

**Informational Meeting**  
**Tuusso Columbia Solar Project**  
**December 12, 2017**



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WASHINGTON STATE  
ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL  
TUUSSO COLUMBIA SOLAR PROJECT  
Kittitas Valley Event Center Armory  
901 East 7th Avenue  
Ellensburg, Washington 98926  
Informational Meeting  
December 12, 2017  
5:30 p.m.

Page 2

1 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you for being here  
2 tonight. I would like to get this meeting started.  
3 My name is Cullen Stephenson. I am the EFSEC  
4 council member representing the Department of  
5 Ecology.

6 The purpose of this meeting is to share  
7 information on the proposed TUUSSO Energy Columbia  
8 Solar Project and EFSEC process and to hear public  
9 comment concerning this project.

10 This meeting is required by statute to be  
11 held within 60 days of receipt of an application for  
12 site certification. That application for site  
13 certification is called an ASC. The ASC was  
14 received on October 16th of this year.

15 This evening, the applicant, TUUSSO Energy,  
16 will provide an overview of the proposed project.  
17 EFSEC staff will also present a brief overview of  
18 the EFSEC process. Following this, we will have  
19 public comment. Speakers will be allowed two  
20 minutes to present their comments.

21 Copies of the agenda for tonight are in the  
22 back. We also have a sign-up list at the back of  
23 the room for those who wish to comment on the  
24 project. Another sign-up sheet is available for  
25 those who wish to testify at the land use hearing,

1 which will follow the informational hearing. If you  
2 wish to submit written comments, please leave them  
3 at the court reporter table just in front of us  
4 here.

5 So the EFSEC council includes five standing  
6 members. Joining me as Ecology's members are Jaime  
7 Rossman from Commerce; Dan Siemann from  
8 Transportation -- sorry, DNR, jeez -- transported  
9 all the way from DNR, Dan Siemann from DNR; Joe  
10 Stohr from Fish and Wildlife who can't be here  
11 tonight; and Laura Chartoff from UTC. Our council  
12 chair is appointed by the governor and interim chair  
13 Roselyn Marcus was unable to attend this meeting and  
14 has asked me to fill in.

15 For projects around this state that involve  
16 other interests, we may add additional council  
17 members to help make a good decision. For this  
18 project, additional members on the council include  
19 Ian Elliot representing Kittitas County and Kelly  
20 Cooper from DOH, who I believe is on the phone.

21 Kelly, are you on the phone?

22 MS. COOPER: Yes, I am.

23 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

24 I believe that makes a quorum of the council  
25 for this meeting.

Page 4

1 We also have staff members here, Stephen  
2 Posner from EFSEC, Sonia Bumpus, Ami Kidder, Joan  
3 Aitken, John Thompson, our Attorney General, and  
4 Christina Potis. Oh, and Tammy Mastro.

5 Sorry, Tammy.

6 MS. MASTRO: Hi. Thanks, Colin.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: Tammy's our coolest person.

8 We also have counsel for the environment  
9 here, Bill Sherman who's here. Thanks, Bill.

10 He's an AAG appointed by the Attorney General  
11 to represent the public and its interest in  
12 protecting the quality of the environment.

13 We will now hear a brief overview of the  
14 EFSEC process presented by Steven Posner, our EFSEC  
15 manager, and this will be followed by a presentation  
16 by the applicant. Thanks, Stephen.

17 MR. POSNER: Good evening, Council Member  
18 Stephenson and council members. Good evening to all  
19 of you here. Thank you very for much for showing up  
20 this evening. We appreciate the large turnout.

21 And what we'd like to do is get started with  
22 a brief overview of the EFSEC process. We'll go  
23 through and just briefly explain the process that we  
24 undertake when we receive an application for site  
25 certification, and then we will have a presentation

1 by the applicant, TUUSSO Energy.

2 So I have a PowerPoint presentation, I'll go  
3 through that and make some comments as we work  
4 through the presentation.

5 So EFSEC, the acronym EFSEC stands for Energy  
6 Facility Site Evaluation Council, was formed in  
7 1970, and largely to address a desire or an interest  
8 in developing nuclear power in the state of  
9 Washington.

10 And one of the main focuses of EFSEC was to  
11 allow for what was referred to as a one-stop  
12 permitting process by which EFSEC would be the one  
13 agency that would issue all permits associated with  
14 the siting and operation of a energy facility.

15 EFSEC is made up of representatives from  
16 different state agencies, as a Council Member  
17 Stephenson mentioned, and also includes local  
18 government members. And in the case of this  
19 project, because it's proposed to be sited in  
20 Kittitas County, we have a representative from  
21 Kittitas County.

22 So EFSEC makes a recommendation to the  
23 governor, and that decision is essentially the  
24 decision that governs the operation of all aspects  
25 of the project.

Page 6

1           The law or the statute that EFSEC operates  
2 under recognizes and makes certain assumptions, if  
3 you will, about the need for energy facilities, the  
4 importance of providing abundant energy at  
5 reasonable cost, and balancing the increasing  
6 demands for energy facilities with the broad  
7 interest of the public and doing all this with  
8 minimal adverse affects on the environment.

9           Talked about the representatives on the  
10 council, you can see them here, the different  
11 agencies that are represented and also the optional  
12 state members.

13           For this project, we do have representatives  
14 of the Department of Health, Kelly Cooper is on the  
15 phone, she introduced herself earlier. The other  
16 agencies chose not to appoint representatives to sit  
17 on the council.

18           We also have counsel for the environment, and  
19 Bill Sherman. Bill, were you introduced earlier?

20           MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

21           MR. POSNER: Okay. Yeah, I was kind of  
22 focusing on my presentation and I missed that.

23           And counsel for the environment represents  
24 the public in the interest of protecting the quality  
25 of the environment, and if any member of the public



1 has interests that are concerns about this project,  
2 I would encourage you to check in with Mr. Sherman  
3 later this evening.

4 This slide just is a sort of quick overview  
5 of the types of facilities that EFSEC regulates.  
6 Thermal power plants such as nuclear power  
7 facilities or gas turbine electrical generating  
8 facilities.

9 Also alternative energy resource facilities  
10 which includes wind, solar, geothermal. Those types  
11 of facilities are what we call an "opt-in." They  
12 have the option of going to EFSEC to seek  
13 certification or to go through the permitting  
14 process with EFSEC. It's not required but there is  
15 the option for them to do that.

16 EFSEC also regulates certain types of  
17 transmission lines which is also opted-in, certain  
18 types of pipelines and refineries and storage  
19 facilities. Those types of facilities are regulated  
20 based on their capacity or their size of the  
21 particular facilities, whether it be a pipeline or a  
22 refinery, and the specifications are described in  
23 our statute as far as what types of facilities would  
24 need to come to EFSEC based on their size.

25 This slide, when we talk about an energy

Page 8

1 facility or an energy plant, it means the facility  
2 together with all associated facilities. So if an  
3 applicant seeks certification through EFSEC, they  
4 have to include all associated facilities connected  
5 to the particular facility. For instance, if there  
6 was a substation associated with an electrical  
7 generating facility, that would have to be included  
8 in the application for site certification.

