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BEFORE THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
ENERGY FACILITY SITING EVALUATION COUNCIL

In the Matter of the Application of:
Scout Clean Energy, LLC, for Horse Heaven
Wind Farm, LLC,
Applicant.

DOCKET NO. EF-210011
DIRECT TESTIMONY AND
ATTACHMENTS OF TROY RAHMIG
ON BEHALF OF SCOUT CLEAN
ENERGY

DIRECT TESTIMONY AND ATTACHMENTS OF TROY RAHMIG

ON BEHALF OF

SCOUT CLEAN ENERGY

EXH-1006_T

Revised 6/26/23

STOEL RIVES LLP
760 SW Ninth Avenue, Suite 3000, Portland, OR 97205
Main 503.224.3380 Fax 503.220.2480

JUNE 12, 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Q. Please state your name, occupation, and business address.

A. My name is Troy Rahmig. I am the Endangered Species Program Manager at Tetra Tech. My business address is 19803 N Creek Pkwy, Bothell, WA 98011.

Q. What are your job duties and responsibilities in that role?

A. I am a consulting biologist and project manager focused on local, state, and federal permitting approvals for infrastructure projects, with a specific focus on renewable energy projects in the western U.S.

Q. What is your educational and professional background?

A. I have a B.S. and M.S. in Biology from Truman State University.

Q. How long have you worked as a consulting biologist?

A. I have worked as a biological resources consultant since 2003. A summary of my education and professional experience is included as Attachment A.

Q. When were you engaged in this matter?

A. I began working on this project in November 2021 as a senior biologist and permitting expert. This involved reviewing all existing materials that had been completed, attending technical and regulatory meetings, preparing new or updating existing technical documents, and providing senior review of technical documents.

Q. How is your testimony organized?

A. My testimony includes background on my qualifications and work experience, followed by a summary of the approach I took to preparing the portions of the Application and Appendices that I am sponsoring. It concludes with a list of topics from the Application that I am prepared to testify about. In addition, because much of my work was performed in coordination with Wildlife Biologist Erik Jansen of Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (“WEST”), Applicant intends for my

1 testimony to be presented in conjunction with Mr. Jansen’s, including participating in
2 a joint panel during the live cross-examination portion of the adjudicative proceeding.

3 **II. PURPOSE AND SUBJECT MATTER OF TESTIMONY:**

4 Q. For whom are you testifying and what is the purpose of your testimony?

5 A. My testimony is offered on behalf of Scout Clean Energy. The purpose of my
6 testimony is to provide additional explanation and support for the biological resource-
7 related sections of the Horse Heaven Wind Farm Application for Site Certification.

8 Q. Are you sponsoring any portions of the Application for Site Certification for the
9 Horse Heaven Wind Farm? Please describe the sections of the application you
10 contributed to.

11 A. Yes. I am sponsoring the following sections concerning biological resources:
12 Section 3.4 – Habitat, Vegetation, and Wildlife

13 Q. Are you sponsoring any appendices or other documents that are part of the
14 Application for Site Certification?

15 A. Yes. I am sponsoring the following appendices:
16 Appendix K - Biological Reports
17 Appendix J – Wildlife and Habitat Mitigation Plan
18 Appendix N – Revegetation and Noxious Weed Control.

19 Q. Are you familiar with those portions of the identified sections and appendices of the
20 Application for Site Certification?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Did you prepare these portions of those sections and appendices of the Application
23 for Site Certification, or, if not, did you direct and/or supervise their preparation?

24 A. Yes. I joined Tetra Tech in November 2021. Since that time, I have directed and
25 reviewed these sections and appendices of the application and am familiar with all
26 that they contain.

