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## Transcript of Proceedings

*November 18, 2025*

### EFSEC CRT informational meetings v.

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WASHINGTON STATE

ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL

CASCADE TRANSMISSION PROJECT

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

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November 18, 2025

Stevenson, Washington

Reporter: John M. S. Botelho, CCR, RPR

1 APPEARANCES

2 STATE AGENCY MEMBERS:

3 Kurt Beckett, Chair

4 Elizabeth Osborne, Department of Commerce

5 Blake Nelson, Department of Ecology

6 Nate Pamplin, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

7 Maverick Ryan, Department of Natural Resources

8 Brian Rybarik,  
9 Utilities & Transportation Commission

10  
11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OPTIONAL STATE AGENCIES:

12 Cascade Renewable Transmission:

13 Asa Leckie, Skamania County

14  
15 ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL:

16 Jon Thompson

17  
18 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:

19 Russell Mikow

1 APPEARANCES (Continuing)

2  
3 COUNCIL STAFF:

4 Sonia Bumpus	Alex Shiley
5 Ami Hafkemeyer	Karl Holappa
6 Joan Owens	Maria Belkina
7 Andrea Grantham	Lisa McLean
8 Lance Caputo	

9  
10 COUNSEL FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

11 Sarah Reyneveld

12  
13 IN ATTENDANCE:

14 For Cascade Renewable Transmission, LLC:

15 Chris Hocker

16 Susan Brown

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1 BE IT REMEMBERED that on Tuesday,  
2 November 18, 2025, at 710 Southwest Rock Creek Drive,  
3 Stevenson, Washington, at 5:33 p.m., the following  
4 public informational meeting of the Washington State  
5 Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council was held, to  
6 wit:

7  
8 <<<<<< >>>>>>

9  
10 CHAIR BECKETT: Good evening,  
11 everybody. Again, my name's Kurt Beckett. I'm chair  
12 of the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council here  
13 for Washington State and want to welcome you-all this  
14 evening, especially those of you who have taken your  
15 time to join us here this evening. Certainly want to  
16 thank those who are online as well.

17 Other members of our Council who will be  
18 introduced here shortly are also online in addition  
19 to members of the public.

20 So, again, welcome. And this is the first of two  
21 meetings tonight. We're beginning this evening with  
22 the public informational meeting as required by state  
23 law. The purpose of the first meeting is to provide  
24 an overview of the EFSEC review process and, in  
25 particular, the overview of the project, itself, the

1 Cascade Renewable Transmission Project.

2 We will then take public comment from our both  
3 in-room and online attendees. And we'll talk a  
4 little bit more about that when we get there on  
5 timing and process. It is about three minutes per  
6 person. Just a heads-up. And, again, we'll take  
7 online comments as well.

8 Please know that the purpose of tonight's meeting  
9 is really to both, again, begin socializing the  
10 details of the project with the public, but also as  
11 you digest that, this evening if you have comments of  
12 what EFSEC Council as well as staff should consider  
13 in the review of the application, whether that's a  
14 question you think that needs to be answered or a  
15 perspective that you want to share, that's the  
16 purpose of tonight's public comment, is to capture  
17 those things.

18 Please know, as we start this process, ultimately  
19 there are many different comment periods along the  
20 way that we won't spend a lot of time on tonight, but  
21 by no means is this kind of the only time that you'll  
22 have a chance to understand the project and provide  
23 your input. But it is an important part so that we  
24 capture any initial thoughts you may have as we then  
25 go further into the official process.

1           The second meeting, which will begin immediately  
2 after our public comment concludes -- and that is  
3 specifically about the land-use consistency of the  
4 project and, in this case, how that project compares  
5 to land-use code in Skamania County. And so there  
6 will be a brief presentation on that, and then  
7 comments will be taken on the land-use issue only  
8 during the land-use consistency hearing.

9           So, with that, let me thank you-all again for  
10 participating.

11           And if Ms. Grantham would please call the roll.

12                   MS. GRANTHAM: Certainly, Chair.

13           Department of commerce.

14                   MS. OSBORNE: Hi. Elizabeth  
15 Osborne, present.

16                   MS. GRANTHAM: Department of  
17 Ecology.

18                   MR. NELSON: Blake Nelson, present.

19                   MS. GRANTHAM: Department of Fish  
20 and Wildlife.

21                   MR. PAMPLIN: Nate Pamplin, present  
22 virtually.

23                   MS. GRANTHAM: Department of  
24 Natural Resources.

25                   MR. RYAN: Maverick Ryan, present

1 virtually.

2 MS. GRANTHAM: Utilities and  
3 Transportation Commission.

4 MR. RYBARIK: Brian Rybarik,  
5 present virtually from the UTC/EFSEC offices in  
6 Lacey, Washington.

7 MS. GRANTHAM: Thank you.

8 Moving on to our local government. For this  
9 project and Skamania County, Asa Leckie.

10 MR. LECKIE: Yeah. Asa Leckie,  
11 online.

12 MS. GRANTHAM: "Asa." Thank you.

13 Moving on to Assistant Attorney General Jon  
14 Thompson.

15 MR. THOMPSON: I am present online.

16 MS. GRANTHAM: Administrative Law  
17 Judge Russell Mikow.

18 JUDGE MIKOW: Present online.

19 MS. GRANTHAM: For Council staff  
20 here, I am going to call those who are anticipated to  
21 possibly speak tonight.

22 Sonia Bumpus.

23 MS. BUMPUS: Here.

24 MS. GRANTHAM: Ami Hafkemeyer.

25 MS. HAFKEMEYER: Present.

1 MS. GRANTHAM: Maria Belkina.

2 MS. BELKINA: Present.

3 MS. GRANTHAM: Lance Caputo.

4 MR. CAPUTO: Present.

5 MS. GRANTHAM: Karl Holappa.

6 MR. HOLAPPA: Present.

7 MS. GRANTHAM: And Lisa McLean.

8 MS. McLEAN: Present online.

9 MS. GRANTHAM: Thank you.

10 And is there anyone here for the counsel for the  
11 environment?

12 MS. REYNEVELD: Yes. Sarah  
13 Reyneveld is here.

14 MS. GRANTHAM: Thank you.

15 Chair, there is a quorum.

16 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you very  
17 much.

18 I'm going to ask our applicant team to introduce  
19 themselves briefly. And as a heads-up to our counsel  
20 member, I was going to next call on you just to  
21 provide a brief word of the role of the counsel of  
22 the environment, and then I would turn this soon to  
23 Sonia Bumpus, our director of EFSEC, that will begin  
24 our staff presentation for the EFSEC process.

25 So heads-up on that, counsel for the environment

1 and first over to our applicant for brief  
2 introductions.

3 MR. HOCKER: My name is Chris  
4 Hocker with Cascade Renewable Transmission. With me  
5 at the desk here is Susan Brown, a colleague. And we  
6 have other folks in the audience are representing our  
7 development partners and our consultant, HDR. So  
8 there's probably five or six who will be happy to  
9 answer questions, I guess, beforehand obviously and  
10 afterwards if there are any.

11 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you.  
12 Counsel Reyneveld.

13 MS. REYNEVELD: Yes. Hello,  
14 everyone. My name is Sarah Reyneveld, and I'm here  
15 tonight on behalf of counsel for the environment,  
16 Yuriy Korol, who has been assigned to this project  
17 but had a conflict this evening.

18 Pursuant to RCW 80.50.080, when the counsel  
19 receives site application, the attorney general, Nick  
20 Brown, appoints an assistant attorney general to  
21 serve as counsel for the environment. And the  
22 purpose of counsel for the environment, per the  
23 statute, is to represent the public and its interests  
24 in protecting the quality of the environment  
25 throughout the siting process so that the -- our

1 counsel for the environment fully participates  
2 throughout that process.