9 As far as nuclear facilities, any nuclear  
10 power facility of any size that produces and sells  
11 electricity is required to come to EFSEC for  
12 certification.

13 Siting process begins with the submittal of  
14 an application for site certification. We have  
15 received an application from TUUSSO Energy. We  
16 received it in October. We're beginning our  
17 environmental review. We are having -- planning on  
18 having a land use consistency hearing later this  
19 evening.

20 And if there's a full environmental review  
21 for a project, we also have adjudicated proceedings.  
22 EFSEC also issues all the air and water discharge  
23 permits associated with the project.

24 SEPA, State Environmental Policy Act, is we  
25 -- EFSEC is the SEPA lead agency for projects that

1 fall under our jurisdiction. The process requires  
2 that a Threshold Determination be made where the  
3 responsible official for the agency determines  
4 whether or not there's going to be a Determination  
5 of Significance which would trigger an Environmental  
6 Impact Statement being issued. And there are a  
7 number of steps in that process, there's a couple of  
8 them outlined right here.

9 If the project is determined that it would  
10 not have significant impact on the environment or  
11 that the impacts could be mitigated to  
12 nonsignificant levels, then an EIS is not required.

13 Permits associated with EFSEC projects are  
14 issued by EFSEC, that would include all the air  
15 permits, if there are any, water permits such as  
16 national pollution and discharge elimination  
17 permits. EFSEC has jurisdiction or delegation  
18 authority from the Environmental Protection Agency  
19 to issue these types of permits.

20 If EFSEC ends up going through a full review  
21 for a project, then adjudicative proceedings are  
22 held. This is much like a court proceeding.  
23 There's an administrative law judge. All the  
24 proceedings are recorded by a court reporter.  
25 There's a record compiled. There's deliberations,

Page 10

1 findings, and conclusions, which result in a  
2 recommendation to the governor.

3 EFSEC also has an expedited process, and this  
4 project, the proposed Columbia Solar Project has  
5 filed their application and requested that EFSEC  
6 process it under expedited process. So this slide  
7 describes the basic steps in that process. The  
8 applicant has requested expedited processing.

9 There are two requirements that have to be  
10 met before the project can qualify for expedited  
11 processing. The first one, that is when the SEPA  
12 review is conducted, it has to be determined that a  
13 DNS, a Determination of Non-Significance, or an  
14 MDNS, a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance,  
15 may be issued. And then it also has to be shown  
16 that the project at the time of the filing of the  
17 application is consistent with land use plans and  
18 zoning ordinances.

19 The ultimate determination of whether or not  
20 the project or the application will be processed  
21 under expedited processing is made by the EFSEC  
22 council. If it's determined that the project  
23 qualifies and the council makes that decision,  
24 there's no Environmental Impact Statement that's  
25 required under SEPA, and there's no adjudication

1 required. The council would still put together a  
2 recommendation for the governor's approval.

3 Recommendation to the governor, the council  
4 makes a recommendation to approve or reject an  
5 application. The governor, upon receipt of the  
6 application or the recommendation, has 60 days to  
7 make a decision.

8 The governor can approve the application and  
9 execute the draft Site Certification Agreement if  
10 the recommendation is to approve the project, the  
11 governor can reject the application, or may remand  
12 it back to EFSEC for reconsideration of certain  
13 features. Any application rejected by the governor  
14 is final as to that application.

15 EFSEC oversees all construction activities  
16 and operating standards for a facility. So not only  
17 do we go through the siting review, we oversee all  
18 activities associated with construction, operation,  
19 and decommissioning. And here are the primary areas  
20 that EFSEC looks at when reviewing an application  
21 for site certification and also during construction  
22 and operation.

23 We also have a compliance monitoring and  
24 enforcement program. All projects that are approved  
25 are monitored during construction for compliance

Page 12

1 with the terms and conditions of the appropriate  
2 permits including Site Certification Agreement,  
3 EFSEC contracts with local and state agencies where  
4 necessary to make sure that the project is in  
5 compliance with their Site Certification Agreement.

6 EFSEC has enforcement authority including the  
7 issuance of penalties to all facilities that violate  
8 conditions of their Site Certification Agreement or  
9 associated permits.

10 This generalized siting process flow diagram  
11 is on our website, and I believe -- I'm not sure if  
12 we have copies here tonight, but we can -- if you're  
13 interested in looking at it more closely, it is on  
14 our website. And it basically just describes the  
15 process, where after an application is received, the  
16 various steps that EFSEC goes through to reach an  
17 ultimate decision point of making a recommendation  
18 to the governor.

19 It also shows the SEPA process, the  
20 environmental review process, and the development of  
21 permits. And essentially, you have three  
22 subprocesses, if you will, that make up the EFSEC  
23 process, which ultimately come together at the end  
24 to inform the recommendation to the governor.

25 As I mentioned earlier, we do have an active

1 compliance monitoring and enforcement program and we  
2 work with local and state agencies under interagency  
3 contracts to assist us with the oversight program.

4           Again, there's the generalized siting  
5 project, here is a project location map. You can  
6 see the various projects that EFSEC currently either  
7 is conducting an application review, or the sites  
8 are listed here, some of them are permitted and some  
9 of them have been permitted but are not constructed  
10 yet.

11           This is also on our website. This is the --  
12 if you go to our website, this is the homepage, and  
13 as you can see, you can scroll through each project,  
14 whether it's permitted or under review, has a  
15 homepage.

16           This particular slide is outdated because  
17 under review we -- along with the Tesoro/Savage  
18 Project, we do have the Columbia Solar project  
19 listed, so there is information about the proposed  
20 project, if you're interested you can read more  
21 about it on the website.

22           And I think that is it. Now the applicant, I  
23 believe, is going to come forward and give their  
24 presentation. Thank you.

25           MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you, Mr. Posner.

Page 14

1           And as the applicant comes up, please  
2     introduce yourself.

3           MR. EVANS: Let me just get set up here.

4           All right. Good evening, everyone, members  
5     of the public, members of the council. Thank you  
6     for coming out tonight.

7           My name is Jason Evans. I'm here on behalf  
8     of my company, TUUSSO Energy, and I'd like to take  
9     some time to talk about our company, myself,  
10    introduce the project, talk about the development  
11    process that we went through to get here today.

12          So my company, TUUSSO Energy, is based in  
13    Washington. We were founded in 2008. We've been  
14    exclusively focused since then on solar development,  
15    and specifically, photovoltaic solar projects. And  
16    we have a track record of working closely with  
17    communities, agencies across this country to develop  
18    these solar projects. And right now we have 130  
19    megawatts that are currently operational under  
20    construction.

21          Personally, I was one of the co-founders of  
22    the company. I led the development of two  
23    20-megawatt projects in California, a 30-megawatt  
24    project in Georgia, and 45-megawatt project in  
25    Arizona.



