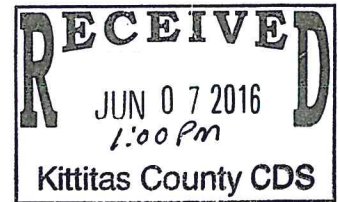


To: Kittitas County Community Development Services

From: Roger Clerf, 6651 Upper Peoh Pt. Rd., Cle Elum, WA

Subject: Comments on the Proposed Iron Horse Solar Farm at 320 S. Caribou Rd.



Gentlemen:

I am sincerely and strongly opposed to the placement of a solar farm facility at the proposed location. This is a commercial/industrial project, one-half mile east of Kittitas, totally out of place in what is prime farm land that has been farmed for 80 or more years using KRD water and zoned Ag-20.

I grew up on my father, Henry Clerf's home place 100 yards east of Caribou Road. I am presently farming land on the south side of Clerf Road directly across from the proposed project.

I can remember when Bill Hanson's great grandfather, W. G. (Bill) Wood and his son Warren moved onto their newly purchased property in about 1946, and operated a dairy farm for many years. After the death of Bill Wood, Warren and his son-in-law, Wayne Hanson, changed the operation to a general farming operation mostly in hay production.

Now, to change the use of as much as 70 acres to a solar farm is completely out of historical character of the neighborhood and would change for the worse the pristine rural character of the area.

Surrounding 70 acres with a high chain link fence would look like some kind of prison compound or a hazardous materials handling area, and would be an eyesore visible for miles.

Agriculture is the economic driving force of Kittitas County and yet we are losing agricultural land to developments of one kind or another at an alarming rate. There are estimates that in the last 50 or 60 years at least 10,000 or more irrigable acres have been taken out of intensive agricultural production in Kittitas County. The rate of loss of ag land will only increase if this solar farm and other such developments are approved. There may be a place for solar farms in nearby sage covered hills but it is not in the prime farm land of the valley.

There is an irrigation water conveyance ditch easement that goes through the project property carrying water to the south to irrigate land owned by Jack Clerf and Carol Clerf Martinez. This ditch must be maintain and kept free of trash and obstructions. Who will do that if the project is approved?

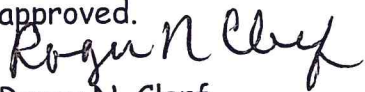
Is there a requirement to keep the project area irrigated and green or will it be allowed to dry up and become a dust bowl full of noxious weeds?

This area is natural habitat for many mammals large and small, many species of birds, rodents, snakes and amphibians. A fenced area will serve to restrict the movement of many of these animals.

The solar farm project and wind farms as well are not economically viable in a stand alone situation in a free market. Instead they are viable only by receiving federal and state subsidies in the form of production payments, tax credits, property tax credits, investment credits and other subsidies at the taxpayers expense. By state law the utilities that buy the output of a solar farm must pay a higher rate than normal market prices and then they can sell it to customers wanting "green" electricity at a higher price. With a different administration at state and federal level these subsidies could be reduced or eliminated.

Will a surety bond be required in the amount sufficient to return the project property to its original natural state when the project is no longer needed or is to be terminated?

For these reasons and many others this Iron Horse Solar Farm should not be approved.


Roger N. Clerf
Cle Elum