

**Respondent No:** 17**Login:** Anonymous**Email:** n/a**Responded At:** Oct 04, 2025 07:02:00 am**Last Seen:** Oct 04, 2025 07:02:00 am**IP Address:** n/a

Q1. Name	Mayor Len Burton
Q2. Email address	lburton@ci.benton-city.wa.us
Q3. Are you part of an Agency or Organization?	Yes (please specify) Mayor Benton City
Q4. Share any comment	Formal comment opposing Horse Heaven Hills wind project on raptor-safety grounds To: Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council and relevant decision makers I oppose the proposed Horse Heaven Hills wind farm as currently configured because it places hawks, eagles, and other raptors at unacceptable risk from turbine blades along a ridgeline that overlaps historic nesting and foraging habitat. Scientific review and permitting discussions for this project have already centered on ferruginous hawk nests and buffer zones, showing the project's potential to harm local raptor populations. Key factual concerns - Historic ferruginous hawk nests within the project footprint motivated EFSEC to propose substantial buffer zones, including a two-mile buffer around certain nests and one-kilometer buffers around others, demonstrating recognized raptor vulnerability in this area. - Local groups, Benton County, and the Yakama Nation have repeatedly raised wildlife and cultural-resource concerns in litigation and public comment, underscoring that raptor impacts are a central unresolved issue for this project. Why turbines threaten hawks and eagles - Large raptors use high ridgelines for hunting and foraging, placing them repeatedly in the same airspace where turbine blades rotate. Collisions and disturbance reduce survival and nesting success for long-lived raptor species. The presence of identified ferruginous hawk nest sites in the Horse Heaven Hills confirms that the landscape is used by sensitive raptors. Requested actions and safeguards - Preserve strict, science-based buffer zones around all documented and historically active raptor nests, with conservative no-build buffers equal to or larger than those EFSEC previously considered (two-mile buffers for viable nests and at least one kilometer for other historic sites). - Require an independent, peer-reviewed post-construction monitoring program focused on raptor mortality and nesting success, with legally enforceable adaptive mitigation triggers that halt or curtail turbine operations if unacceptable raptor impacts are detected. - Eliminate turbine siting on key ridgelines and proven hunting corridors used by hawks and eagles; prioritize alternative locations or smaller-scale installations that avoid these critical habitats. - Fund and implement compensatory conservation measures such as habitat protection and restoration in nearby safe areas to offset any unavoidable raptor impacts, developed in consultation with the Yakama Nation and local wildlife experts. Conclusion and call to action Protecting raptors is both a legal obligation and a community priority. The record already shows significant concern about ferruginous hawks and other raptors in the Horse Heaven Hills and the need for robust buffers and monitoring before any expansion of turbines is allowed. I urge EFSEC and the Governor to require the strongest possible protections for hawks and eagles, to deny or substantially downscale any turbine placement that endangers raptors, and to ensure meaningful tribal and community consultation before permitting moves forward. I walk and drive the tops of the hills at least twice a week. I see hawks every time I do this. The bald eagles now nesting and wintering along the Yakima River also soar on the air currents of the Horse Heaven Hills Respectfully submitted. Mayor Len Burton
Q5. Upload your document (optional)	not answered
Q6. Upload a picture (optional)	not answered
Q7. Did you also share a video?	No
Q8. What is the title of your video?	not answered