1           These are just a few of the projects that  
2 we've built or are under construction right now. If  
3 you look from left to right they're kind of on a  
4 timeline from when we first started we worked in  
5 California on two 20 megawatt projects. The  
6 Antelope Project was actually one of the first  
7 projects that was permitted in Southern California,  
8 first solar projects.

9           We then turned to the east coast, we worked  
10 in Georgia and Maryland developing some projects  
11 there in rural communities. And most recently, we  
12 have a 45- megawatt project that recently broke  
13 ground in Arizona.

14           So the projects we're going to be talking  
15 about are the Columbia Solar Projects, these are  
16 five megawatt projects located in Kittitas County.  
17 And these projects are going to use photovoltaic  
18 solar modules, there's one of them back there, and  
19 they're getting mounted on single-axis trackers  
20 following the sun during the day from east to west.

21           Each of these projects will avoid  
22 approximately 5,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide,  
23 and that's by displacing traditional generation  
24 sources. This is the equivalent to taking about  
25 1,100 cars off the road. They don't create steam,

Page 16

1 exhaust, or emissions. These are not concentrated  
2 solar projects, these are just the modules just like  
3 you see on people's roofs.

4 And in addition to the modules and the  
5 trackers, there's very limited infrastructure.  
6 There are a few inverters on each site, five to six,  
7 there are limited access roads to access those  
8 inverters, there's perimeter fencing, and then there  
9 are grasses throughout the site. This is a picture  
10 of our Maryland project and you can see the grasses  
11 that were planted there.

12 Now, over the past nine years we've honed our  
13 development process, and we look at it from -- we  
14 kind of approach each market from looking at the  
15 utility demand, looking at the region that will meet  
16 that utilities demand, identifying potential sites,  
17 screening those sites for viability and  
18 availability, and then we solicit stakeholder input.

19 So stepping through how we evaluated the  
20 Washington State market when we first looked here,  
21 we looked at Puget Sound Energy. And we saw that  
22 they have a real need for renewable power. Right  
23 now, they're at 9 percent of their renewable  
24 portfolio standard targets, and we're going to help  
25 them reach 15 percent by 2020, which is the

1 requirement here.

2 In addition to diversifying their generation  
3 mix, we're going to help offset the loss of some of  
4 their coal generation sources that are going to be  
5 coming offline in the coming years as well as to  
6 meet the growing electricity demands they forecast.

7 In Puget Sound Energy's most recent RP, they  
8 saw the need for 266 megawatts of solar by 2023. So  
9 this is going to help them meet approximately 10  
10 percent of that need.

11 Each of these projects has a Power Purchase  
12 Agreement with Puget Sound Energy for 15 years. We  
13 executed it earlier this year. And they're going to  
14 supply power during the day to the residents that  
15 are taking power from Puget Sound and Kittitas  
16 County.

17 Each of these projects generates  
18 approximately 11,500-megawatt hours per year, and  
19 just to put that in terms we can all understand,  
20 this is the electricity needs of approximately 1,000  
21 households here.

22 So when we looked at Washington State, we saw  
23 Puget Sound Energy's service territory, we knew we  
24 wanted to sell to Puget Sound Energy, and we saw  
25 that looking at their service territory, as you can

Page 18

1 see here that is highlighted in purple, the red  
2 overlay is sunshine, and you can see that the area  
3 around Ellensburg and Kittitas County stands out as  
4 a uniquely sunny place in Puget Sound's territory.  
5 And, in fact, when we looked at the numbers, this is  
6 really one of the only places you can put a solar  
7 power plant and sell effectively to Puget Sound.

8 So we looked at Kittitas County and we saw --  
9 we first looked for land that was zoned for  
10 utility-scale solar development. We're happy to see  
11 that in 2015 a project was sited here, the Osprey  
12 Solar Project, and went through the permitting  
13 process on land that's zoned exactly like our land  
14 is.

15 We also looked for agriculture or otherwise  
16 previously disturbed land. We're renewable  
17 developers but also like to think of ourselves as  
18 low-impact developers. We want to make sure that  
19 we're not impacting kind of native habitat, places  
20 with protected flora or fauna, we're looking for  
21 those places that already been touched by humans.

22 In addition, we need proximity to Puget Sound  
23 Energy's network. And in particular, for this size  
24 project, we need to be near distribution lines or  
25 near substations. And if you look at the map right

1 now, you can see the I-90 corridor going from east  
2 to west, and along that corridor is where the Puget  
3 Sound Energy substations that are called out there  
4 are located and that coincides with the population  
5 core of the county. And it's no coincidence that  
6 our projects are located there because we need to be  
7 constructed near those lines.

8 Our projects are not big enough to take on  
9 large infrastructure improvements, build huge  
10 transmissions lines, connect to huge transmissions  
11 lines, we really need to be located in that central  
12 portion of the valley.

13 We also needed available land of sufficient  
14 size for the solar facilities, proximity to roads,  
15 needs to be flat, all of those kind of general  
16 characteristics of solar projects.

17 So we identified the pieces of land that were  
18 going to be ideal for solar facilities and started  
19 reaching out to the landowners here. We sent about  
20 100-plus letters to landowners asking them if they'd  
21 be interested in leasing us their land, and we  
22 started whittling through those sites.

23 Some landowners weren't interested, sometimes  
24 the price wasn't viable, sometimes another solar  
25 project was already proposed for that line so that

Page 20

1 line was oversubscribed, essentially, there can be  
2 only one project per distribution line in Kittitas  
3 County.

4 And then there were idiosyncratic site or  
5 environmental factors. And as a company, we pride  
6 ourselves on making sure that we're eliminating  
7 sites early and making sure that we don't encounter  
8 sites that have high risk of flooding, protected  
9 flora or fauna, we weed those out early so we don't  
10 end up going down the line and permitting projects  
11 that have those sorts of issues.

12 So through that process, we've identified the  
13 five proposed Columbia solar sites as really the  
14 best opportunities for solar development in the  
15 valley. Now, once those sites were selected, we  
16 started engaging with stakeholders, and we've been  
17 engaging with them since the very start of this  
18 project and we continue to engage and iterate on the  
19 project plans today.

20 So we had multiple meetings with county  
21 commissioners and county staff, we've been active in  
22 this Solar Facilities Advisory Committee that's been  
23 working on the next phase of solar regulations for  
24 the county, we have an office in downtown  
25 Ellensburg, we're a member of the Chamber of

1 Commerce. We've engaged in a really comprehensive  
2 outreach to our neighbors. We want to inform them  
3 about the projects and what our plans are but also  
4 solicit feedback on how we can best shape those  
5 plans to meet their needs.

6 So earlier this year, in May, we had an open  
7 house. We represented to the public along with  
8 other solar vendors and Puget Sound, other  
9 utilities. We advertised that in the paper, we had  
10 sent postcards to over 100 landowners, and we've  
11 just opened ourselves up to talk -- to start that  
12 conversation with the public.

13 Then we had project-specific open houses, and  
14 these were to solicit feedback from the very  
15 specific landowners that are nearest to our sites to  
16 figure out what their concerns were in that  
17 particular area of the county.