3 So thank you for the opportunity for a brief  
4 introduction. Again, Yuriy Korol has been assigned  
5 to this project, and should be present tomorrow  
6 evening. Thank you.

7 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you very much  
8 for the overview.

9 And, with that, let me pass this to Director  
10 Bumpus to kick us off on the EFSEC overview process.  
11 Thank you.

12 MS. BUMPUS: Thank you, Chair  
13 Beckett.

14 As Chair Beckett said, my name is Sonia Bumpus.  
15 I am the executive director of the Energy Facility  
16 Site Evaluation Council, or EFSEC, as we say.

17 Wanted to first say thank you for being here  
18 tonight. We really welcome your attendance and  
19 participation. It means a lot to us. I know  
20 everybody's busy. And so you taking the time to come  
21 out and meet us, we really appreciate that.

22 **A couple of remarks before we get started with**  
23 **the PowerPoint presentation that EFSEC staff will**  
24 **provide about our process. And Chair Beckett talked**  
25 **about this a little bit already. The reason that**

1 we're here tonight is to hear from you about this  
2 application that was filed with EFSEC. It's also to  
3 hold the land-use consistency hearing that's going to  
4 follow this public informational hearing.

5 When EFSEC receives an application for site  
6 certification, when someone wants to build an energy  
7 facility that falls under EFSEC jurisdiction, EFSEC's  
8 required to hold a public informational hearing and  
9 take comment on the application. And then we also  
10 have to do a land-use consistency hearing. But  
11 that's not all there is to the process. There's  
12 other steps that follow that you'll hear about in the  
13 PowerPoint presentation.

14 They include the environmental review under the  
15 State Environmental Policy Act. And if the project  
16 doesn't qualify for what we call expedited  
17 processing, then EFSEC is required to also hold an  
18 adjudicative hearing. So there's a lot of steps.

19 The reason I'm telling you all this right now,  
20 even though you're going to get a nutshell  
21 presentation of it shortly, is because there are a  
22 lot of steps ahead of us in terms of engaging with  
23 EFSEC and providing input into the process, and they  
24 all have -- these different parts of the process all  
25 serve a different role.

1           Tonight when you come up and you talk with us  
2 about this application, what it's going to do is it's  
3 going to help inform our review of the application  
4 that was just filed. And so as the SEPA responsible  
5 official of EFSEC, I'm going to be looking at those  
6 comments to help inform what I'm looking at when I'm  
7 interpreting the information in the application. And  
8 what we hope to do is get to a point where we  
9 consider the application to be complete enough to be  
10 able to move towards the next part of the process.

11           So with that being said, I encourage you to also  
12 sign up with us, if you haven't already, for  
13 notifications about the project and EFSEC activities.  
14 Because moving forward from here, EFSEC will be  
15 talking with the Council at our monthly Council  
16 meetings. They're held on the third Wednesday of  
17 each month. And there'll be a project update about  
18 this specific application at each one of those  
19 meetings.

20           So it's a good way to stay apprised as to what's  
21 developing with the application review, public  
22 meetings that we're planning for the future parts of  
23 the process.

24           So thank you for coming out, and I am now going  
25 to pass this over to our siting specialist so that

1     **they can introduce themselves and start the**  
2     **presentation.**

3                     MS. BELKINA: Welcome, everybody.  
4     And thank you, all, for coming to participate this  
5     evening. My name is Maria Belkina. I'm the lead  
6     site specialist for EFSEC for this project. And I  
7     would like to introduce my colleague Lance Caputo.  
8     He will be giving a short presentation on the EFSEC  
9     process for those who are unfamiliar with our agency.

10                    MR. CAPUTO: Thank you, Maria.

11                    As Maria mentioned, my name is Lance Caputo.  
12     I've been assigned to assist Maria. She is the lead  
13     siting specialist on this project. And I am going to  
14     go through a very hopefully brief overview of the  
15     agency and our process.

16                    **A little bit about the history of the EFSEC**  
17     **agency. EFSEC was created in 1970 for the siting of**  
18     **thermal power plants. The intent was to create a**  
19     **one-stop permitting agency for large energy**  
20     **facilities. EFSEC is comprised of state and local**  
21     **government members who review each application before**  
22     **voting to make a council recommendation to the**  
23     **governor.**

24                    **If recommending approval, the package to the**  
25     **governor includes a draft site certification**

1 agreement, or what we call a SCA, which defines all  
2 preconstruction, construction, and operation plans.  
3 If approved by the governor's office, the decision  
4 preempts all other state or local regulations.

5 EFSEC is comprised of members from several  
6 different state-level agencies. The chairperson is  
7 appointed by the governor, and there are standing  
8 members from five other agencies appointed by those  
9 agencies to sit on the Council.

10 The current Council is made up of Chairman Kurt  
11 Beckett, Blake Nelson from the Department of Ecology,  
12 Nate Pamplin from the Department of Fish and  
13 Wildlife, Elizabeth Osborne from the Department of  
14 Commerce, Maverick Ryan from the Department of  
15 Natural Resources, and Brian Rybarik from the  
16 Utilities and Transportation Commission.

17 There are additional agencies that may elect to  
18 appoint a Council member during the review of a new  
19 application. These agencies are the Department of  
20 Agriculture, the Department of Transportation, the  
21 Department of Health, and the Military Department.

22 The local county shall also appoint a Council  
23 member for the review of a new application. For  
24 Skamania County, Asa Leckie -- if I said your name  
25 correctly, sir -- is the county representative. If a

1 proposal -- if a proposal project is located at a  
2 port, the port may also appoint a nonvoting member.

3 Multiple energy generations -- generation  
4 facilities fall under EFSEC's jurisdiction. Some  
5 projects, such as thermal power plants with less than  
6 350 megawatts and nuclear generation for the purpose  
7 of generating electricity, are required to be sited  
8 through EFSEC, while others -- such as wind, solar,  
9 green hydrogen, storage, or clean energy  
10 manufacturing -- can opt in our process at any size.

11 Transmission lines greater than 115 kilovolts can  
12 also opt in, while lines greater than 500 kilovolts  
13 alternating current or 300 kilovolts direct current  
14 are required. Thresholds for pipelines and  
15 refineries that may be sited through EFSEC are found  
16 in the Revised Codes of Washington, or RCW,  
17 80.50.060.

18 Multiple energy generation -- thank you. My  
19 first mistake. Somebody keep track for me. I  
20 appreciate how many mistakes I make.

21 Here is a map of the facilities that are  
22 certified or have applied for certification under  
23 EFSEC's jurisdiction. You can see marked in green,  
24 there are seven operating facilities, including two  
25 natural gas facilities, one nuclear facility, two

1 solar facilities and two wind facilities.

2 The blue marks indicate the four additional  
3 facilities that are approved but are not yet  
4 constructed.

5 The clear circle is the one facility in the  
6 process of being decommissioned. EFSEC is currently  
7 reviewing seven projects marked by yellow, including  
8 this Cascade Renewable Transmission project.

9 Here is a flowchart showing the general process  
10 an applicant will go through when they submit an  
11 application to EFSEC. I know it looks daunting, but  
12 please bear with us.

13 There are yellow boxes on the chart that indicate  
14 specific milestones in the process where the Council  
15 and staff seek public input. You can see that there  
16 are multiple processes that happen concurrently when  
17 EFSEC is reviewing an application. The permitting  
18 process, outlined across the top row, involves  
19 identifying and preparing applicable environmental  
20 permits. The land-use and adjudicative process runs  
21 through the middle. And the State Environmental  
22 Policy Act, or what we call SEPA, process is shown  
23 along the bottom. All these processes ultimately  
24 feed into the Council's recommendation made to the  
25 governor.