1 Q. Is the information in these portions of those sections and appendices of the
2 Application for Site Certification within your area of authority and/or expertise?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Are the contents of these portions of those sections and appendices of the Application
5 for Site Certification either based upon your knowledge, or upon evidence, such as
6 studies and reports that reasonably prudent persons in your field are accustomed to
7 rely on in the conduct of their affairs?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. To the best of your knowledge, are the contents and portions of those sections and
10 appendices of the Application for Site Certification true?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you incorporate the facts and contents of these portions of those sections and
13 appendices of the Application for Site Certification as part of your testimony?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Are you able to answer questions under cross-examination regarding these portions of
16 those sections and appendices of the Application for Site Certification?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Do you sponsor the admission into evidence of these portions of those sections and
19 appendices of the Application for Site Certification?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did you also participate in preparing portions of the updated Application for Site
22 Certification?

23 A. Yes. I drafted portions of the revised Application for Site Certification, including
24 updates to Section 3.4 – Habitat, Vegetation, and Wildlife and two revisions of
25 Appendix J (Habitat Mitigation Plan). I also reviewed the memorandum on Potential
26 Impacts to Pronghorn from the Horse Heaven project developed in December 2021

1 and added to Appendix K (Biological Reports) in response to an EFSEC data request.
2 I provided a peer review of the Cumulative Effects to Birds and Bats, and Land Cover
3 from Renewable Energy in the Columbia Plateau Ecoregion of Eastern Oregon and
4 Washington, which was completed by Erik Jansen and submitted to EFSEC in
5 January 2023.

6 Q. Are there any modifications or clarifications to be made to these portions of those
7 sections of the Application for Site Certification that you are sponsoring?

8 A. Not beyond what was captured in the revised Application for Site Certification and
9 associated appendices in December 2022.

10 Q. How did you develop your contributions to those sections and appendices of the
11 Application for Site Certification?

12 A. I obtained information about the natural resources in the Project Area through a
13 combination of field surveys, state resource databases (e.g., Washington Priority
14 Habitats and Species, Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group),
15 literature searches, and coordination with the Washington Department of Fish
16 (“WDFW”) and Wildlife. Field data was collected by members of the project team,
17 including Erik Jansen, Andrea Chatfield, Samantha Brown, Karen Brimacombe, and
18 Jess Taylor. Field studies were conducted using standard protocols, which were
19 discussed and approved by WDFW. These included aerial surveys for raptor nests,
20 due to the size of the project area and survey buffer around the project area, and the
21 difficult canyon terrain, particularly north of the project. Vegetation, rare and noxious
22 plants, avian use, and wetland surveys were conducted from the ground, using a
23 combination of pedestrian transects, point counts (avian use), and site-specific
24 delineations (e.g., wetlands).

25 I reviewed the information that was collected, including summary technical reports,
26 and advised technical experts on the evaluation of potential effects on natural

1 resources from the Project. The evaluation of effects involved a review of the
2 proposed Project layout and spatial overlays of Project components with natural
3 resource information. Resources, including habitat, plants, and wildlife (including
4 wildlife connectivity and movement) were assessed relative to the Project. Effects to
5 habitat were characterized as permanent, temporary, or modified, the latter being
6 effects to habitats inside of the security fence at proposed solar arrays, where some
7 residual habitat value is expected to persist following revegetation. Those evaluations
8 were in line with the 2009 WDFW Wind Power Guidelines and were refined
9 following discussions with EFSEC and WDFW.

10 Q. On what resources, data or other references did you rely on in contributing to those
11 sections and appendices of the Application for Site Certification?

12 A. Primary resources included field data collected specifically for the Project. Field data
13 collection was informed by and supplemented with information from statewide
14 databases, including the Washington Natural Heritage Program Priority Habitats and
15 Species data, Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group (Statewide
16 and Columbia Basin data), and the Arid Lands Initiative.

17 During the design of field studies and as part of the information gathering phase of
18 the Project, my team coordinated with WDFW and EFSEC to ensure that the data and
19 information being used was the most current, and that any additional data that
20 WDFW had, which had not been published but may inform the assessment of the
21 Project, could be shared. During those meetings my team also sought and received
22 confirmation of surveys to be conducted and methods to be used. The list of data
23 sources utilized is found in the literature cited section of the Application and each
24 Appendix.