18 We sent follow-up letters to those  
19 landowners, and then we went door to door after that  
20 just to make sure that those landowners that we  
21 weren't able to reach by mail, that weren't able to  
22 make it to our open houses, that we did have that  
23 touch point, that we did have that opportunity to  
24 hear their feedback.

25 MR. STEPHENSON: Mr. Evans --

Page 22

1 MR. EVANS: Yeah, I'm sorry.

2 MR. STEPHENSON: No, you're doing great. I'm  
3 just seeing our reporter and you're doing a  
4 wonderful job, stay in the microphone and just a  
5 little slower, thank you.

6 MR. EVANS: Okay. Sorry about that.

7 So then we commissioned a public opinion  
8 survey of 250 voters in Kittitas County. We wanted  
9 to understand whether or not the people of Kittitas  
10 County did want to see solar, and overwhelming, the  
11 response was yes, they were happy to have solar in  
12 this county.

13 MR. STEPHENSON: That's just a little slower.  
14 Please.

15 MR. EVANS: Even slower? Okay. Sorry, I  
16 have 20 minutes, I'm trying to get it all done but  
17 I'll do my best. Thank you.

18 MR. STEPHENSON: You're doing great.

19 MR. EVANS: Looking at this timeline, I'm not  
20 going to go through this in detail, but I did want  
21 to point out that all these projects are on the same  
22 timeline, we'd like to get them in the ground by the  
23 end of 2018. And in order to do that, we need to  
24 break ground by April or May of this year, and  
25 that's why we're here requesting expedited treatment



1 by EFSEC.

2 Now, I wanted to talk to some of the concerns  
3 that we've heard from the community up until now,  
4 and I want to directly address them. Now, one of  
5 the concerns that we've heard is that we're taking  
6 some agriculture land out of production, and they  
7 want to understand what are the benefits to the  
8 community from these solar projects. And I think  
9 they're quite substantial so I'd like to kind of  
10 point out some of those benefits.

11 In terms of job creation, about 80 local  
12 construction jobs will be created during the  
13 construction window, so this is going to be in 2018.  
14 On an ongoing basis, we're going to be creating  
15 about three to five operations and maintenance jobs  
16 that will be for the life of the projects.

17 In terms of our benefits to the local  
18 economy, we're going to have 40 to \$50 million  
19 construction investment, much of that is capital,  
20 but then there's going to be at least \$5 million  
21 that will go to local contractors and workers.

22 Over the lifetime of the project, there's  
23 going to be significant property tax revenue to the  
24 county, there's going to be significant lease  
25 payments to local landowners, and there are going to

Page 24

1 be operations and maintenance wages paid to workers  
2 here. And if you look at the total impact of these  
3 projects over the next 30 years, it's about \$25  
4 million that are going to be paid to the county or  
5 to families living in the county over the next  
6 30 years.

7 In addition, for the landowners that we're  
8 working with, we're going to give them a diversified  
9 revenue stream for these farming families. And  
10 after the projects' useful life, the projects can be  
11 rapidly decommissioned, the sites restored, and the  
12 land returned to agriculture if that's what the  
13 landowners want to do at the time. This  
14 decommissioning process is going to be secured by a  
15 plan that's going to be followed with EFSEC, and  
16 there's also going to be an accompanying bond.

17 Another question that we commonly get is why  
18 are we here in this room talking to EFSEC as opposed  
19 to going through the county process? So I want to  
20 talk about the timeline of these projects to kind of  
21 explain that.

22 We began developing the Columbia Solar  
23 Projects in April of 2016, and we actually did Power  
24 Purchase Agreements for these projects with a  
25 15-year term beginning in December of 2016. What

1 that means is that that 15-year term remains whether  
2 or not we get online in 2018, 2019, or later. And  
3 so every day that we're not online we're losing  
4 contractual revenue, and that's vital for these  
5 smaller projects.

6 Now, we met with Kittitas County's Community  
7 Development Services in May -- June of 2016 to  
8 discuss our projects, we talked about the project  
9 that they had recently permitted, again, this Osprey  
10 Project that they permitted in 2015, and we talked  
11 about the Iron Horse Project that was currently  
12 winding its way through the permitting process with  
13 the county.

14 Now, we watched the progress of Iron Horse  
15 through the county with interest until the permit  
16 was eventually denied in January of 2015, and the  
17 county ended in enacting a moratorium, that I'm sure  
18 you're aware of, that prevented the county from  
19 receiving new solar applications.

20 Now, during this moratorium, a citizens  
21 committee was formed to recommend new regulations  
22 for solar, and as I mentioned, we've been an active  
23 participant in that, trying to craft regulations  
24 that work for the solar industry as well as for the  
25 community.

Page 26

1           Unfortunately, our timeline is such that we  
2    can't wait for the county to come up with these new  
3    regulations and then apply for permits after that  
4    and go through that extended process. So for that  
5    reason, in early 2017 we got to seriously explore  
6    this option of working with EFSEC.

7           And when no regulations were produced by the  
8    county in the in six months of the moratorium, we  
9    were forced to file our project with EFSEC. And  
10   indeed, it's now coming on 12 months of the  
11   moratorium, and there still have not been  
12   regulations submitted to the Board of County  
13   Commissioners.

14           So turning to our projects in particular, the  
15   Camas is our first project I'll look at, and you can  
16   see here that across the project site there will be  
17   rows of panels mounted on trackers, those are those  
18   lines that you see crossing the site. In addition,  
19   there are six inverter pads on Camas that take the  
20   electricity from the panels and convert them to AC  
21   electricity.

22           And there are access roads -- limited access  
23   roads just to access those inverters. Beyond those  
24   access roads, the rest of the site will be planted  
25   with grasses or other ground cover. Originally,

1 we've been looking at native grasses in  
2 communications with WDFW, but we've heard from our  
3 neighboring landowners and we've continued this  
4 conversation with WDFW, and a lot of people are more  
5 interested in us planting crops that are more  
6 similar to what's being grown around us, such as dry  
7 land alfalfa. And we're very open to considering  
8 other types of ground cover, and so we're currently  
9 exploring that.

10 We're looking at potentially planting local  
11 pollinators for native pollinator populations.  
12 We're happy as long as it doesn't present a fire  
13 hazard and as long as it's a relative  
14 low-maintenance crop. But this is a conversation  
15 that's ongoing, happy to continue it.

16 The one other thing to mention kind of about  
17 our sites in general is over all five projects, we  
18 have about 600 square feet of wetlands impact on one  
19 of the project sites where there's an existing  
20 access road there being used to access the project,  
21 and we're actually just improving that road to allow  
22 for construction traffic. No other impacts there  
23 are proposed.

24 In addition, the buffer is to all of the  
25 wetlands, a lot of the natural features, the creeks

Page 28

1 are actually quite improved by our projects because  
2 we're actually going to be incorporating buffers as  
3 opposed to the current farming operations that go  
4 right up to these natural features.

5 I just wanted to highlight some of the  
6 particular features of the Camas project. One of  
7 them is the landscaping along Tjossem Road. We  
8 incorporated that landscaping, these trees and  
9 bushes outside of our fence line that will help  
10 obscure our facility from your neighbors based on  
11 feedback we were getting.