1           Where an adjudication is required following the  
2 land-use consistency hearing, an order is issued to  
3 commence proceedings and initiate intervention.

4 Here, members of the public wishing to participate in  
5 the adjudication must identify themselves and their  
6 issues in writing. There are prehearing conferences  
7 through which parties are granted intervention status  
8 and issues are identified. Exhibits and testimony  
9 are provided, and cross-examination is conducted.

10           After this, the Council looks at all the  
11 information in the adjudication record and  
12 deliberates. Finally, the Council develops an order  
13 establishing their findings of fact and conclusions  
14 of law from the information provided throughout these  
15 proceedings.

16           For every proposed project, a SEPA review is  
17 performed. When a determination of significance and  
18 a decision to prepare an environmental impact  
19 statement -- or what we call an EIS -- is made,  
20 public comments are taken on the scope of the EIS.

21           After public comment for scoping, the SEPA  
22 responsible official -- here, our agency director  
23 Sonia Bumpus -- determines the scope of the EIS. A  
24 draft EIS is prepared and issued with a minimum  
25 30-day public comment period, after which the final

1 EIS is prepared and released.

2 In some instances, a determination of  
3 nonsignificance, or a DNS, or a mitigated  
4 determination of nonsignificance, an MDNS, is issued.  
5 If the SEPA responsible official determines that a  
6 project meets the criteria of a DNS or MDNS, an EIS  
7 is not required.

8 This is an alphabet we have here going.

9 In this process, determination is noticed to the  
10 public, and there is a minimum 15-day public comment  
11 period on a mitigated determination of  
12 nonsignificance while a determination of significance  
13 requires no comment period.

14 Following the conclusion of these separate  
15 avenues of application review, the Council develops  
16 its recommendation to the governor, tying together  
17 the information brought forth throughout the entire  
18 application review process. If a project is issued a  
19 mitigated determination of nonsignificance and  
20 received a determination of land-use consistency, it  
21 may qualify for an expedited review process.

22 To be considered for expedited processing, an  
23 applicant must make the request in writing. If the  
24 project meets the two aforementioned criteria for  
25 land-use consistency and a MDNS, the Council can

1 grant expedited process review.

2 In this expedited process, the adjudication step  
3 is not required, and an environmental impact  
4 statement is not prepared. Applications granted  
5 expedited processing do hold an additional public  
6 hearing prior to the Council's recommendation to hear  
7 any conditions that may be considered to impose on  
8 the project, similar to a conditional use process  
9 hearing. The Council prepares their recommendation  
10 to the governor in an expedited time frame under this  
11 process.

12 Now, EFSEC is also the issuing agency for any  
13 applicable state and local governmental permits a  
14 facility may require, including water quality and air  
15 quality permits as they may apply. The permits are  
16 identified in the final package with the Council's  
17 recommendation to the governor.

18 If an application is approved by the governor,  
19 EFSEC then has oversight of the environmental  
20 compliance for the life of the facility through  
21 decommissioning. EFSEC has standing contracts with  
22 applicable state agencies that assist in monitoring  
23 and enforcement of conditions either in the site  
24 certification agreement, identified permits, or the  
25 environmental impact statement or the mitigated

1 determination of nonsignificance. EFSEC's  
2 enforcement authority extends to the issuance of any  
3 penalties that may apply.

4 At the conclusion of the Council's review of an  
5 application, a recommendation is made to the governor  
6 to either approve or reject the application. This  
7 initiates a 60-day window within which the governor  
8 will then either approve the application, reject the  
9 application, or remand the application back to the  
10 Council for reconsideration. Any application that is  
11 rejected by the governor is a final decision on that  
12 application.

13 As previously mentioned, EFSEC oversees  
14 facilities under its jurisdiction through  
15 decommissioning. Prior to the start of construction  
16 of approved projects, an initial site restoration  
17 plan is required. Then at the end of the life  
18 expectancy of the facility, prior to the start of  
19 decommissioning, a detailed site restoration plan is  
20 required.

21 These plans must be reviewed and approved by the  
22 Council. The project must also provide financial  
23 assurance for the decommissioning in the event that  
24 the project is no longer able to complete the  
25 process. Assuming the project decommissions while

1 still on the full control of the developer, these  
2 costs would be paid by the certificate holder  
3 directly.

4 And before I conclude the presentation, I'd like  
5 to mention that our partners in the project are  
6 representing the State of Oregon, the senior siting  
7 analyst with the Oregon Department of Energy and the  
8 Energy Facility Siting Council, is Christopher Clark.  
9 He's here tonight. So if you have questions about  
10 the Oregon half of the project, the gentleman over  
11 there with the beard. He's available for you.

12 So thank you for joining us this evening. We  
13 appreciate your time and interest in the Cascade  
14 Renewable Transmission Project. Our work is closely  
15 coordinated with the Oregon Department of Energy and  
16 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ensuring that both  
17 states and federal agencies have aligned in the  
18 environmental permitting process.

19 This wraps up my presentation for the evening.  
20 But before I end, I'd like to remind everyone how  
21 they may submit comments for this project.

22 You may send in written comments by e-mail to  
23 [comments@efsec.wa.gov](mailto:comments@efsec.wa.gov); by postal mail to our office  
24 at 621 Woodland Square Loop, PO Box 43172, Olympia,  
25 Washington; or by phone at (360) 664-1345.

1           When EFSEC is in an active comment period  
2 associated with a specific milestone, comments may  
3 also be submitted to our online comment database at  
4 [comments.efsec.wa.gov](https://comments.efsec.wa.gov). All comments received,  
5 regardless of timing or method of delivery, will be  
6 saved with the project record and available to the  
7 Council and staff for review.

8           Thank you for bearing with me. And I'll turn it  
9 back over to Maria? Sonia Bumpus, our director.

10                           MS. BUMPUS: Thank you, Lance.  
11 Really appreciate it.

12           Just a couple of things. And Lance went over  
13 the -- how to submit comments, so I won't go back  
14 over that, other than just to say, so using an  
15 example from the presentation, Lance talked about, if  
16 we were to prepare an EIS, we would make a  
17 determination of significance.

18           And he also mentioned that there's no comment, no  
19 public comment period required when I issue a  
20 determination of significance. However, there's this  
21 part of SEPA, called scoping, that we're required to  
22 do.

23           So if we were going to make a determination of  
24 significance, we would need to go through a scoping  
25 period. And there's a comment period that we're

1 required to do. And what that comment period does is  
2 it gives us a chance to hear from you as far as what  
3 you think needs to be analyzed or considered in that  
4 environmental impact statement.

5 And so that is exactly what EFSEC would call a  
6 comment period. So if you're on that mailing list  
7 that I talked about earlier, you would get noticed,  
8 Hey, EFSEC is going to be starting scoping. We've  
9 issued a determination of significance, and we're  
10 inviting you to provide comments to us about the  
11 scope of the environmental impact statement.

12 So just to give you a real-world example of one  
13 of those milestones that Lance highlighted in his  
14 presentation. Thank you.

15 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you, all.

16 As we move to the PowerPoint, let me make a brief  
17 word. A PowerPoint from the applicants. I think we  
18 can cue that up. We will move to the project  
19 overview, which is one of the most critical parts  
20 tonight in addition to your input.

21 I did want to also highlight again Commissioner  
22 Leckie, Asa Leckie, who is serving on this project  
23 council for the Cascade Renewable Transmission  
24 Project -- always appreciate busy officials that are  
25 also now dual -- dual-hatting and providing their

1 presence on behalf of Skamania County on the project  
2 council.

3 So, Commissioner, we welcome you to this process  
4 and appreciate your making time for it and those who  
5 you represent.

6 Also wanted to echo Lance's comments of  
7 highlighting our partner from the Department of  
8 Energy in Oregon. That's EFSC with one "E," and  
9 we're EFSEC with two Es, is one way to keep that  
10 clear, so to speak.

