

1 TCC
2 Pre-Filed Testimony
3 Kevin Leary
4 EXH-5604_R

5 BEFORE THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
6 ENERGY FACILITY SITING EVALUATION COUNCIL

7 In the Matter of the Application of:

DOCKET NO. EF-210011

8 Scout Clean Energy, LLC, for
9 Horse Heaven Wind Farm, LLC,
Applicant.

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF TCC
WITNESS KEVIN LEARY

10
11 Q: Please state your name, employer (if relevant) and home address.

12
13 A: Kevin Leary, 53903 N 208 PR NW-Benton City WA-99320. Time at
14 Residence-22 and ½ years.

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16 Q: Please briefly describe your work experience and qualifications.

17
18 A: I have a BS in Soil Science and an MS in Hydrogeology/Hydrology with over
19 38 years of experience in the environmental field. I have worked on several
20 environmental documents including EIS's, EA's, FLPMA, lead Hazmat
21 coordinator for State of NV-BLM; in graduate school at UNR/Desert Research
22 Institute-I did the first physical groundwater recharge model for Yucca
23 Mountain; CERCLA/RCRA (one of my CERCLA documents won ROD of the
24 year nationally by EPA), as well as multiple NEPA/SEPA documents. In
25
26

1 addition, I was funded through OSU to write a National Handbook on Non-Point
2 Source Pollution for the EPA (I wrote over 700 pp.-but funding ran out)

3
4 Q: Please describe why you are testifying.

5 I am voluntarily supporting and coordinating with the local community non-
6 profit organization Tri-City CARES as well as share my concerns about the
7 impacts the Horse Heaven Hills Project will have on my home, property values,
8 and the other homes in my neighborhood and other similarly situated
9 neighborhoods in Tri-Cities. My property values and future land use of one of my
10 "buildable parcels (greater than 5 acres) as well as others in Benton City have
11 already been adversely impacted by the massive 220 KV BPA powerline (coming
12 from the ENW nuclear power plant) that crosses my property. This powerline
13 goes against all the principles of environmental justice delineated in NEPA--that
14 is--it was built in a predominately poor, predominately Hispanic area! In addition
15 to the aesthetics and the obvious EMW from such massive powerlines, Benton
16 County continues to charge me high property taxes on this parcel with no
17 consideration to the fact that who would want to build a house adjacent to or
18 below such a strong source of EFR (note-the US doesn't recognize the adverse
19 health impacts [i.e. cancer]. The following was measured 6/12/20 directly
20 beneath the BPA powerline on my lower 5-acre parcel:

21 Electrical Field Radiation- 1840 V/m

22 Magnetic Field Radiation- 15.6 uT (micro-Tesla's)

23 A [meta-analysis](#) of 15 studies by the National Cancer Institute observed a 1.7-
24 fold increase in childhood leukemia among children with exposures of 0.3 μ T or
25 higher (from a WHO study). Now my property is essentially condemned for any
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1 future development with no financial compensation from the Feds; no property
2 tax relief from Benton County, an already adverse impact on my visual aesthetics
3 of the HHH and now Scout Energy wants to further destroy what little
4 unobstructed view of the HHH I have left! Outrageous!

5
6 Finally, I am testifying mostly because in my 38 years as an environmental
7 scientist, the EIS for the HHH Wind and Solar farm is: **THE WORST**
8 **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT I HAVE EVER REVIEWED!** The
9 document doesn't even come close to meeting the legal requirements of
10 SEPA/NEPA. For example, the Alternatives Analysis in this EIS is an absolute
11 mockery of SEPA. What the EIS should have analyzed as an alternative is
12 moving the wind farms to the south off the ridge-tops of HHH by 1000 to 2000
13 feet. Had they done this, the majority of the objections (e.g., aesthetics, wildlife
14 impacts) would have been dropped and there would be very little objection to this
15 proposed project. The other major issue I have is Jay Inslee's comments about
16 Eastern Washingtonians attitudes of NIMBY (Not in my Back Yard). In reality,
17 what Jay fails to realize is that over 90% of the energy generated in WA State is
18 generated on the East side of the Cascade Mountains, yet the majority of this
19 power is inefficiently exported back to the western portion of the most populated
20 area of WA state. Furthermore, some of this energy generated here is also
21 exported to California. Furthermore, from a carbon footprint/carbon reduction
22 and waste of natural resources (for extensive powerlines) it makes more sense to
23 build the power production near the point of use (i.e., Western WA) such as
24 windmills in Puget Sound or at the base of the Cascade Mountains. But Mr.
25 Inslee can't have this as there would be huge opposition from the same
26

1 environmentalists that support building these projects on the eastside--plus--the
2 majority of these people on the West side are a big part of his democratic voting
3 constituents whereas the majority of the population on the eastside--where all of
4 these “green energy” projects are being forced down the locals’ throats is
5 predominantly Republican.
6

7 Q: Please describe your opinion on the effect this project will have on property
8 value of your home and other homes in the area.

9 A: It will continue to decrease the property values; however, the Benton County
10 Assessor’s Office will continue to raise taxes. Let’s face, the Tri-Cities and the
11 surrounding area isn’t exactly the prettiest place in the world. However, from an
12 aesthetics “viewpoint,” the only view we have is the Horse Heaven Hills and the
13 remnant scars left behind from the Late Pleistocene Missoula Floods: a
14 magnificent viewshed that continually reminds us of the overwhelming power of
15 nature. All of this would be obliterated if the HHH wind farm were to be
16 approved.
17

18 Q: Please describe your opinion of any other issues or concerns you have about
19 the project.

20 A: In addition to all of the objections I have listed above, a critical personal
21 observation I have made over the years is the regular migration of the once
22 endangered Sandhill cranes. In the late winter/early spring and late Fall heading
23 south, like clockwork, every year I first hear the very distinctive call of the
24 migratory Sandhill Cranes making their tortuous annual migration back up North
25 from winter nesting grounds in the South. I am usually outside working-pruning
26 fruit trees or pruning grapes or other types of work. And every day, I see

1 hundreds of these birds, in multiple flocks, flying overhead. And one of the more
2 curious observations I have made over the years is how low they fly over the
3 Horse Heaven Hills. I suspect that if these windmills were installed along the
4 ridge-tops of the HHH, there would be massive bird kills of these magnificent
5 migratory birds by the rotating blades of windmills that are larger than the Seattle
6 Space Needle. One final concern is the threat, the frequency, and the magnitude
7 of wildfires on the Horse Heaven Hills. The frequency would only increase
8 statistically due to the increase in human activity during both construction and
9 maintenance of the proposed wind and solar farms on the top of Horse Heaven
10 Hills. Increased fire frequency would not only be bad for the adjacent
11 landowners, but would also damage or destroy the windmills and solar panels.
12 And who would all of these replacement costs be passed on to? That is correct,
13 the utility rate payers. Just recently a fire exploded across the Horse Heaven Hills
14 on June 13th, 2023 burning close to 10,000 acres within hours and the taxpayers
15 were hit with over a 1-million dollar bill for fire-fighting/suppression. This
16 doesn't even take into account costs for re-vegetation/site restoration.
17

18 I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that
19 my testimony is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
20

21 Signed this __3__ day of July, 2023, in _Kennewick WA _____.

22 Kevin Leary
23 Printed Name

_____/s/_____
Signature