

BADGER MOUNTAIN SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT

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ENERGY FACILITY SITE
EVALUATION COUNCIL

Michael and Debbie McCarl
2343 Grand Avenue
East Wenatchee, WA 98802

April 4, 2022

Ms. Ami Hatkemeyer
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
Lacey, WA 98504-3172

Re: BADGER MOUNTAIN SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT

Dear Ms. Hatkemeyer:

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT

1. East Wenatchee, Washington, is an expanding residential area with limited potential for future expansion. This project has earmarked one of our most accessible acreages which holds great potential for residential, recreational and commercial development.
2. Solar power is vastly too expensive to introduce into a local market where sustainable hydropower is well-established and functioning efficiently and affordably.
3. Solar technology is not a viable option for affordable energy today. Current technology is still too inefficient, too costly, too impactful on carbon footprint, and genuinely too wasteful in its manufacturing and maintenance processes.
4. Solar farms do not produce jobs.
5. Solar is abrasively unsightly.

1. By virtue of our diverse economy and widely-admired natural recreational resources, people are coming to Eastern Washington in unprecedented numbers to purchase apartments, condos and homes. They come here to work, finding abundant opportunities in agriculture, construction, industry, business, education, medical, and more. They come to play at everything from rock climbing to fly fishing, golf, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, cycling, hunting, boating and sailing, as well as almost endless other outdoor pursuits. The local demand for housing and business expansion is not slowing, but is ever increasing as more and more are coming to join those who have discovered the lifestyle that has defined our region. Pressure to expand into the area of your proposed solar farm is inescapable. Your proposed

location lies directly in the path of community expansion. If a solar farm were to be built in this highly desirable location, it will be nearly impossible to remove it later, and will forever be a tremendous regret to the community. There are vast potential sites located far from the interest of the general public beyond the prized property you have chosen.

Furthermore, our local infrastructure is overburdened and our traffic troubles are mounting. Local planners must turn to expansion possibilities that will de-centralize expansion away from the nucleus of present population centers. One of the MOST desirable areas locally to develop would be the areas eastward from East Wenatchee -- especially the area you are proposing for solar development. Eastern Washington has thousands of square miles of undeveloped lands far from population centers that could pose no burden on existing communities. Though proximity may enhance some financial advantages for your proposed project, proximity does not provide anything beneficial to the general public.

2. Current solar subsidies are paid for by government programs, market manipulation and taxation. These subsidies represent only a portion of the high cost of solar energy. Market entry is unattainable to solar even with subsidies. Presently, with today's current technology, solar does not compete for a share of the market; it simply cannot compete. As such, the public should be educated on the actual costs that solar presents to the end user before any vote on installation should be forwarded.

Every taxpayer, every property owner, and every business owner contributes substantially to the development and installation of solar power regardless of their opinion or knowledge of solar energy and its inability to enter the market and compete with existing energy sources. The promotion of alternative energy is a good desire for America's future, but its implementation is not viable at our present technology. Because solar is so heavily subsidized, its future is heavily dependent upon current and ongoing funding, which will never decrease. Current technology will never allow solar to become viable in the market. Until solar technology makes gigantic leaps forward, it will be a heavy cost burden to end users and those paying for the additional funding it subsists upon.

Advancements in solar technology may happen one day whereby it becomes a viable source for energy, but that day may be far into the future. Unfortunately, this technology is massively expensive and few seem to be aware of the actual cost of solar energy production. From manufacturing costs, deforestation and carbon footprint issues to the disposal of retired panels, there are enormous costs hidden from the general population. Added to these high costs are the added costs of procuring land, developing access roads, building facilities, tying into existing distribution systems, creating oversight, maintenance, billing and business needs.

