

**From:** [Susan Ballinger](#)  
**To:** [EFSEC \(UTC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comments Solar Development Douglas County  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 8:00:28 PM

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External Email

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to urge rejection of the proposal by Avangrid Renewables, LLC, to construct and operate the Badger Mountain Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 200-megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) generation facility with an optional 200-MW battery energy storage system (BESS) located in unincorporated Douglas County (County), Washington.

The Greater Sage Grouse's only remaining viable population in Washington state depends upon the shrub-steppe habitat within the footprint of this proposed development. There are ample other already-developed areas within Douglas County where solar could be sited. There is no mitigation that is possible if the habitat disturbance is permitted, as proposed. The Sept. 2020 Pearl Hill Fire burned sagebrush, so sage grouse populations shifted to non-burned habitat, and Badger Mountain's shrub-steppe is a critical area for their use. Washington's sage grouse populations are at high risk of extinction. The Washington legislature recently funded recovery efforts through the WDFW, prioritizing shrub-steppe as a critical habitat in need of protection. If Douglas County Commissioner's allow this development, they will be taking permanent steps to push this iconic wildlife species to extinction.

There is an opportunity to think creatively about best placement of solar complexes. Many small towns in Eastern Washington have abandoned industrial areas that could be re-purposed for solar. I urge you to deny this permit.

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