11 So, with that, over to you, sir.

12 MR. HOCKER: All right.

13 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you.

14 MR. HOCKER: Thank you. And thank  
15 you to EFSEC and particularly to the folks who turned  
16 out tonight. We appreciate the interest.

17 My name is Chris Hocker. The company I work for  
18 is called PowerBridge. My colleague Susan Brown is  
19 next to me. And like I said before, we had some  
20 project representatives throughout the audience here  
21 who'd be happy to answer informal questions.

22 The project that we're going to describe is  
23 innovative in the sense that it's a technology that  
24 has not been used widely in the Pacific Northwest,  
25 but it is a technology that has been used on several

1 occasions throughout the world. And the company I  
2 work for, PowerBridge, has actually developed and  
3 built and currently operates two such projects  
4 involving underwater electric transmission.

5 Before I go any further, I do want to acknowledge  
6 that we're well aware of the long-standing thousands  
7 of years of occupancy by indigenous peoples of the  
8 region, and we are working very diligently to engage  
9 with tribes and understand their concerns. So, you  
10 know, I wanted to make sure that you knew that we're  
11 very much appreciative of that and it's an ongoing  
12 effort that's been going on for several years.

13 So I hopefully won't take too much time. But I  
14 do want to give you a pretty thorough overview.

15 The project begins in The Dalles, Oregon, and  
16 ends in the Rivergate section of Portland.

17 What's next?

18 It is about a hundred miles in length, of which  
19 about 80 is underwater. When we say underwater, we  
20 mean buried 10 to 15 feet below the sediment of the  
21 river. It's not lying on the bottom of the river.

22 It avoids negative impacts associated with  
23 overhead transmission lines. It will probably take  
24 about three and a half years to build. The  
25 installation of the cable underwater would only occur

1 during winter months to avoid sensitive periods for  
2 migration and spawning of fish.

3 And like I said before, this is a technology that  
4 has been in use for quite some time and continues to  
5 be in use around the world.

6 Next.

7 Just as sort of a backdrop: A few years ago,  
8 both states, Washington and Oregon, passed  
9 legislation that mandated a sort of a stair-step  
10 process of achieving 100 percent clean energy in  
11 their states. And the first milestone under those  
12 mandates actually occurs in 2030, and then it  
13 ratchets up from there.

14 So it is a state mandate to move to clean energy.  
15 The issue, however, is that most of the clean energy  
16 resources exist east of the Cascades. And most of  
17 the load, the people who actually use the power, is  
18 west of the Cascades. So the dilemma is how do you  
19 get enough transmission to move the energy from east  
20 to the west.

21 Next.

22 Right now, in the region, Washington and Oregon,  
23 the existing transmission system is very much  
24 constrained. It's at its limit. Not every single  
25 hour of every day. But at peak periods, the

1 transmission system is under great constraint. And  
2 this isn't just us saying this. It's something that  
3 has been more and more widely acknowledged throughout  
4 the region, as you can see by, you know, some of the  
5 headlines shown here.

6 So there's very little available east-to-west  
7 transmission capacity. There's a transmission grid  
8 that was built in the '60s and '70s primarily by BPA.  
9 Putting in new overhead high-capacity transmission  
10 lines is very challenging. There have been a couple  
11 of efforts to do that that have failed.

12 And so we have this, as I said, highly  
13 constrained transmission system that needs to be  
14 addressed one way or the other.

15 Next.

16 Now, I realize this is not the most intuitive  
17 slide, but I'm showing it because it illustrates how  
18 energy flows and how the project, even though it  
19 begins in Oregon and it terminates in Oregon, really  
20 doesn't -- it's irrespective of geography. And the  
21 benefits to Washington are every bit as evident as  
22 the benefits to Oregon.

23 The blue kind of semicircles illustrate the  
24 current main energy flows from east of the Cascades  
25 to the west. The little circles are planned and very

1 early-stage planning that BPA and others are thinking  
2 of building. And the reason they need to build those  
3 improvements in the red and the black circles and the  
4 blue circles is because the system works as a whole.

5 So if you're bringing energy from sources in the  
6 east, you don't just string a line and from Point A  
7 to Point B. Everything you do has an impact on the  
8 existing system, so that if you bring it over to a  
9 point, then that's going to affect how the other  
10 parts of the system need to be upgraded to make it  
11 all work. Otherwise, all you're doing is moving  
12 constraints.

13 Our project, which is the green line, bypasses  
14 those constraints by going directly from the Big Eddy  
15 substation in The Dalles to the load center in  
16 greater Portland. From there, it then escapes the  
17 constraints and is able to flow north and south. So  
18 by eliminating, or I should say reducing -- because  
19 it's not the only solution -- by reducing those  
20 constraints, you benefit the whole system in both  
21 states.

22 So as we said, we've, you know, managed to draw a  
23 certain amount of attention as we've been filing  
24 permits and dealing with folks on both sides of the  
25 river. We are part of the needed solution, which is

1 really probably three/four, at least, thousand  
2 megawatts' worth of transmission capacity. What we  
3 propose is 1100 megawatts. So it's a significant  
4 portion of meeting the constraints. It's not the  
5 only solution, but it's one that we know can be  
6 implemented.

7 So it's hard to depict a hundred-mile  
8 transmission line, but this is essentially the  
9 overview of the project that, like I said, begins in  
10 The Dalles. And, by the way, that complex, if you're  
11 familiar with it -- it's called the Starr Complex --  
12 is a very large BPA set of facilities, including a  
13 large substation called Big Eddy.

14 And the transmission that moves east from --  
15 further east into The Dalles, into Starr, is not  
16 constrained. The constrained area is basically the  
17 hundred miles between Big Eddy and here.

18 So the green is the underwater portion. The  
19 yellow is the on-land portion. As you can see, the  
20 only on-land portion affecting this specific local  
21 area is the bypass of the Bonneville Dam, which we're  
22 going to show there. There we go.

23 So the idea would be to take the cable out of the  
24 river and land it in Stevenson. The landing is  
25 affected by a technology called horizontal

1 directional drill. So there is no trenching involved  
2 in bringing it from -- from water to land. It's done  
3 with a drill. Conduits are pulled through. The  
4 depth of the drill can be 40, 50 feet below the  
5 ground surface. It comes back up onto land. And  
6 then the cable is trenched. And it's conventional  
7 trenching about four feet deep, as I'm sure we're all  
8 familiar with for cables and pipelines and things  
9 like that. Water lines, that kind of thing.

10 It primarily follows State Route 14. That little  
11 jog on Ashes Lake Road is at the suggestion of the  
12 Washington DOT, Department of Transportation. It  
13 proceeds around the dam, primarily on Route 14, till  
14 you get onto federal government property over by the  
15 dam, over to where you see the kind of the purple  
16 slash there, which is the other horizontal  
17 directional drill that gets it back into the water  
18 and on down toward -- toward the Portland area.

19 Just for context, these are the Oregon land  
20 routes. Each is about five miles. It -- because  
21 this is a direct current -- or DC -- line, it  
22 requires conversion from the alternating current,  
23 which is what the system -- we are primarily familiar  
24 with. It's converted to DC because it's -- that  
25 makes it controllable and doesn't require a lot of

1 mechanical systems along the way. It can be  
2 transported long distance underwater.

3 So it's converted from AC to DC at Big Eddy. It  
4 continues as a DC line to, if you look at the left  
5 figure, to a converter station in the Rivergate  
6 industrial area in Portland. It then is converted to  
7 AC -- back into AC power. Proceeds underground for  
8 two, three miles to the Willamette. Once again,  
9 there's a horizontal directional drill that goes  
10 under the Willamette and comes up on the existing  
11 Harborton substation, which is owned by Portland  
12 General.

