5 and I live in Kennewick.

6 The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife will be  
7 providing official comments in writing, and the following is  
8 taken directly from those comments.

9 The immense size of the project along the Horse Heaven  
10 Hills ridge line and the subsequent landscape scale impact  
11 to an important habitat and ecological connectivity corridor  
12 will be difficult, if not impossible, to mitigate. It is  
13 important to note that the lineal Horse Heaven Hills  
14 represents some of the last remaining functional and  
15 uninterrupted shrub-steppe and natural grasslands in  
16 Benton County.

17 The project's location and east/west orientation in the  
18 Horse Heaven Hills puts many of the turbines, micro-siting  
19 corridors, transmission lines, solar arrays, etcetera, in  
20 close proximity to and crossing over many of the draws and  
21 canyons that provide some of the only native shrub-steppe  
22 and grassland habitat in the area as well as crossing over  
23 waters of the state.

24 Specifically, the solar, we consider impacts to vegetation  
25 inside the fenced area as permanent loss of existing habitat

1 functions and values in wildlife use. And for solar arrays  
2 that have any draws or canyons or ephemeral drainages in  
3 them, these areas should be maintained as open and connected  
4 to the adjacent off-site habitats. Conservatively, we have  
5 calculated 1,555 acres of temporary and permanent impacts.

6 And finally, the Horse Heaven Hills ridge line is an  
7 important shrub-steppe habitat and landscape connectivity  
8 area. We have worked closely with Benton County and private  
9 developers to mitigate previous projects in a way that  
10 conserves natural habitats and connectivity.

11 Constructing this project would result in the loss of  
12 ecological connectivity and loss of wildlife species. We  
13 would ask that the project focus on the south end. And I  
14 will conclude there. Thank you so much.

15 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Ritter, just so I'm clear -- again, this  
16 is Judge Torem. Are you speaking on your own behalf or on  
17 behalf of the agency?

18 MR. RITTER: On behalf of the agency.

19 JUDGE TOREM: Okay. Thank you. That's important for me  
20 to know and for the Council as well.

21 Is Dennis Simmelink available yet?

22 All right. Steve Simmons.

23 MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

24 JUDGE TOREM: Steve Simmons, go ahead. Your two minutes.

25 MR. SIMMONS: So I am -- my name is Steve Simmons, and I

1 am a lifetime resident of the Tri-City region, currently  
2 live in Franklin County in Pasco. I just wanted to say  
3 thank you for letting me have the opportunity to speak  
4 tonight.

5 I am opposed to the Horse Heaven Wind Farm project. I  
6 feel that we are moving too fast with clean energy  
7 production in certain areas and not fast enough in others.  
8 It seems that government officials want clean now and they  
9 feel that we are following -- just following the green  
10 trend.

11 If we sit back and ask ourselves: Do we want this so bad  
12 that we are overemphasizing the supposed benefits while we  
13 are underemphasizing serious concerns in the name of  
14 choosing the green stamp of approval that our state  
15 executive department wants so bad?

16 In reality, wind power just doesn't pencil out. We have  
17 an abundance of fossil fuel that can be cleanly spent while  
18 we develop and implement an energy approach that encompasses  
19 all sources of energy and is not rushing subsidized sources  
20 such as wind farms to use.

21 We have other sources in our area that produce more  
22 benefit to the state, and most importantly to the people of  
23 the Tri-City area. We have nuclear and hydropower -- and I  
24 would also add in that we used to have coal power -- both of  
25 which offer higher and longer-term regional employment as

1 well as recreational flood control, medical uses, on-demand  
2 energy and load shifting.

3 From my experience as an electrician, I know that the  
4 construction of these wind farms are quick and fast jobs,  
5 not long-term as has been stated. And from my experience as  
6 a maintenance planner, I know that the majority of  
7 maintenance jobs on these farms is done by specialized  
8 contractors who bring in their own workers.

9 The economic benefits in our area -- to our area's  
10 families and public services are being overexaggerated. And  
11 I would just want to say that I do agree with the  
12 Benton County Commissioners, the Benton County Planning  
13 Commission, the gentleman with the comments about the Space  
14 Needle, I agree with our Representative Mary Dye and also  
15 the gentleman who just had the comments about bringing the  
16 argument to our area because there are so many concerns.  
17 And I just want to say thank you for your time. And I am a  
18 electrician, a local electrician in this area as well.

