

BEFORE THE STATE OF WASHINGTON  
ENERGY FACILITY SITING EVALUATION COUNCIL

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

DOCKET NO. EF-210011  
  
REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF JESSICA  
WADSWORTH ON BEHALF OF  
SCOUT CLEAN ENERGY

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**SCOUT CLEAN ENERGY**  
  
**EXH-1034\_R**

**JUNE 30, 2023**

**STOEL RIVES LLP**  
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1 Q. Please state your name, occupation, and where you live.

2 A. My name is Jessica Bosse Wadsworth. I am an elected Benton City Councilor. I am  
3 also a Field Representative with Laborers Local 348. I live in Benton City, in Benton  
4 County, north of the Horse Heaven Hills.

5 Q. Please describe the purpose of this rebuttal testimony.

6 A. I am testifying in response to aspects of the pre-filed direct testimony of Greg Wendt,  
7 and Michelle Cooke, as well as aspects of the pre-filed direct testimony filed by  
8 members of Tri-Cities CARES.

9 Q. Are you able to answer questions under cross examination regarding your testimony?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. How long have you lived in Benton City?

12 A. I've lived in Benton City since 2009, almost 15 years.

13 Q. How long have you served on City Council?

14 A. I have served on Benton City Council for about 18 months.

15 Q. What are your duties in your role as a City Councilor?

16 A. As a City Councilor, I represent my community and participate in overseeing our  
17 local government responsibilities. That could be considering and adopting  
18 ordinances, reviewing, and approving annual budgets, and hearing from the public.  
19 We hold a once-a-month workshop, to go over things brought before us, and we hold  
20 two City Council meetings per month. The workshop and Council meetings are open  
21 to the public, and I also receive phone calls and have conversations with my  
22 constituents and raise their concerns with the Council.

23 Q. In your role as City Councilor, do you work on land use or development issues?

24 A. Well, ordinarily, yes. But not long after I joined the Council, the City put in place a  
25 moratorium on nearly all new building and land use applications. So I have not had  
26 any new development applications come before me during this term.

1 Q. Why did the City impose the moratorium?

2 A. Development was getting out of hand. The existing standards were not working and  
3 we started to see things going in a bad direction. We have only a small buildable  
4 footprint left within City limits. And residential developers, mostly building single  
5 family housing developments, were eating up that footprint, converting old orchards  
6 into housing communities. So we decided to put things on hold until we could come  
7 up with a better system to control that growth in a responsible way.

8 Q. Has the City coordinated with the County in the moratorium or other recent land use  
9 planning efforts?

10 A. Not that I'm aware of.

11 Q. Since the City moratorium went into effect, has residential or other development  
12 continued within County limits?

13 A. Based on my observations in the area, yes. Especially large single-family residential  
14 development, has continued in the County. You see really large homes going up. The  
15 residential developers who can no longer build in the City seem to have moved their  
16 plans to the County.

17 Q. I'd like to talk now about your role with Local 348, how long have you been involved  
18 in your union activities?

19 A. I first joined the Laborers apprenticeship program in 2007 and worked at Washington  
20 State University's campus as a Laborer apprentice. When that job ended, I moved on  
21 to another, then another, continuing to learn more and more along the way. Since  
22 then, I've always participated in the union and local labor issues. I started to really  
23 get involved and wanted to give back, so when a spot opened up as an auditor, I took  
24 it. I then moved up to an organizing position, and now serve as a field representative.

25 Q. What are your duties in your role as field representative?  
26

1 A. As a field representative, I represent the membership of Laborers Local 348. Our  
2 membership is over 1200, covering a dozen counties in Washington. In my work, I  
3 make sure memberships' interests and concerns are heard, and grievances are  
4 addressed. That means I make sure our contractors follow the agreements, making  
5 sure there's enough work for our members, advocating for local construction projects  
6 to go union and making sure that our contractors have enough skilled hands when  
7 they need it.