13 So why are we doing this underwater? Well, we've  
14 already talked about the difficulties of siting  
15 overhead transmission lines. But in developing this  
16 project, we considered a number of alternatives to  
17 see if there was any possible alternative path or  
18 combination of paths that might be preferable to  
19 using the river.

20 There is no available path through the gorge or  
21 densely populated areas without unacceptable impacts.  
22 If you can imagine running an overhead power line  
23 through the gorge, it seems rather unlikely.

24 We are asked occasionally, Well, why don't you  
25 just bury it in I-84? Because it's not permitted, is

1 the answer. The State DOT and the Federal Highway  
2 Administration does not allow for that kind of burial  
3 for that kind of length. They make occasional  
4 exceptions for very short lengths. But for a  
5 hundred-mile route, never mind that it probably isn't  
6 constructible. Even if it were, they wouldn't permit  
7 it.

8 Same with State Route 14 with a few exceptions.  
9 If you were to try to use State Route 14 for the  
10 entire length, it would be unconstructible because of  
11 various natural and manmade features, bridges,  
12 tunnels, rock slides. We counted over 300 potential  
13 obstacles, which, if you had a thousand years, you  
14 might be able to figure them all out, but there's no  
15 contractor in the world who would do that.

16 So we will say that for the small stretch of  
17 State Route 14 that bypasses the dam, that is a  
18 constructible route. And as I said, we've been  
19 consulting with the DOT to understand, you know, what  
20 we need to do in order to do that.

21 Same is true for railroad rights-of-way on either  
22 side of the river where in many cases they're so  
23 constrained that you basically can't do it. And I  
24 doubt if the railroads would be happy about shutting  
25 down their operation while we figured out how to put

1 the trench in the line.

2 So now we get to describing the project, itself.  
3 This is an illustration -- it's not an illustration.  
4 It's the real deal. But it's to show you what the  
5 cable looks like.

6 If you look at the bottom left figure, the cable  
7 is installed in a bundle that is about 12 inches in  
8 diameter. So this is a slice of an actual cable, not  
9 a replica or a facsimile or to scale or anything like  
10 that. It's also quite heavy, so... And as you can  
11 see, it's about the size of an iPhone.

12 The two cables are bundled together with one or  
13 two fiber-optic cables. The point of the fiber-optic  
14 is not a commercial enterprise. It's to effect  
15 communication between the two converter stations.  
16 And it's used, for instance, to detect if there's a  
17 problem at either converter station. It's all  
18 internal to the -- to the project.

19 The construction, itself -- and if you look at  
20 the right-hand figure, this is a depiction of a  
21 process that uses a machine called a hydroplow or a  
22 jet plow that is pulled by a barge or a ship very,  
23 very slowly. In a really good day, you can make  
24 about a mile and a half.

25 Can we go back for a second.

1 MS. BROWN: Red button?

2 MR. HOCKER: There we go. The  
3 left-hand shows the cable bundle being paid off the  
4 back of the vessel. This is actually from our  
5 Neptune project that we -- that we built.

6 And so going back to the other figure. It is  
7 slowly lowered in a bundle into the machinery called  
8 a hydroplow. A hydroplow has an adjustable blade.  
9 And most importantly, the blade includes a number of  
10 high-pressure water jets. So you're not digging a  
11 trench. You're basically jetting a trench that  
12 emulsifies the sediment.

13 The cable then sort of simultaneously lays into  
14 the trench. And about 75 percent of the sediment  
15 that rises up within the trench then settles back  
16 down over the cable. So it's like one slow,  
17 continuous process. There's no mechanical dredging.  
18 There's no massive scar on the riverbed. The trench,  
19 itself, is perhaps two feet wide to accommodate a  
20 12-inch-diameter cable bundle.

21 As we said before, the in-water portion of the  
22 project is only allowed during what's called work  
23 windows by the environmental agencies, which is  
24 typically in the winter months -- November through  
25 February, March -- and specified to avoid, as I said,

1 spawning and migration of fish species.

2 We talked about converter stations. This is  
3 part -- this is really the only aboveground  
4 facilities involved in the project. This particular  
5 photo is of a converter station in San Francisco.  
6 About 15 years ago, a project very similar to this  
7 was built with a converter station in San Francisco,  
8 a converter station in Pittsburg, California, which  
9 is in the East Bay, if you're familiar with it, and  
10 then the cable runs under the San Francisco Bay to  
11 the converter station here in -- in San Francisco.

12 A converter station property requirement is about  
13 five acres. And it is quite similar to the type of  
14 substation that you may see pretty much anywhere,  
15 including, for instance, the Starr Complex or the  
16 Harborton substation that we referred to.

17 Permits, approvals, studies. We're under the  
18 jurisdiction of really three major entities. One of  
19 them is EFSEC here in Washington. One of them is  
20 EFSC, without the second "E," in Oregon. And the  
21 other is the Army Corps of Engineers.

22 So we need to get approvals of all three of those  
23 entities. That is a complex process. Although, we  
24 have been through that before with our projects on  
25 the East Coast between New York and New Jersey, where

1 we also had two state jurisdictions and the Army  
2 Corps overseeing.

3 So it is complex to get a coordinated review.  
4 It's something that I know that both EFSECs and the  
5 corps are focusing on in order to have a review  
6 that -- that can be as coordinated as possible, but  
7 again, still observing the interests of the various  
8 states and of the federal waterway.

9 We also need interconnection agreements with the  
10 Bonneville Power Administration and Portland General  
11 Electric. That's part of the process. We have  
12 virtually no private property involved where the  
13 cable is. It's primarily on public land. And there  
14 have been already a large number of very significant  
15 studies that we have conducted -- biological  
16 assessments, sediment analysis, sediment transport --  
17 in other words to say, Well, okay, if you're plowing  
18 the sediment, where does it go? Does it travel down  
19 the river? Does it stir up anything you don't want  
20 to travel? That kind of thing.

21 We've conducted a geophysical survey of the river  
22 bottom and done a lot of modeling for things like  
23 magnetic fields and temperature.

24 The point being that we're -- even though we  
25 showed you earlier on what looked like just a line on

1 a piece of paper, in fact it's been sited very  
2 carefully; for instance, to get as close to the  
3 middle of the river as possible, but to avoid the  
4 navigation channel where possible. We want to get  
5 away from the shoreline because of the cultural  
6 resources aspect near the historic shoreline.

7 We have mapped the river bottom to know where  
8 there are areas of let's say solid rock or steep side  
9 slopes where you can't run a jet plow. So really the  
10 siting has been anything but random. It's been  
11 pretty careful in terms -- and to avoid habitat  
12 areas, foraging areas for fish, that kind of thing.

13 So the permitting update. I don't need to go  
14 through this in detail, but we have obviously  
15 submitted our application to Washington EFSEC. We  
16 are in the process of completing our siting  
17 application for Oregon EFSC. There are actually a  
18 couple of Army Corps of Engineers permits that are  
19 required: Section 408, Section 404. We have filed  
20 those. Those are under review. And a very, very  
21 important part of the process for the corps as well  
22 as for the states is consultation with the various  
23 Native tribes.

24 And so that consultation process, which is called  
25 Section 106, has been underway. And as I said

1 before, we are trying as best we can and have been  
2 able to engage with a number of the tribes. It's  
3 really the federal government's responsibility to  
4 lead that consultation process. But we are  
5 supporting that, and it's perfectly permissible for  
6 us to engage ourselves as long as it's done in  
7 coordination with the 106 process.