19 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mr. Simmons.

20 Last call for Dennis Simmelink. All right, sir. If  
21 you're having a problem with your mute, Mr. Simmelink, or  
22 you're still on the line, please send in your comments in  
23 writing.

24 We have three more speakers, and then I've been notified  
25 that the Mayor Don Britain wants to be the last speaker.



1 And because no one signed up after him, we'll put him last.  
2 You'll get the last word, sir.

3 Rylan Grimmer and then Margaret Hue and then Matt Malin  
4 will precede the Mayor.

5 Mr. Grimmer, are you out there?

6 MR. GRIMES: Yeah. This is Rylan Grimes.

7 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Go ahead, sir. Two minutes.  
8 And, again, if you can speak at a reasonable rate for the  
9 court reporter, we appreciate it.

10 MR. GRIMES: Okay. My name's Rylan Grimes, and I'm a  
11 lifelong residence of the Tri-Cities and I'm also the  
12 organizer for the International Brotherhood of Electrical  
13 Workers Local Union 112 here in Kennewick.

14 Local 112 represents over a thousand electricians in  
15 Southeast Washington and Northeast Oregon, and we are in  
16 support of this project because of the good-paying jobs it  
17 will create both during and after construction.

18 Wind combined with solar and battery storage is a very  
19 reliable source of energy generation, and IBW has been  
20 proving this all over Oregon. We currently have a couple of  
21 projects like this right now down in Moro and Gilliam County  
22 in Oregon.

23 When we combine renewable energy with the hydroelectric  
24 and the nuclear that we already have, it will give us a  
25 healthy amount of diversification in our energy generation

1 and will keep our grid reliable for decades. The windmills  
2 are nothing new in the Tri-Cities as there have been  
3 windmills in the face of Jumpoff Joe with the Nine Canyon  
4 project since I graduated from high school at Southridge  
5 over 15 years ago. I haven't once looked at them with  
6 disgust. In fact, I look at them with pride knowing that I  
7 worked on a few just like them when I was an apprentice  
8 electrician.

9 IBW Local 112 looks forward to working with Scout Clean  
10 Energy and their electrical contractor to successfully  
11 complete this project in the near future. Thank you.

12 JUDGE TOREM: Mr. Grimes, is that it?

13 MR. GRIMES: That is it.

14 JUDGE TOREM: All right. Perfect. I wasn't sure the way  
15 you left off there.

16 Margaret Hue, Matt Malin are next.

17 Ms. Hue?

18 MS. HUE: I'm trying to find it.

19 JUDGE TOREM: I see you on the screen there, Ms. Hue. Let  
20 me know when you're ready.

21 MS. HUE: I'm trying to find the microphone. There. Am I  
22 on? Okay.

23 JUDGE TOREM: Yes, you're on.

24 MS. HUE: Okay. I didn't know that.

25 JUDGE TOREM: All right.

1 MS. HUE: Okay.

2 JUDGE TOREM: Go ahead. I'll start your two minutes now.

3 MS. HUE: All right. Well, thank you for letting me speak  
4 here. I live in Badger Canyon, and Badger Canyon is about  
5 13 miles long, and it's from I-82 and it goes around and  
6 meets at Kiona. So where about 140 of these machines are  
7 planning on going are right above me.

8 And people have said, "Oh, nobody's going to see these,"  
9 but they're absolutely wrong because some of these are --  
10 when I took Scout's map and enlarged, it said that some of  
11 these are going in at 500 foot level. That is inside of our  
12 Badger Canyon.

13 And Badger Canyon used to be the Yakima River before the  
14 Montana floods. So you get an idea of the train. We have  
15 hills on both sides. And some open up a little bit more,  
16 but we're long and narrow.

17 Well, with that we're -- in 1948, airplanes started  
18 applying herbicides, 2,4,5-T herbicide to the hills. And  
19 this is significant because it drifted onto grapes and wiped  
20 out grape fields and farms from Kiona all the way to Henley.  
21 Now, with that there is a lot of turmoil and back and forth.  
22 But not until the 1980s when they started using other  
23 herbicides. That has affected diversified all agriculture  
24 that was not growing wheat. And these were all wheat  
25 herbicides.