25 In total, Applicant, my team and WEST participated in at least nine meetings with
26 WDFW. EFSEC and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) also attended some of

1 these meetings. In the first two meetings, attendees from Scout, my team, WEST,
2 WDFW, and USFWS discussed how to approach wildlife and habitat surveys, and
3 WDFW/USFWS made recommendations regarding wildlife and habitat survey
4 methods. Later meetings focused on reviewing the surveys conducted and discussing
5 potential impacts (or lack thereof) and proposed avoidance, minimization, and
6 mitigation measures. WDFW also reviewed and approved the surveys and the impact
7 tables we developed, including the proposed mitigation ratios for Priority Habitat
8 types.

9 Q. On what topics in the Application for Site Certification are you prepared to testify
10 about?

11 A. Habitat, Vegetation, and Wetlands; Habitat Fragmentation (Project Layout
12 Issues/Impact of East Solar Array); Wildlife; Bird and Bat Mortality; and
13 Threatened/Endangered Species.
14

15 DATED: June 12, 2023.

STOEL RIVES LLP



TIMOTHY L. MCMAHAN
tim.mcmahan@stoel.com
ARIEL STAVITSKY
ariel.stavitsky@stoel.com
EMILY K. SCHIMELPFENIG
emily.schimelpfenig@stoel.com
Telephone: (503) 294-9517
Of Attorneys for Applicant

1 **CERTIFICIATE OF FILING AND SERVICE**

2 I hereby certify that on June 12, 2023, I filed an original and one copy of the
3 foregoing **DIRECT TESTIMONY AND ATTACHMENTS OF TROY RAHMIG ON**
4 **BEHALF OF SCOUT CLEAN ENERGY** with the Washington Energy Facility Site
5 Evaluation Council, through electronic filing via email to adjudication@efsec.wa.gov,
6 together with mailing via U.S. Postal Service, Return receipt requested, with postage prepaid
7 to the following address:

8 Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
9 ATTN: Horse Heaven Adjudication
10 621 Woodland Square Loop SE
11 P.O. Box 43172
12 Olympia, WA 98504-3172

13 I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document upon all parties
14 of record in this proceeding by first-class U.S. Mail (authorized method of service
15 pursuant to WAC 463-30-120(3)) at the addresses listed below (with a copy sent via email
16 where an email address is indicated).

17 ***Service List Attached***

18 DATED: June 12, 2023.

19 STOEL RIVES LLP

20 

21 TIMOTHY L. MCMAHAN
22 tim.mcmahan@stoel.com
23 Telephone: (503) 294-9517
24 *Of Attorneys for Applicant*

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AAG Sarah Reyneveld
Attorney General’s Office
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 (TB/14)
Seattle, WA 98104-3188
sarah.reyneveld@atg.wa.gov

Attorney for Counsel for the Environment

Kenneth W. Harper
Aziza L. Foster
Menke Jackson Beyer, LLP
807 North 39th Avenue
Yakima, WA 98902
kharper@mjbe.com
zfoster@mjbe.com

Attorneys for Benton County

J. Richard Aramburu
Law Offices of J. Richard Aramburu, PLLC
705 2nd Ave, Suite 1300
Seattle, WA 98104-1797
rick@aramburu-eustis.com
aramburulaw@gmail.com

Attorney for Proposed Intervenor Tri-Cities C.A.R.E.S.

Ethan Jones
Shona Voelckers
Jessica Houston
Yakama Nation Office of Legal Counsel
P.O.Box 151
Toppenish, WA 98948
ethan@yakamanation-olc.org
shona@yakamanation-olc.org
jessica@yakamanation-olc.org

*Attorney for Proposed Intervenor Confederated Tribes
and Bands of the Yakama Nation*