8 We also hold what are called agency coordination  
9 meetings periodically when we have something to say,  
10 when we have performed a study that we think might be  
11 interesting to the agencies or the tribes. So every  
12 so often -- we've got one coming up next month --  
13 we -- and these are voluntary. They're not part of  
14 the process. They're outside the process. But we've  
15 had very good response from the agencies and the  
16 tribes who sit in and learn about where we are in our  
17 studies and what we have -- what we have found.

18 We do expect that the project, during  
19 construction, will and can result in a variety of  
20 benefits, including quite a few construction jobs  
21 during the three-and-a-half-year process. We have  
22 done this before, as I keep saying. And we  
23 understand that we can't just come in, run a line, go  
24 away, without partnering with the communities that  
25 are affected, even if the effect isn't all that

1 great.

2 So we're open to any sort of discussions with the  
3 localities where there may be an impact or an effect,  
4 to look for ways to partner or benefits that we can  
5 help provide.

6 So, with that, just to mention some of our  
7 development team. PowerBridge has done this before  
8 within the last 20 years or so on the East Coast.  
9 Sun2o Partners is primarily a solar developer that  
10 was out here, oh, about six, seven years ago trying  
11 to see if there were opportunities to site a solar  
12 farm east of the Cascades and discovered very quickly  
13 that the opportunity is only as good as the  
14 transmission that will get it to the people who will  
15 actually use the energy. And so they came to us,  
16 knowing that, you know, we were in this kind of  
17 business, and asked us if we would take a look and  
18 see if this was something that we think is feasible.

19 NextEra Transmission -- and we have a couple of  
20 NextEra partners here tonight -- is the leading  
21 publicly traded utility and renewables developer.  
22 And they are the ones that now own and operate the  
23 Trans Bay Cable project, which is the one I talked  
24 about in San Francisco.

25 Next slide -- and I won't belabor this -- is just

1 an illustration of the similar marine transmission  
2 that has happened throughout the world. And there's  
3 more being built that -- even beyond this particular  
4 listing.

5 Our projects include, they're called Neptune and  
6 Hudson. Neptune has been running successfully for 20  
7 years, or almost 20 years. 18 years. And it's  
8 similar to this. It runs primarily underwater for  
9 about 50 miles, down part of a river, and into the  
10 Atlantic Ocean. It runs almost exactly 24/7 -- 24  
11 hours a day, seven days a week -- and supplies about  
12 25 percent of the -- all the energy use, electric  
13 power use, on Long Island.

14 The Hudson project similarly connects two power  
15 grids: One in New Jersey, one in New York. And it  
16 serves -- it goes down the Hudson River, buried  
17 beneath the Hudson River, and serves the government  
18 agencies in New York City.

19 So just to conclude, as I keep saying, we are  
20 experienced at this. We understand the need to be  
21 respectful, to be open, to be transparent, and to try  
22 to partner with the communities that we may affect.  
23 And that's what we're trying to do.

24 And always happy to answer any questions, not  
25 just here. We do have a website, of course.

1 Cascade -- no. What's it called?  
2 CascadeTransmission.com. There's a mechanism where  
3 you can send us questions, which we're happy to  
4 answer. And we welcome that.

5 So, with that, I'll turn it over to Chair  
6 Beckett. Thank you.

7 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for the  
8 thorough review. And, with that, we will move into  
9 our public comment portion of this meeting. And  
10 Ms. Grantham will help me know who has signed up.

11 If you haven't signed up, you're welcome to, I  
12 think, over here at this table. And ultimately I'll  
13 certainly call on you if you raise your hand and  
14 would just ask that you state your name for the  
15 record if you haven't already signed up.

16 So, with that, let me turn this, I believe, to  
17 Ms. Grantham to let us know our first speaker.

18 Again, we are trying to limit comments tonight to  
19 three minutes and welcome your comments. If you do  
20 have questions that you would like to note that be  
21 included for the record, we will, you know, capture  
22 those questions to the degree that we can answer some  
23 tonight without, you know, cutting off other people  
24 who want to speak. I will consider that, but  
25 ultimately we follow the rule of three minutes per

1 person here.

2 So, with that, Ms. Grantham.

3 MS. GRANTHAM: Certainly, Chair.

4 The first speaker that I have signed up is a Fred  
5 Greef.

6 CHAIR BECKETT: Welcome, sir.

7 MR. GREEF: Thank you for this  
8 opportunity.

9 CHAIR BECKETT: And if you would,  
10 sir, if you might stand just a little closer to the  
11 mike. I don't know if we can quite capture you for  
12 our online audience as well as the other Council  
13 members who are here to hear your testimony, so...

14 MR. GREEF: All right. Thank you  
15 for this opportunity.

16 For me, one of the most important things with  
17 this environmental impact statement, which I strongly  
18 believe is needed and will be required, is the  
19 no-action alternative.

20 I think there's many reasons why this project  
21 should not go forward. And I'm not going -- I've  
22 just found out about it. I -- I will be submitting a  
23 lot more comments besides this tonight. But you  
24 mentioned there's magnetic field and temperature  
25 studies. And there's an awful lot of recreation in

1 this river: Fishing, windsurfing, swimming. There's  
2 not a lot of lakes near the river. This is where the  
3 people here live and recreate.

4 And there's such a thing as EMFs. I think we  
5 need to do a full study of what are the impacts of  
6 people right in the proximity of that cable for long  
7 periods of time or -- anyway, so let's just say  
8 elec- -- magnetic, electric EMFs, all that type of  
9 thing really does need to be closely looked at.

10 Another thing would be -- so anyway, there's  
11 going to be all kinds of recreation impacts. People  
12 might not want to be near those cables. We might  
13 lose our windsurfing on the river.

14 There may be other pathways besides the gorge.  
15 The gorge is the shoreline of the greatest  
16 significance in this whole Northwest region. I know  
17 Ecology's shoreline program will really be interested  
18 in before they permit this. And I believe you should  
19 talk to the scientists there as to what they think  
20 the impacts on the fish and all the different water  
21 quality impacts associated with such disruption to  
22 the most important shoreline of statewide  
23 significance.

24 There's -- there may be other ways to go from  
25 east-west besides the gorge. There may be other

1 pathways through the mountains, through railroads,  
2 through other highways. You say they may not want  
3 it. So, anyway, I'm not sure that you can't put it  
4 where there's railroads or other highways. This is  
5 the worst place for it.

6 I really don't have -- and I would like to know  
7 who the power serves, is going -- so you mentioned  
8 something like 800,000 households. We want to be  
9 sure it doesn't go to serve any data centers --  
10 absolute zero -- if for some reason this project does  
11 have to go through, and that there's no nuclear power  
12 traveling through it that was created by any type of  
13 nuclear.

14 Whether it's Bill Gates or Amazon or Meta or  
15 Google, they're all pronuclear now, and that is a  
16 horrible thing. We in this state, Washington State,  
17 know how horrible nuclear power is. We had the  
18 Washington Public Power Supply System, which was such  
19 a disaster. We know the impacts of -- we still have  
20 not cleaned up with the river from that.

21 And then the other thing would be Bradford  
22 Island. There's been huge impacts to this river.  
23 The tribal nations, their whole way of life and  
24 culture was destroyed by BPA and all the dams on this  
25 river. Every -- there's things in EISS called

1 cumulative impacts. The cumulative impacts are so  
2 big already that doing this one more thing that  
3 trashes the sacred tribal land and their fish use and  
4 various -- it's just -- the impact on fish.

5 Then dams can be removed to help the fish. If  
6 those dams have -- if we get permission to move those  
7 dams and fix the river for the fish and the recre- --  
8 and what happens to your line then? Does this mean  
9 we can't remove those dams for the next 50 years? So  
10 anyway, that's just a (unintelligible) --

11 CHAIR BECKETT: Appreciate your  
12 comment.

13 MR. GREEF: I -- I'm really -- I  
14 haven't even begun to get my head around this thing  
15 yet. But I think the impacts are huge. And there's  
16 no question an EIS is required in this thing. It's  
17 just -- that's all. Thank you.