1 Well, in 1988, I lost a lot of crops. I -- and in a  
2 paraquat application that was made in August of 1988 was  
3 important because it ended up drifting over 400 square miles  
4 of Tri-Cities. And with that, the comprehensive  
5 meteorological analysis of a pesticide incident was written  
6 by Battelle Northwest, which did a lot of study on the  
7 topography and the terrain and how the winds come down into  
8 the canyons and they circle around on the other side of the  
9 hill. And with that, we are going to have so much noise  
10 from 140 turbines when the majority of those are at 2,000  
11 feet, somebody said 1500 but they're 2,000 feet coming into  
12 the canyon down the --

13 JUDGE TOREM: Ms. Hue, we're running past your time. Can  
14 you sum up for me, please?

15 MS. HUE: So I just think that there is a critical piece  
16 of information from Battelle Northwest that is a meteorology  
17 study on winds and the -- and the air movement off of Horse  
18 Heavens and that is going to significantly cause a lot of  
19 noise problems in Badger Canyon.

20 JUDGE TOREM: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Hue. I'm going to  
21 have to cut you off there.

22 MS. HUE: That's okay. (Inaudible).

23 JUDGE TOREM: Matt Malin, are you on the line?

24 MS. HUE: I've submitted a long letter to you.

25 JUDGE TOREM: Excellent. We will read it.

1 MS. HUE: Thank you.

2 JUDGE TOREM: Matt Malin, are you out there? Matt Malin?  
3 Going once. Going twice. Because I promised the Mayor he'd  
4 be last, I can't call you again. Matt Malin, last call.  
5 All right. Mr. Malin, if you have any comments if you're  
6 still on the line, please submit them in writing.

7 Mayor Don Britain, are you on the line?

8 MAYOR BRITAIN: I am. Can you hear me?

9 JUDGE TOREM: Sir?

10 MAYOR BRITAIN: Hello? Can you hear me?

11 JUDGE TOREM: Hello. I can hear you. You're our last two  
12 minutes. I'd ask you to give us the courtesy of making it  
13 two minutes. I'll cut you off and let you know when we get  
14 there. Two minutes, go ahead, sir.

15 MAYOR BRITAIN: Judge, it will be less. I appreciate you  
16 placing me last. I was traveling all day today, and I was  
17 not sure when I'd be back in town.

18 The City of Kennewick had prepared and submitted a letter,  
19 which I was going to read into the record tonight opposing  
20 Scout Energy's request for expedited review. However, since  
21 Scout's now withdrawn that application, and in fairness and  
22 respect for the time tonight, I am not going to read that  
23 into the record.

24 But I do want to state that the primary reason for the  
25 opposition of the expedited review process was to be in

1 alignment with the Washington 2021 State Energy Strategy  
2 that identified the need for maximum outreach to  
3 communities, public involvement, and environmental impacts.

4 So with that, I just wanted to say that. I appreciate  
5 your time and effort and your patience tonight during this  
6 long public comment. You did a great job. And thank you  
7 for the opportunity to speak.

8 JUDGE TOREM: Thank you, Mayor.

9 Chair Drew, I think that is the end of our public comment  
10 listing. It's now 8:19 p.m. I'm going to suggest we take  
11 another ten-minute break, make sure the applicant and the  
12 County are ready to go at 8:30 for the land use consistency  
13 hearing.

14 Is there anything else that the chair wants to do before  
15 we close the public comment hearing that we've been on since  
16 5:30 p.m.?

17 CHAIRPERSON DREW: No. I think that's an excellent  
18 suggestion. And I appreciate everybody's comments tonight  
19 and patience with a different kind of communication. And we  
20 are all here listening to your comments, and we will be  
21 reviewing all the written comments as well.

22 And with that, we will close the public information  
23 meeting. And we will come back at 8:30 for the land use  
24 consistency --

25 JUDGE TOREM: We're at 8:20. We're closing that public

1 information and comment hearing. Thank you all. We're off  
2 the record at this point. We'll come back in ten minutes  
3 and I'll then formally open with the chair the land use  
4 consistency hearing. Back in ten minutes. Thank you.

5 (Conclusion of Public Information and Comment Hearing)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF WASHINGTON )

COUNTY OF KING )

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing court proceedings or other legal recordings were transcribed under my direction as a certified transcriptionist; and that the transcript is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and ability, including any changes made by the trial judge reviewing the transcript; that I received the electronic recording directly from the trial court conducting the hearing; that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially interested in its outcome.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of April, 2021.

*Katherine VanGrinsven*



Katherine VanGrinsven, WA CCR No. 3415

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