12 We also incorporated a 40-foot offset from  
13 Little Naneum Creek as well as a 20-foot offset from  
14 an irrigation ditch that has created kind of a  
15 man-made wetland on the west side of this project.

16 Turning to our Penstemon project, a couple of  
17 the features we've incorporated here, we have  
18 landscaping along two sides of the project, along  
19 the north and west sides. Again, we got the  
20 landowner input, they wanted to have us incorporate  
21 a visual buffer and we did that.

22 In addition, Coleman Creek along the eastern  
23 side of the project was of concern to WDFW, they  
24 wanted to make sure we were incorporating a buffer  
25 there, so we have a greater than 100-foot offset

1 there. We actually moved our entire project over to  
2 the west to provide the maximum buffer possible  
3 there.

4 Finally, we recently heard from landowners on  
5 the east side of us that they are also concerned  
6 about a visible buffer, and we've heard from WDFW  
7 that they'd like to see improvements to the riparian  
8 habitat, so we're going to be doing additional  
9 plantings, trees and bushes there, to kill two birds  
10 with one stone, improve that riparian habitat and  
11 provide that visual buffer for our neighbors.

12 Our Urtica project also incorporates  
13 landscaping, again, along the north and east sides  
14 of the project based on neighbors' concerns that  
15 were expressed to us. In addition, we're going to  
16 make some changes based on the current plans, we're  
17 going to make some additional changes to completely  
18 avoid a cultural site that was found during  
19 surveying, and we're incorporating a 40-foot setback  
20 from McCarl Creek, and we're going to improve this  
21 wetland as well with additional plantings at WDFW's  
22 request.

23 Our Typha project is actually quite far from  
24 most observers. It is near the golf course, and  
25 when I walked the golf course, there was one area

Page 30

1 that looked like it could look out onto this land.  
2 And as a result, we again changed our site  
3 footprint, we took a row of panels out, we  
4 incorporated some landscaping as you can see  
5 highlighted there, and we're going to incorporate  
6 the same sorts of trees that are currently setting  
7 up the border of the golf course.

8 We're also incorporating a 30-foot setback  
9 from the wetlands on this project site, as well as a  
10 155-plus-foot setback from the Yakima, and that's  
11 really just that corner of the site from the  
12 northeast there that comes close to the river, the  
13 remainder is quite far setback -- quite setback.

14 In addition, here's the 600 square feet of  
15 wetlands impact that I mentioned before. I just  
16 want to highlight that that's an existing access  
17 road being used by the farming operation right now,  
18 and we're just proposing putting down some  
19 geotextile fabrics, some rocks to make that ready  
20 for construction traffic.

21 For the Fumaria project, this is another  
22 project that's pretty far from its neighbors, a  
23 relatively low visual impact. We are incorporating  
24 some landscaping for our neighbors to the south,  
25 that's going to be in addition to existing



1 landscaping that forms the rest of that southern  
2 boundary, and we have a 60-foot setback to the  
3 wetlands on the west side of that project.

4 I appreciate your time. Thank you for coming  
5 again. I look forward to hearing what the council  
6 has to say. I really look forward to hearing what  
7 the community has to say. I'm very open to feedback  
8 on these projects. Thank you very much.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you, Mr. Evans.

10 I'm going to propose a two-minute break to  
11 let our court reporter's fingers cool off for a  
12 moment. And, Mr. Evans, you did a great job, but  
13 I'm asking -- we're about to go into public  
14 testimony and we will have two minutes per person,  
15 this will be timed by staff, and we will go forward  
16 with that.

17 But please try to remember if you're going to  
18 be recorded, you have to be written down, and we  
19 listen to all of these things and it's great, I  
20 think this worked, but I'm looking at my court  
21 reporter here and she seems okay, but I want to make  
22 sure this is going well. So two minutes and then  
23 we'll start up with public testimony.

24 (A short recess was had.)

25 MR. STEPHENSON: All right. We are now ready

Page 32

1 to start the public comment for this phase. And  
2 remember, we are about to have another hearing just  
3 later this evening on the land use hearing, so these  
4 comments are not on the land use hearing but we will  
5 hear those.

6 Staff will help us by calling up the numbers  
7 and the names of the folks that have signed up to  
8 testify. Please keep this to two minutes each.  
9 Written comments can be given to us at the table  
10 here, and we're happy to look at those, we look at  
11 those all the time, and we will look at each of them  
12 and we do review those.

13 So with that, Steven, can you tell us -- or  
14 Ami, are you going to tell us --

15 MS. POTIS: Christina.

16 MR. STEPHENSON: Christina, sorry, I can't  
17 get the names right tonight.

18 MS. POTIS: That's all right.

19 MR. STEPHENSON: But who's the first  
20 testifying?

21 MS. POTIS: Our first speaker is Tony  
22 Helland,  
23 No. 1. Do you want to come up to the front?

24 MR. STEPHENSON: And can you maybe read out  
25 the next four or five names so that other folks are

1 ready to go?

2 MS. POTIS: Oh, sure.

3 And the next four or five speakers can come  
4 and sit in the front and then they'll be ready to go  
5 right after.

6 So that would be Keith Crimp, Dwight Bates,  
7 Judy Hallisey, Barry Brunson can come and sit in the  
8 front, it will just help expedite the process.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Thanks, Christina.

10 MR. HELLAND: Good evening. My name is Tony  
11 Helland. My address is 414 Alpine Drive,  
12 Ellensburg, Washington. I'd like to say this is the  
13 second EFSEC hearing process I've been involved in,  
14 first one was back maybe 15, 16 years ago when we  
15 were involved with the Wild Horse Wind Project. I'm  
16 happy to say that was given the go-ahead.

17 Another thing I'm happy about is all the dire  
18 things that were predicted that might happen with  
19 the turbines going in up on the hill, none of those  
20 have come to fruition.

21 I'm just happy to see our county moving  
22 forward. I've lived here 65 years, I'm a sixth  
23 generation valley resident. I want to see -- I want  
24 to see growth. I want to see forward movement, and  
25 there's just nothing better to do for forward

Page 34

1 movement than projects like this.

2 I'm trying -- when I first was going to  
3 speak, I -- everything I was going to talk about  
4 kind of tied everything together with land use  
5 issues and stuff, but that land use is going to be  
6 later. So I'm trying to pull stuff out that -- for  
7 the general portion of this.

8 These facilities, these plants that TUUSSOs  
9 is proposing to build, are needed. They're  
10 community-based, they're going to provide not so  
11 many ongoing jobs but they'll provide construction  
12 jobs and there are many people in this room that are  
13 in the construction business, myself included.

14 I just want everybody that's here tonight to  
15 keep an open mind and think about what this is going  
16 to mean for the valley. We need to lead, we need to  
17 bring this together. There's a lot of talk about  
18 solar in Washington State but it's just not there.

19 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

20 MS. POTIS: You need to wrap up now.

21 MR. HELLAND: That's it.

22 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you. And good job  
23 keeping to your two minutes. That's what we're  
24 going to work on.

