

June 6, 2016

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KITTITAS COUNTY
CDS

Kittitas County Community Development Services
Attention: Jeff Watson, Planner
411 N Ruby St.
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Subject: CU-15-00006, Iron Horse Solar Project, OneEnergy Development LLC

Mr. Watson,

My name is Eric Pentico. My wife Sheryl and I live at 4300 Clerf Rd. in Kittitas Co., approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the location OneEnergy Development is proposing to locate the Iron Horse Solar Project. We would like to take this opportunity to oppose the proposed development. We do not feel that utilizing prime farm ground to build a solar project is a good or proper use of the proposed location. Hundreds of acres of usable farm ground are lost daily to development and other uses. This particular piece of property, currently prime hay production ground, should not be subjected to the same fate.

The proposed project at this location does not seem consistent with the intent of 'rural character' in the Washington State Growth Management Act. We believe this project will not maintain the current rural character of the area. Rural Character is defined under the Growth Management Act, RCW 36.70A.030 Part 15. According to the definition, Rural Character refers to the patterns of land use and development established by the county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan: a) In which open space, the natural landscape, the vegetation predominate over the built environment; b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas; c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities; d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development; f) That generally do not require the extension of urban government services; and g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and groundwater and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

In particular, the proposed project will displace a local population of deer that has been observed on multiple occasions utilizing the property for browsing and possible cover. Area raptors including red tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and northern harrier hawks (*Circus cuaneus*), which have been seen utilizing the property to forage after the hay has been cut in the summer and during the idyl winter season will also be negatively impacted. Caribou Creek, a salmonid stream containing rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), traverses through the

proposed property and will likely be negatively impacted due to disruption of the current hydrological system, due to the solar panels preventing moisture from reaching the ground, and increased sedimentation will likely result due to land disturbance activities. Another potential negative impact may be to local residences due to glare from the solar cells. This may only occur periodically, but it could affect passing traffic on the roadway, creating a very dangerous situation for all vehicles in the area. Finally, we feel that the proposed project will have a very negative impact on property values of parcels both in the immediate area and potentially all along Clerf Rd.

Because of the mentioned impacts, we feel that the proposed project would be better suited at a different location.

Sincerely,

Eric D. Pentico
Sheryl A. Pentico
Eric Pentico and Sheryl Pentico