But the most heinous of all costs related to the development of alternative energy facilities are those attached to profits for investors and developers. If solar were to be

owned and promoted as an outgrowth of existing power companies in the region, the cost of building solar farms would be reduced significantly. Obviously, a significant reduction of cost to develop a farm would translate to lower power cost to the consumer, with many associated costs absorbed in the established systems already handling energy production, including in-house engineering, construction and design. However, even with all of these cost-shaving advantages, it would yet be minimal with regard to the overall cost of creating a new solar farm. There is no apparent rational basis today for the development of solar energy with technology in its infant stage, aside from profiteering by those who seek its inception. Only a small few will realize any benefit from solar, and they won't be the end users or members of this community.

3. Solar technology has expanded greatly over the past few years, gaining stronger viability in the energy markets. It is reasonable to assume that competition will continue to enhance even greater advancements in this technology in the coming few years. It is prudent to view the emergence of solar power and to recognize that one day it may provide the earth with all of its power needs, but that day is not now nor likely to be in the near future. The only reason that solar exists today is because of lucrative government subsidies and unfair market entry practices enacted by law that promote the marketing of solar and wind power that are vastly too expensive to claim a fair competitive place in the open market.

Considered to be among the greatest inventions of all time, the wheel made its appearance in the world and changed everything thereafter. If the first wheel had been honed from stone in the shape of a cube, progress would have been greatly hampered. It was when the end product was perfected, becoming a round object which could sustain heavy weight that it changed the world. Solar technology and wind technology are the square wheel versions of a perfected technology yet to be. They are as yet the 8-track tapes of the 70s and the VCR players of yesteryear, and are, just as these predecessors, destined for the technological graveyard of imperfect design. Patience teaches us that over time perfection in design may be achieved. Perhaps in ten years, solar will achieve a technologically-advanced state where it not only competes with hydro, but surpasses it in efficiency and cost. Prudence teaches us to be patient and wait for that day -- not to jump in prematurely and expect the public to pay for a product that is fundamentally undeveloped.

4. Solar farms are built quickly and require relatively little effort in terms of getting one up and running. Aside from the initial and minimal jobs that construction projects provide, solar farms produce almost no long-term jobs. On the other hand, agriculture for an area the size of this proposal would support up to a few hundred jobs every year. Construction in this area could provide hundreds of homes, road systems, utility development, parks, public buildings, schools, businesses, and manufacturing opportunities for years and years to come. Profits from solar energy production would be funneled outside of our community to bank accounts of financiers and investors elsewhere. Utilization of this land for more beneficial

purposes would allow for local workers to make their earnings here and presumably spend those dollars in our local markets where those earned dollars continue to recirculate in the community and be spent over and over.

With regard to the promotion of this select acreage for solar, one must see the obvious advantages for investors. The site is close to existing distribution lines belonging to public power. Solar does not build, own, or pay for distribution infrastructure. It is allowed access to existing facilities by law. The selected site has a nice slope that lends to efficient placement of solar collection. It is south-facing as well and therefore is unarguably a prime acreage for solar farms. It is for these same reasons that it is one of the most desirable areas for community expansion. We will see this community expand into these areas as pressures push development eastward. Will we want to see a massive solar farm in the midst of our community? Will we shape our developments around an expansive solar farm that mandates where we build our roads and neighborhoods? Will we forever regret that we did not say "No" to use these lands for such an unsightly development, especially when there are thousands of acres in far less visible areas to be considered?

The movement to push solar upon the public will in all likelihood be undeterred, regardless of our public outcry against it. Political agendas frequently drive programs that are party-specific rather than public-specific. Advancements in energy production do need to come forth and provide additional energy for a growing America, and both solar and wind have a shot at a place in that market. Given that it will come to be, let us make certain that we do not encumber our best lands with unsightly solar farms or with wind generators. All one need do is view the decrepit state of neglected alternative energy farms across America as they rust away and come crashing down from neglect and defunding. The profiteers will be long gone and it is always the general public that is left with the decay and cost to remove these inefficient and already obsolete constructions.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael McCarl
Debbie McCarl

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