18 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you.

19 Ms. Grantham.

20 MS. GRANTHAM: The next speaker I  
21 have is Mary Repar.

22 MS. REPAR: Thank you very much for  
23 this opportunity. It's been a long time since  
24 Whistling Ridge. So I'm looking forward to this.

25 You're in the National -- Columbia River Gorge

1 National Scenic Area. You've entered the twilight  
2 zone for permitting process. So welcome. It's going  
3 to be a long, long haul.

4 I'm assuming that the gorge commission also has  
5 something to say about this, will have something to  
6 say. I brought it up to them at the last meeting.

7 I made comments on the Columbia River Treaty.  
8 I'm sure many of you did. And it was a very  
9 interesting process. And one of the things that the  
10 Columbia River Treaty says is very important, is  
11 improving the ecosystem is going to be the main aim  
12 of modernization. I don't see this project as  
13 improving the ecosystems that we have here.

14 NEPA is a very good process. It does have  
15 cumulative impacts and effects, and those will have  
16 to be analyzed thoroughly and with analysis.

17 This little river is being asked to do a lot. We  
18 have the Goldendale pump project that wants water  
19 from the Columbia. We have the EPA Superfund cleanup  
20 at Bradford Island. We have this, and we have that.  
21 And, you know, this is asking too much of our  
22 environment. The rights of nature needs to be  
23 included in the analysis of this, and I'm a very huge  
24 proponent of the rights of nature.

25 Also tribal consultation and alternatives. I

1 would like to see a lot more alternatives. You know,  
2 we're always being asked to vote for all these  
3 projects that are going to make our lives better and  
4 lower our utility costs. Well, I'm not seeing it.  
5 I'm sorry. We have had solar projects that have  
6 promised to lower our costs. We have some of the  
7 highest cost per kilowatt-hour here in this  
8 community. If you can't do something for our  
9 community, don't bother.

10 We -- you know, there's -- there's other  
11 alternatives that are much cleaner and much less  
12 intrusive on our environment.

13 Also, the gentleman before me spoke about the  
14 health effects. There are health effects from  
15 transmission lines. There are health effects on  
16 the -- on humans, and there are health effects on  
17 wildlife.

18 So these are my notes, which you'll be getting in  
19 a different format, and I'm going to submit something  
20 tonight. But I look forward to the NEPA EIS, and I  
21 think you will find that this project is not for us.

22 Thank you very much.

23 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for your  
24 comment.

25 I believe that's the last of our sign-ups ahead

1 of time?

2 MS. GRANTHAM: Correct. That's all  
3 I was able to get.

4 CHAIR BECKETT: Okay. Would anyone  
5 else who's in the room care to make a comment? And  
6 also for those online, if you raise your hand, we  
7 will recognize you. But let me please first turn  
8 this to our guests in the room.

9 Yes, ma'am. If you'd please step up to the mike.  
10 State your name for the record, please.

11 And then I saw one other hand, but we'll catch  
12 you next.

13 Thank you again.

14 MS. ALLINGER: My name is Debbie  
15 Allinger. And I am a survivor of cancer and your  
16 wonderful overhead power lines, which I lived  
17 underneath or close enough that it's actually  
18 disfigured my body. And, therefore, you want to put  
19 some more stuff in this area that's going to kill  
20 people. I've lost (unintelligible) and many family  
21 members to do with cancer and power lines. And  
22 there's no studies right now on what you're planning  
23 on doing. You keep mentioning tribal. And there's  
24 more effect on more than just tribal.

25 I believe you need to do more research on your

1 land-use to actually find out who owns the land. And  
2 I'll bet you find out the government does not own it.

3 So, therefore, I'm asking for more studies and  
4 looking into how the government acquired the land if  
5 they think it's theirs. Thank you.

6 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for your  
7 comment.

8 Next up. Welcome.

9 MS. YAZDANI: Thank you.

10 Hi. Teryn Yazdani with Columbia Riverkeeper.  
11 Thanks for being here. I'll keep this super brief.  
12 I'm going to be speaking at the land-use hearing as  
13 well.

14 CHAIR BECKETT: Okay.

15 MS. YAZDANI: But I just wanted to  
16 ask specifically if you-all would be willing to  
17 respond either tonight or in the near future to  
18 something raised in a recent article from the  
19 Columbian. Quoting Julie Carter, staff from the  
20 Columbia Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, specifically a  
21 response to the statement that the applicant is  
22 asserting the project meets the recommendations and  
23 goals for CRITFC's energy vision and that CRITFC  
24 openly stated that this is untrue.

25 I think it's extremely important to address that

1 openly, honestly. And claiming that a project is in  
2 line with an energy vision when CRITFC is saying the  
3 opposite is quite concerning in how you're addressing  
4 this to the public and seems like greenwashing. So  
5 just wanted to put that out there. Thank you.

6 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for the  
7 input and comment.

8 Others in the room who'd like to step forward and  
9 add comment?

10 Let me turn to our online audience just to make  
11 sure if I'm missing a hand that's raised and buy  
12 another couple seconds here for our in-room  
13 participants.

14 Anything else --

15 MS. GRANTHAM: We have --

16 CHAIR BECKETT: -- Ms. Grantham?

17 MS. GRANTHAM: We have three hands  
18 raised online. The first one I'm seeing is Nathan  
19 Baker.

20 CHAIR BECKETT: Nathan Baker, go  
21 ahead.

22 MR. BAKER: Can you hear me?

23 CHAIR BECKETT: We can. Thank you.  
24 Please proceed.

25 MR. BAKER: Thank you.

1 Good evening, Chair Beckett and members of the  
2 Council. My name is Nathan Baker. I'm a senior  
3 staff attorney with Friends of the Columbia Gorge.  
4 And for this hearing, I'd like to speak about two  
5 procedural issues.

6 The process is important. We want to make sure  
7 that the required procedures are properly followed  
8 for this hearing and for EFSEC's process.

9 The first procedural issue is that this hearing  
10 tonight is premature. The duty to conduct an  
11 informational public hearing is triggered by, quote,  
12 the receipt of an application for site certification,  
13 end quote. That's RCW 80.50.090.

14 So that's triggered by an application. Draft  
15 applications don't count. And this is clearly a  
16 draft application. "Draft" is the first word on the  
17 cover page. All of the PDF file names of a draft  
18 application are labeled with the word "draft." The  
19 word "draft" is used more than 200 times in the  
20 document, mostly in the footers.

21 The document contains metadata with internal  
22 comments between the applicant's consultants and  
23 lawyers. The EFSEC website links to all the draft  
24 application materials and describes them as drafts.

25 This is a draft application that is not ready for

1 prime time. EFSEC should not have scheduled the  
2 hearings until after it receives an application, not  
3 a draft application. This hearing is premature, and  
4 it is error to be holding this hearing on a draft  
5 application.

6 Regardless, if and when the applicant submits an  
7 actual non-draft application or converts the draft  
8 application to a final application, that will be,  
9 under the plain language of the statute, the, quote,  
10 receipt of an application for site certification, end  
11 quote, which will obligate EFSEC to hold a new series  
12 of hearings.

13 The other procedural issue involves the members  
14 of the Council. Last night, the appointee by Clark  
15 County to the Council was never mentioned and did not  
16 participate. We're pleased to see Commissioner  
17 Leckie from Skamania County here tonight. But  
18 tonight there was no mention of the city of  
19 Stevenson. Under RCW 80.50.030, Subsection 5, the  
20 City of Stevenson is supposed to appoint a member of  
21 the Council who, quote, shall sit with the Council,  
22 end quote, for hearings involving the site involving  
23 that city.

