

Informational Meeting

Scout Clean Energy-Horse Heaven Hills Wind Project

March 30, 2021



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HORSE HEAVEN WIND FARM
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
March 30, 2021

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.

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, micrositng
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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