8 Q. Are you a participating landowner in the project or have any other direct financial  
9 stake in the project?

10 A. No. I do not.

11 Q. As a resident and City Councilor, how would you describe Benton City and Benton  
12 County?

13 A. You know, we're in an interesting time right now. At the same time we've have a lot  
14 of residential development in the City, we have a lot of empty storefronts. We're not  
15 growing in a healthy direction. I hear a lot of folks complain about the fact that we  
16 don't have a hotel, no restaurant, a lot of people feel that. People talk about things we  
17 used to have, like an ice cream shop. We don't have a thriving downtown anymore.  
18 This community needs to attract business owners to want to participate, to invest in  
19 our area. But we have to be able to sustain the business. Right now, there's not  
20 enough revenue to help them stay. I think the City and County residents are generally  
21 aligned on that, everyone would like to not have to go drive all the way to Richland to  
22 go do things and enjoy activities.

23 So, we have a lot of growing to do. Our community wants good family wage jobs,  
24 we want local hires. That money trickles down and comes back into the community.  
25 Really, we need investment in our local economy and community.

26 Q. How are you familiar with the Horse Heaven Wind Farm project?

1 A. I first learned about the project in late 2019 or early 2020, in my role with the union,  
2 when Scout Clean first reached out to us to start a conversation about labor for the  
3 project. Scout staff came to us, presented about the project, talked with us about the  
4 overall scope of the project, Scout’s goals, the project layout, everything we wanted  
5 to know about the project.

6 Later, at City Council, we received multiple presentations from the Tri-Cities CARES  
7 group opposing the project, but we never heard the other side. I don’t believe the  
8 mayor ever reached out to Scout to speak with us. All the information presented and  
9 discussed at City Council has been coming from only that one side, the opposition.  
10 I’ve been vocal about my concerns about how one-sided the conversation has been.  
11 The public and the Council need to have balanced information in order to form their  
12 opinions about the project and whether it is good or bad for our community.

13 Q. Based on your experience as Councilor, could you describe your constituents’ general  
14 sentiments or concerns about the Horse Heaven Wind Farm project?

15 A. All I’ve heard about opposition to the project has come from the Tri-Cities CARES  
16 members. Whenever I’ve brought it up with other people, they don’t have strong  
17 thoughts on it one way or another. Because they feel it doesn’t affect them in a  
18 negative way. If anything, Benton City has a lot of union households, and they know  
19 what the project would mean for the community. These are going to be local jobs.  
20 It’ll give many workers that ability to buy local, to work local, to keep that money in  
21 their community. That means a lot to them.

22 And our residents believe in landowner rights. Ultimately, they respect their  
23 neighbors’ rights to control their land and know what’s best for it. What gives us the  
24 right to tell somebody else what to do with their land?

1 Q. Based on your experience as a City Councilor, do you agree with the positions in Ms.  
2 Cooke’s testimony that the development of the project threatens the “regional farm  
3 economy”? Please explain.

4 A. No, I do not. I mentioned our constituents care about jobs, about local investment.  
5 The same goes for our farmers. The investment the participating farmers get directly  
6 helps the farming community and the supporting businesses. It allows them to finally  
7 invest in their farms, to buy that new combine they’ve needed but haven’t been able  
8 to afford. If they need more hands, they can hire enough help. They can invest in the  
9 most productive parts of their land. Again, that money trickles down and helps other  
10 agricultural support businesses too.

11 The County testimony seems to ignore that farmers sell their land. This happens.  
12 They might sell off land to fund a new farm investment, or buy a new truck, or  
13 whatever they know is needed for their land. It is a part of the agricultural  
14 community, regardless of whether it is a wind or solar project or other type of  
15 development.

16 Q. In your role as field representative, how would the project impact the local labor  
17 community?

18 A. It means more family wage jobs, feeding back into our community. Almost all of the  
19 people employed by the project would be local workers who would shop at Fred  
20 Meyer, at local stores. We love to provide local jobs within Benton County so our  
21 members do not have to travel 60 miles to go to work every day. That would be huge.  
22 One thing people outside of the building industry often don’t realize is that all of our  
23 jobs are temporary jobs. I like to say “we’re always working ourselves out of a job.”  
24 Our goal is to finish a job. No job is permanent in the construction industry. You  
25 show up in a dirt field and leave when the job is finished. So, these jobs are  
26 temporary, but that’s the nature of the industry. For us, a six-month job is considered

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a good one. A two-year job like working on the project is a great opportunity, an extremely long job for a construction worker. That’s hugely impactful for that family, who knows they’ll have a dependable job for that long and can take that money back to invest and give back in Benton City and Benton County.

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