25 MS. POTIS: Keith Crimp.

1 MR. CRIMP: My name is Keith Crimp. I am a  
2 co-owner of the Ellensburg Golf Club. What Jason  
3 said was right, he came out and gave a nice little  
4 demonstration on what the solar power project is all  
5 about. My brother and I thought about it a long  
6 time and the more we think about it, we're adamantly  
7 opposed to the Typha project.

8 Now, the Typha project is located right on  
9 the Yakima River, we talked about a buffer and all  
10 that sort of stuff, but gosh, if you know golfers,  
11 golfers have a tendency to slice the ball, and  
12 regardless or not where you put those solar panels,  
13 they're going to slice that ball.

14 And unfortunately, we've got about one-third  
15 of our play is college kids, so you can imagine  
16 seeing 20,000 solar panels sitting out there, some  
17 of them are going to be a little bit inebriated and  
18 going to show off and I'm afraid we're going to have  
19 broken solar panels.

20 So the first thing is, I don't want to go  
21 ahead and be liable, I want a waiver for our golf  
22 club on any liability on broken solar panels or any  
23 of their equipment.

24 My other concern, and I'll talk to the  
25 individual in front of me as far as the

Page 36

1 environmental impact, we're right by the Yakima  
2 River and we've got teams of wildlife right there,  
3 in fact, we're in the migratory pattern of several  
4 geese and other pelicans and believe it or not swans  
5 and so on.

6           You know, when you're a golfer, you like to  
7 go out there and seeing the surroundings, you're not  
8 there to go ahead and be inundated by 20,000 solar  
9 panels, now, that's just for our site alone. So  
10 when you go ahead and put the little notice in there  
11 this is going to be discreet, it's not discreet one  
12 bit. It's going to be kind of, as I said, a  
13 bombshell.

14           I gave this to you on public record and I  
15 believe you've got that and I'm good. I'm going to  
16 give one copy to the environmental agent right here.  
17 But there's several other things I'd like to discuss  
18 that in my two minutes I'm not going to get the  
19 chance.

20           But we are against it. There's a right place  
21 and a wrong place. The Typha project is not the  
22 right place. I am pro clean energy. The wind power  
23 was fine. It was put in the wrong place, the one  
24 that was in front of the Cascade range. Out by  
25 Whiskey Dick it was great.

1           Here, next to a golf course, when you've got  
2   3 or 400 golfers golfing every day, that's taboo.  
3   I'm afraid it's going to hurt our financial bottom  
4   line is the final thing.

5           MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you, sir. That was  
6   some really fast golfing, and so I want everybody to  
7   think about slowing down just a little bit in your  
8   testimony so that our court reporter can record all  
9   of this.

10          MS. POTIS: Speaker No. 3, Dwight Bates.

11          MR. BATES: I'm Dwight Bates. I represent  
12   myself. 1509 Brick Road. These solar panels are  
13   inefficient. I'm an engineer. I think they're an  
14   eyesore. Just like the wind turbines are  
15   inefficient, they're an eyesore. I'm against them.

16          And I came to this valley to see the hay  
17   fields and the cattle. I retired here 18 years ago,  
18   I didn't retire here to see solar panels. I didn't  
19   retire here to see those ugly wind turbines.

20          I can't see them coming to this valley at  
21   all. It's a beautiful valley and you're just  
22   ruining the whole valley putting them in. If you  
23   have to put them in, put them in a overlay zones  
24   east of the city in the sagebrush, do not put it in  
25   farmland. I don't want the Timothy hay land ruined

Page 38

1 by big solar panels.

2 I don't think you need a flat area to put  
3 them in. I think you can put them in sagebrush area  
4 that doesn't have a big slope, so I can't see taking  
5 up valuable farmland.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

7 MS. POTIS: Speaker 4, Judy Hallisey.

8 MS. HALLISEY: Good evening. My name is Judy  
9 Hallisey. I'm a resident of Kittitas County, I'm  
10 also a natural resource manager and a lifelong  
11 birder.

12 My concerns are with bird habitat. And  
13 National Audubon declared three years ago that the  
14 No. 1 threat to birds is climate change. Because of  
15 that, I am a strong proponent of solar farms and  
16 solar energy. If I had my wish, every rooftop in  
17 this valley would have panels on it.

18 My first check on the location of these  
19 proposed farms was to see if they overlaid the  
20 important bird areas. They do not. That's a plus  
21 for their location.

22 Secondly, I'm pleased that they're not being  
23 proposed within the shrubsteppe. The shrubsteppe  
24 habitat is our most rapidly disappearing habitat in  
25 North America. It supports a plethora of wildlife



1 and birds.

2 Over half the bird species of North America  
3 are threatened by climate change, 50 of those birds  
4 occur right here in Kittitas County and are  
5 dependent on shrubsteppe. Shrubsteppe is  
6 disappearing because of development and conversion.

7 So if these solar farms go in as proposed to  
8 converted land, I would like to see the areas  
9 mitigated by covering the ground for erosion and  
10 invasive species by use of native plants and  
11 grasses. And I have at my disposal a list of native  
12 plants that are fire resistant, draught-tolerant,  
13 and tailored specific to Kittitas County that will  
14 benefit those 50 species of birds, and I will make  
15 them available. Thank you.

16 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you. Christina, do we  
17 have the next five?

18 MS. POTIS: Yes, so Speaker No. 5 is Barry  
19 Brunson. And then if Karen Poulsen, Jim Armstrong,  
20 Debbie Strand, Klaus Holzer would like to come  
21 forward and sit in the front.

22 MR. BRUNSON: Hi. I'm Barry Brunson. I'm a  
23 resident of Cle Elum. There are many reasons to  
24 support solar power but two of the most precious to  
25 me are named Avery and Sydney. They're eight years

Page 40

1 old and three years old. They're our grandchildren  
2 and they and their parents -- our kids -- and their  
3 kids and their grandchildren are the ones who are  
4 going to be most impacted by the climate change as a  
5 result of global warming.

6 Global warming comes from principally an  
7 increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and  
8 that causes lots of climate disruptions. Lots of  
9 you are familiar with this. There's no specific  
10 dispute about those facts. They come largely from  
11 burning fossil fuels and that's not in scientific  
12 dispute.

13 The evidence is all around us from more  
14 extreme weather events and more of those extreme  
15 weather events, from hurricanes, droughts, floods.  
16 Millions of climate refugees are expected. And  
17 wildfires, as we saw most closely by this summer up  
18 here, as well as spread previously only tropical  
19 diseases.

20 Now, solar is a big part of a healthy future,  
21 and that's why I'm fully in support of increased  
22 industrial sized as well as individual level solar  
23 panels -- solar power.