24 And according to Section 2.1.3.2 of the draft  
25 application, the project is proposed inside the city

1 of Stevenson. That may also be the case for the city  
2 of North Bonneville. The project certainly goes  
3 within a big section of the North Bonneville urban  
4 area. We're not quite sure about the city limits.  
5 But the statute requires city appointees to, quote,  
6 sit with the Council, end quote, for this hearing.  
7 Holding this hearing without their participation  
8 violates the statute.

9 In conclusion, if and when the applicant submits  
10 a non-draft final application, EFSEC will then need  
11 to schedule informational public hearings in each of  
12 the three counties. The relevant county and city  
13 appointees to the Council will need to sit with the  
14 Council for these hearings. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you,  
16 Mr. Baker.

17 Ms. Grantham, who's up next?

18 MS. GRANTHAM: The next speaker is  
19 Kate Murphy.

20 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you.

21 MS. MURPHY: Good day. This is  
22 Kate Murphy. I'm with Columbia Riverkeeper.

23 Can I ask for a point of clarification, Chair,  
24 before I start?

25 CHAIR BECKETT: Sure.

1 MS. MURPHY: I just -- I just --

2 CHAIR BECKETT: Yes, you may.

3 MS. MURPHY: -- wanted to clarify.

4 In yesterday's meeting, we were able to ask  
5 project-specific questions, and I think I heard Chris  
6 mention that that would be okay. So can I ask -- can  
7 I get an answer -- a response to a question?

8 CHAIR BECKETT: If you go ahead and  
9 state your question for the record, and then we'll  
10 see where we're at on time.

11 MS. MURPHY: Oh. Okay. Great.

12 CHAIR BECKETT: Ultimately any  
13 iterative answers that I believe, you know, are  
14 helpful in the moment, at the same time ultimately,  
15 that's at the latitude of the chair. And out of  
16 respect to the group, certainly want to continue  
17 to --

18 MS. MURPHY: Okay. Good.

19 CHAIR BECKETT: -- proceed here,  
20 so -- but please note your question for the record  
21 and your other comments, and we'll start this now.

22 MS. MURPHY: Thank you.

23 I'd start by lifting up Teryn's concern about  
24 potential misrepresentation for CRITFC. And my  
25 question directly is about what type of modeling and

1 research and testing has been done specific to the  
2 Georgia-Pacific pulp and paper mill in Camas,  
3 Washington, which is a known contaminated site that  
4 contains total petroleum hydrocarbons, it contains  
5 polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, polychlorinated  
6 biphenyls, metals, dioxins, and things like that, and  
7 it's got an order for cleanup.

8 So I'm just curious if you could speak to that a  
9 little bit about how that's been addressed in the  
10 project plan. Thank you.

11 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for the  
12 question. I am actually going to ask that we not  
13 answer that question in the moment, given -- I can  
14 appreciate the complexity of it and including from  
15 other past experience on certain cleanups. So I  
16 think we'd all be probably best served if we handled  
17 that more formally. So thank you.

18 MS. MURPHY: Could I just ask  
19 specifically: Has that site been considered based on  
20 the contamination there? That would be helpful.

21 CHAIR BECKETT: Your questions are  
22 being noted for the record, so that's ultimately  
23 really the core function.

24 MS. MURPHY: Oh. Okay. So we're  
25 not doing the same kind of Q & A tonight.

1 CHAIR BECKETT: Yeah.

2 MS. MURPHY: Okay. Then I will  
3 also ask for the record to have some more specific  
4 explanation about, when it says that it's buried  
5 within the sediment of the riverbed, there's a lot of  
6 bedrock. And it seems that that wouldn't be possible  
7 for the entire hundred miles. So how -- how is it  
8 being negotiated through some of those areas where  
9 there might not be the deeper sediment?

10 That's it. Thank you.

11 CHAIR BECKETT: And I'm sorry. Can  
12 you clarify. Was there a specific section of the  
13 river that you were noting was the area that was more  
14 predominant in bedrock or just in general?

15 MS. MURPHY: Well, I mean, they  
16 did -- Chris mentioned they've done a whole scan of  
17 the river, so they -- that would probably be more  
18 informative than my input. But I think throughout  
19 the entire hundred miles, I would be interested in  
20 that. Thank you.

21 CHAIR BECKETT: Understood. Thank  
22 you.

23 I think we may be close. Seeing one more.

24 MS. GRANTHAM: We have one more.  
25 Excuse me if I pronounce it incorrectly. Juan Monje.

1 MR. MONJE: You did connect me.  
2 I'm Juan Monje. I have only -- I have some concern,  
3 but I can -- for the record, I can do two question.

4 One: If this project is meant to serve  
5 residential -- residential and regional clean-energy  
6 goals, why is the main converter station located in  
7 the Rivergate industrial area, where multiple large  
8 data center are being planned?

9 Another one question is: PowerBridge says that  
10 you will respect tribal concerns. Can you list which  
11 tribal nations have formally consented and provide  
12 copies of those letters, please?

13 That's it for now. Thank you.

14 CHAIR BECKETT: Very well. Thank  
15 you, Mr. Monje.

16 And I see that you had posted a question in the  
17 chat, and that's been responded to. I think, if we  
18 can make sure that we have the contact information if  
19 you wish to be contacted in case we need to follow up  
20 just to clarify anything here in the record, that  
21 would be helpful. And you can paste that in chat in  
22 this instance. Thank you again for your  
23 participation.

24 I don't see any other hands raised. Are there  
25 others in our audience this evening who wish to

1 speak? Please come forward.

2 MR. HECHT: Hello. My name is  
3 Martin Hecht, and I'm a 35-year resident of  
4 Stevenson, Washington.

5 And I -- my concern is primarily that this, I  
6 guess, was billed as a public information meeting,  
7 but I don't think it was very well publicized. I  
8 mean, I'm glad that there's other neighbors and other  
9 interested parties here. But I really found out  
10 about it randomly, like, last night and tried to get  
11 some word out today that, you know, that this meeting  
12 was happening.

13 I find it very interesting and intriguing, this  
14 project. I'd love to learn more. But if you're  
15 going to have a public information meeting, I think  
16 you need to try a little harder to, you know, engage  
17 the public.

18 CHAIR BECKETT: Thank you for the  
19 input. And I certainly appreciate that. I think we  
20 all share, you know, the interest in achieving what  
21 you've stated. And obviously, you know,  
22 communicating out and finding everyone that wants to  
23 be found is sometimes a challenge, but ultimately  
24 it's one we need to stick with. And I can just  
25 assure you that we will continue to do so. And

1 wherever we can improve, we will, will be our pledge,  
2 so -- but thank you for stepping forward and calling  
3 that out.

4 Other hands or anyone else in the audience?

5 Okay. Then I am going to conclude our public  
6 informational hearing and meeting at 6:54 p.m.

7 (Meeting concluded at  
8 6:54 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF WASHINGTON ) I, John M. S. Botelho, CCR, RPR,  
2 ) ss a certified court reporter  
3 County of Pierce ) in the State of Washington, do  
4 hereby certify:

5 That the foregoing public informational meeting of the  
6 Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council was  
7 conducted in my presence and concluded on November 18, 2025,  
8 and thereafter was transcribed under my direction; that the  
9 transcript is a full, true and complete transcript of the  
10 said meeting, transcribed to the best of my ability;

11 That I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel  
12 of any party to this matter or relative or employee of any  
13 such attorney or counsel and that I am not financially  
14 interested in the said matter or the outcome thereof;

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand  
16 this 2nd day of December, 2025.

17 \_\_\_\_\_  
18 /s/John M. S. Botelho, CCR, RPR  
19 Certified Court Reporter No. 2976  
20 (Certification expires 5/26/2026.)  
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23  
24  
25