24 It may seem -- it may seem troubling to some  
25 that the TUUSSO project is going around -- going

1 directly to the state, but on the other hand, there  
2 was a permit denied by the county. They imposed a  
3 six-month moratorium and then extended it another  
4 six months and that sort of leads one to be  
5 impatient, and I can sort of understand that. Thank  
6 you.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

8 MS. POTIS: Karen Poulsen.

9 MS. POULSEN: Hello. I'm Karen Poulsen.  
10 5591 Tjossem Road. I'm a full-time farmer with land  
11 across from two of the proposed solar sites. I'm  
12 also fifth generation -- or my family -- I'm fifth  
13 generation of family.

14 The land and water resources of the Kittitas  
15 Valley have long been important to both Native  
16 Americans and those who have come since. This  
17 valley is well known around the world for its  
18 Timothy hay and is now also being known for its  
19 high-quality apples and seed crops.

20 Due to a unique climate and an ability to  
21 irrigate our prime farmlands, Kittitas County has  
22 developed a viable agriculture community. However,  
23 for modern agriculture to thrive in a world  
24 marketplace, it takes a certain economy of scale and  
25 land base to maintain both our markets and our local

Page 42

1 agricultural infrastructure of buyers and farm  
2 suppliers.

3           If our prime irrigated farmland is converted  
4 to other nonagricultural uses, it puts an  
5 ever-increasing economic stress on those remaining  
6 farms and businesses who are left. As an example,  
7 the Camp Valley was once a thriving farming area,  
8 but as farms were converted to other uses, those  
9 that are left have become economically stressed to  
10 the point where they were lost.

11           I will give some more of my testimony later  
12 to the specifics of the land use. Anyway, thank you  
13 very much.

14           MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

15           MS. POTIS: Speaker 7, Jim Armstrong.

16           MR. ARMSTRONG: Jim Armstrong with the  
17 Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce. Last month the  
18 Chamber Board of Directors voted to support TUUSSO  
19 Energy's application and asked me to elaborate on  
20 that endorsement this evening.

21           That Kittitas County is a center for  
22 renewable energy is no surprise. Our winds are  
23 legendary and our sunshine is the highest in PSE  
24 service territory. So TUUSSO came here for good  
25 reason. The resource and transmissions are here,

1 zoning regulations are favorable, and willing  
2 landowners seek to diversify their income by leasing  
3 their land for solar.

4           The right of those landowners to do so was a  
5 major consideration of the Chamber Board. Another  
6 was the property tax the project will generate.  
7 Taxes paid by wind energy have already built new  
8 schools and added substantially to the county's  
9 annual tax revenue and solar will do the same. So  
10 this is a significant economic opportunity that most  
11 counties would leap at.

12           The Chamber Board also acknowledged the  
13 continuing need to replace fossil fuels with clean  
14 renewable energy. As for the projects before you  
15 today, a concern is the visual impacts, we  
16 understand that. However, it's important to note  
17 that these facilities have few direct neighbors,  
18 that TUUSSO planned significant landscaping to hide  
19 the panels from view, and certainly, they will have  
20 far less visual impact than our wind farms, which  
21 were extremely controversial, as you remember when  
22 they were approved, but today are largely invisible  
23 to the average resident.

24           Finally, it's also important to note these  
25 projects have minimal long-term impact. Unlike

Page 44

1 residential development which is forever, at the end  
2 of their lifespans these can be removed and the land  
3 returned to agriculture if that's what the landowner  
4 wishes.

5           Given these factors and that TUUSSO's plans  
6 conform to county land use regulations, the Chamber  
7 Board asks you to give expedited approval for the  
8 applications before you. Thank you.

9           MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

10           MS. POTIS: Speaker No. 8, Debbie Strand.

11           MS. STRAND: Good evening. My name is Debbie  
12 Strand. I'm 1932 East Village Drive, Ellensburg.  
13 I've been a resident here for 20-plus years now.

14           I'm the former director of the Economic  
15 Development Group of Kittitas County and the owner  
16 of a consulting firm, Strand Consulting. But I'm  
17 not here representing either of those entities, I'm  
18 here representing myself. I worked closely with the  
19 wind projects in our valley, and I'm very familiar  
20 with the EFSEC process having gone through it two,  
21 maybe three times.

22           TUUSSO's application to EFSEC is  
23 understandable. The county's existing zoning allows  
24 for alternative energy. Hearing examiner found as  
25 much with Iron Horse. The superior court decision

1 is flawed and I imagine that One Energy will likely  
2 appeal that decision.

3 Board of County Commissioners, when they  
4 rejected Iron Horse, it signaled to developers that  
5 they were reversing their pro solar position that  
6 they had with the Teanaway Solar Project.

7 Certainly, the county has its right to  
8 reverse its policy and developers also have the  
9 right to not wait until the county figures out what  
10 its policy is, because as we know and any business  
11 knows, time is money.

12 So there are three projects permitted, wind  
13 projects here now: Two are built, one is yet to be  
14 built. And there really aren't that many people  
15 that are angry with them, it's hard to find somebody  
16 that really is. The employment, the property taxes,  
17 the landowner benefits, they're all wonderful  
18 assets.

19 The county will be heard here, Mr. Ian  
20 Elliot, he will certainly represent our county very  
21 well. He's done so on other projects before the  
22 EFSEC board. Mitigation will be taken care of  
23 through the EFSEC process.

24 Let's see, Kittitas County is the center of  
25 wind energy, and we'd really like to be the center

Page 46

1 of renewable energy by adding solar to this. So I  
2 think that the proposed facilities should be built,  
3 and I think it's good and something that we all  
4 should be proud of. Thank you.

5 Two minutes goes really fast, especially when  
6 I try to be slow so that the reporter can get it.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: Yes, it does. Thank you.

8 MS. POTIS: Speaker No. 9.

9 MR. HOLZER: Hello. My name is Klaus Holzer.  
10 I live at 9982 Manastash Road. And I'd like to also  
11 voice approval of the solar project, but, you know,  
12 I really love my home here.

13 I love this valley and I love my neighbors.  
14 I'd hate the idea of them being harmed in terms of  
15 placement of new solar and wind projects. And this  
16 makes for some real difficulties in deciding where  
17 and when we're going to site -- well, where we would  
18 site these projects.

19 And so the purpose of my contribution here  
20 this evening is to kind of admonish our own  
21 commissioners and county process. Your presenter on  
22 the project said that it had been 12 months and they  
23 still haven't gotten any kind of a ruling from our  
24 county. And this seems to be a tendency for us to  
25 just kind of kick the can down the road and let



1 someone else make our decisions.

2 Many of the people in this valley that I've  
3 heard from are very angry that someone's coming and  
4 making a decision for us. And yet, in a way, we're  
5 kind of getting what we deserve because we continue  
6 a practice where we don't make decisions for these  
7 really tough things that are going to impact our  
8 county.

9 And that's what I have to say. Thank you.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

11 MS. POTIS: Speaker No. 10, Merrill Klocke.

12 And if the last two informational speakers,  
13 Kathi Pritchard and Schrade Rouse would come up to  
14 the front to expedite the process, thank you.

15 Speaker No. 10, Merrill Klocke? Are you  
16 Speaker No. 10?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, I got a number.

18 MS. POTIS: No, no. That's for land use.

19 Speaker No. 10 for informational meeting,  
20 Merrill Klocke?

21 MR. KLOCKE: Yes. Yeah. My name is Merrill  
22 Klocke, No. 6 Tjossem Road. And my main concern is  
23 keeping the valley in agriculture which, to me, is  
24 the biggest income of the county. And mine is on  
25 the Camas project and they want to put them within

Page 48

1 200 feet of my back window of my yard.

2 Originally, they weren't going to come north  
3 of the Bull Ditch but they said they had to have a  
4 certain size. So if they kept them south of the  
5 creek I wouldn't be quite concerned. But I would  
6 have to look at these things, I've got to -- to me,  
7 it's going to depreciate my value of my property.

8 If I had to look at a few acres with  
9 360-degree view, and I had to look at a property  
10 that had a bunch of solar panels, which one would I  
11 buy? That's my main concern, they're going to block  
12 my view around my property. So it's my property  
13 value and my view and preserving agricultural land.  
14 Thank you.

15 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

16 MS. POTIS: Speaker 11, Kathi Pritchard.

17 MS. PRITCHARD: Good evening. I'm Kathi  
18 Pritchard, a local resident. The state is at a  
19 crossroad. The agricultural investment throughout  
20 the state would be diminished and a serious  
21 precedence made if this council approves this  
22 application to convert prime irrigated farmland to  
23 use as utility-scale energy production.

24 Agriculture is woven into the fabric of  
25 Washington State's heritage according to the State

1 Department of Commerce website. Governor Inslee  
2 supports this fact through goals to, quote, grow the  
3 agricultural sector. Among his five goals listed on  
4 the state commerce website are protecting scarce  
5 resources, land, water, and labor; harnessing  
6 emerging opportunities in organic, sustainable, and  
7 local farming.

8 Kittitas County is the home to a thriving  
9 farm community. Ranging from small family farms to  
10 national-ranked export operations and new crops are  
11 being developed every year.

12 MR. STEPHENSON: Just a bit slower, please.  
13 Thank you.

14 MS. PRITCHARD: I'll take a breath.

15 MR. STEPHENSON: I'll give you some more  
16 time.

17 MS. PRITCHARD: Okay. Thank you.

18 According to 2012 USDA Kittitas County farm  
19 figures, Kittitas County farm economy exceeded \$68  
20 million. The state export assistance program cites  
21 Anderson Hay & Grain a success story through its  
22 venture to export hay and grain to the middle east.

23 Kittitas Valley is also home to innovative  
24 growers in apples and organics. Just this year,  
25 Yakima-based Zirkle Fruit planted 600,000 trees on

Page 50

1 600 acres in lower Kittitas Valley, and they have  
2 plans to plant up to 1.5 million trees.

3 Another business, a family-owned organic seed  
4 company, also calls this county home, farming about  
5 150 certified organic acres. These are just three  
6 farming success stories for our county. These and  
7 many more could be adversely affected if this  
8 application is approved.

9 If approved, the proposed projects would  
10 likely begin a drain on the number of irrigated  
11 acres available to our -- I'm sorry, in our county  
12 and states, since 18 other projects are seeking  
13 similar acreage and are waiting in the wings.

14 As proposed, these projects are not in  
15 harmony with the governor's stated goals to protect  
16 scarce resources of land, water, and labor and  
17 encourage emerging innovation in sustainable  
18 farming.

19 Now, the choice does not have to be between  
20 farms and renewable energy. Over 18,000 acres of  
21 non-irrigated land and DNR trust land meet  
22 developers' criteria for siting. The site on trust  
23 land would fund K to 12 schools throughout the  
24 state.

25 The laws of prime irrigated farmland means

1 that agriculture and innovation and economic growth  
2 for longer than the 30 years of the proposed  
3 projects' timeline --

4 MS. POTIS: And your time is up.

5 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you. And thank you  
6 for slowing down.

7 MS. POTIS: Speaker 12.

8 MR. ROUSE: My name is Schrade Rouse. I live  
9 on Park Creek Road near where the Iron Horse solar  
10 facility would have been located. I came to this  
11 meeting tonight to thank my locally elected county  
12 commissioners for enacting the solar moratorium.

13 I believe that this decision was a direct  
14 response to public sentiment. I would also like to  
15 thank the judge who upheld that decision, again, for  
16 representing the people.

17 Lastly, I came to this meeting so that I  
18 could try to understand how and why a nonelected  
19 board has the ability to override local government,  
20 and I do not feel that those questions have been  
21 answered.

22 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

23 MS. POTIS: Speaker 13.

24 MR. BLAZYNSKI: Good evening. Stan  
25 Blazynski, resident of Kittitas County. To start

Page 52

1 off, I would like to reveal that I'm really for  
2 clean energy, but I'm against these solar farms  
3 because they trade precious farmland for very, very  
4 expensive electricity.

5 If we're going to have expensive electricity  
6 like they proposing, we're going to lose any  
7 leverage  
8 with -- as a county we're not going to be  
9 competitive.

10 I submitted this to the county previously.  
11 Germany seems to be ahead of anybody on solar farms,  
12 but where they put these farms, that's very  
13 interesting. Typically, they find locations that  
14 are useless: Mines, vacated military bases, so on,  
15 be too long, not enough time.

16 Another case here is I don't know if people  
17 are aware, it's called a feed-in electricity tariff.  
18 It's a tariff designed for quick return on  
19 investment. Our neighbors to the north in Canada do  
20 that. It is the tariff per kilowatt of electricity  
21 is over 40 cents, over 40 cents. Please add 40  
22 cents to the current rates of about 10, 12 cents,  
23 we're not going to compete with the world at 50  
24 cents an hour, kilowatt hour. I'd like to submit  
25 that because it's too lengthy.

1 And I appreciate the opportunity.

2 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

3 Is this the last one?

4 MS. POTIS: Yes, it is. Actually, no, one  
5 more.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: One more?

7 MS. POTIS: Yeah. Dan Morgan.

8 MR. MORGAN: Hi, my name is Dan Morgan. I'm  
9 a Kittitas County resident and a local business  
10 owner. I'm here to speak in favor of this project.  
11 I believe that renewables are a good fit for this  
12 county and consistent with land use regulations.

13 My company has been involved with renewable  
14 projects in the past and still -- we still are, and  
15 it's been very good for us. It's employed my  
16 people, and they have spent their dollars locally  
17 and trickles down through the economy here.

18 So you've -- we've already had projects like  
19 this approved before so need to be consistent and  
20 I'm all for it. Thank you.

21 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

22 Is that it now?

23 MS. POTIS: Uh-huh.

24 MS. STEPHENSON: All right. So let's take a  
25 15-minute break. There's a couple reasons for this.

Page 54

1 One is to let our court reporter have a chance to  
2 rest her fingers, and the other is to let myself and  
3 the council members, we listen hard to these things  
4 and we need to keep listening hard, so we're going  
5 to take a 15-minute break and then we're going to  
6 start the land use hearing portion of this meeting.  
7 Thank you very much for being here.

8 (PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 6:48 P.M.)

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