+

Kittitas County CESP Stakeholder Meetings and Discussions with Tribal Staff

August 2026

Version 2.0

Purpose & Background

To support the Kittitas County Clean Energy Siting and Permitting (CESP) Project potential code updates and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Kittitas County conducted a series of meetings with tribal staff, utility providers, state and federal agencies, environmental organizations, agricultural groups, emergency response agencies, educational institutions, local governments, and community stakeholders.

These discussions were intended to gather technical expertise and local perspectives, identify opportunities and concerns, and better understand local perspectives regarding utility-scale wind, utility-scale solar, battery energy storage systems (BESS), geothermal energy, and small modular reactors (SMRs). In the meetings, participants were asked a series of questions regarding energy siting criteria, permitting processes, environmental and cultural resource considerations, infrastructure needs, mitigation measures, and emergency response considerations for the potential code updates. Feedback from these discussions will help inform the County's evaluation of clean energy technologies, development of the Draft EIS, and future amendments to County regulations.

Meetings and Attendees Summarized

Date	Participant Group	Who We Met With	Primary Meeting Objectives
July 21, 2026	Staff of Yakama Nation	Yakama Nation Fisheries and Cultural Resources representatives (2 people attended)	Discuss tribal interests, treaty rights, cultural resources, water resources, siting considerations, coordination, and permitting processes for proposed clean energy facilities.
July 21, 2026	General Stakeholders	Local governments, agencies, military representatives, chambers of commerce, county departments, EFSEC, public works, public health, and other community stakeholders (15 people attended)	Introduce the project, gather input on energy facility siting and permitting, discuss workforce development, agrivoltaics, battery storage, aviation considerations, and implementation challenges.
July 21, 2026	Utility Stakeholders (BPA)	Bonneville Power Administration representatives (2 people attended)	Discuss transmission infrastructure, interconnection requirements, future energy demand, utility-scale energy development, and transmission constraints.

Date	Participant Group	Who We Met With	Primary Meeting Objectives
July 21, 2026	Utility Stakeholders (PSE)	Puget Sound Energy representatives (3 people attended)	Discuss utility-scale solar, BESS, geothermal feasibility, agrivoltaics, transmission considerations, code development, and industry best practices.
July 21, 2026	Staff of Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Tribal staff and Traditional Territories Program representatives (2 people attended)	Discuss tribal consultation processes, cultural resource protection, tribal interests, coordination, environmental concerns, and responsible clean energy siting.
July 23, 2026	Environmental Groups	Conservation organizations, environmental nonprofits, Audubon representatives, and habitat advocates (5 people attended)	Gather feedback on habitat protection, shrub-steppe conservation, agrivoltaics, emerging technologies, siting criteria, environmental mitigation, and long-term environmental impacts.
July 23, 2026	State and Resource Agencies (WDFW, Ecology, DNR)	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Ecology, and Department of Natural Resources staff (7 people attended)	Discuss available technical resources, siting guidance, permitting considerations, geothermal opportunities, wildlife concerns, PEIS resources, and mitigation approaches.
July 23, 2026	Central Washington University (CWU)	CWU facilities, geology, and sustainability staff (3 people attended)	Discuss geothermal energy opportunities, the CWU geothermal project, siting considerations, renewable energy technologies, and EIS alternatives.
July 23, 2026	Fire Districts and Emergency Response Agencies	County fire districts, fire marshals, fire chiefs, and DNR representatives (6 people attended)	Discuss fire safety, wildfire risks, emergency response capacity, BESS hazards, suppression strategies, access requirements, training needs, and mitigation standards.
July 23, 2026	Staff of Snoqualmie Indian Tribe	Tribal cultural resource staff (1 people attended)	Discuss tribal coordination, cultural resource protection, permitting processes, treaty rights, and opportunities to improve tribal engagement throughout project development.
July 24, 2026	Agricultural Stakeholders	Kittitas County Conservation District, Farm Bureau, agricultural producers, cattlemen's organizations, and USDA representatives (2 people attended)	Discuss impacts on agricultural lands, agrivoltaics, dual-use opportunities, irrigation concerns, preservation of agricultural productivity, and siting considerations for clean energy facilities.
August 13, 2026	Yakama Nation Followup	Tribal fisheries staff	Follow-up discussion with additional staff members on coordination, cultural resource protection, permitting processes, and opportunities to improve tribal engagement throughout project development.

Key Findings

Recurring concerns included the preservation of shrub-steppe habitat, wildlife connectivity, water quality and availability, agricultural productivity, cultural and tribal resources, and public safety. Stakeholders also expressed a strong interest in ensuring that future county regulations provide clear siting criteria, meaningful mitigation requirements, enforceable maintenance standards, and adequate review processes for emerging technologies such as battery energy storage systems (BESS), geothermal energy, and small modular reactors (SMRs). Collectively, the discussions suggest that future policy development should focus on five overarching resource themes: agriculture, shrub-steppe and wildlife habitat, cultural and tribal resources, water resources, and public safety and emergency response.

Solar (Including Agrivoltaics)

Comments

Strong support for agrivoltaics and dual-use agricultural systems.

Concerns that solar development could permanently convert agricultural land.

Concern that solar would direct projects into intact shrub-steppe habitat.

Interest in commercial, rooftop, parking lot, canal, floating solar, and transmission corridor.

Impacts on heat island effects, viewsheds, and scenic corridor compatibility.

Concerns about wildlife movement and fencing.

Concern about relationship between MW threshold and Solar Zone 3 Overlay.

Siting / Development Regulations

Prioritize disturbed lands and lower-conflict areas and developed properties.

Avoid core shrub-steppe habitat, wildlife corridors, and high-connectivity habitat areas.

Require viewshed analysis in scenic corridor areas such as the I-90 Scenic Byway.

Establish agrivoltaic performance standards for grazing, crop production, or other dual-use activities.

Mitigation Measures

Ecological management strategies including shrub-steppe mitigation banking or habitat replacement ratios, wildlife-friendly fencing and corridor preservation, and vegetation management.

Farmland conservation easements and agricultural land preservation programs.

Decommissioning and land restoration requirements.

Wind

Comments

Wildlife connectivity, habitat fragmentation, aviation, and emergency response issues were recurring concerns.

Concerns regarding turbine fires, collapse, and decommissioning.

Questions regarding the existing 7 MW threshold and overlay boundaries.

Siting / Development Regulations

Require aviation notification and military coordination in training corridors.

Avoid wildlife corridors and high-value habitat areas.

Establish evidence-based setbacks.

Require decommissioning financial assurance.

Mitigation Measures

Bird and bat monitoring.

Wildlife corridor preservation.

Fire detection and suppression technologies.

Aviation coordination protocols.

Battery Energy Storage Systems

Comments

Significant concern regarding thermal runaway, fire suppression, emergency response, environmental risks, disposal, and facility security.

Concern that existing county code lacks clear BESS standards.

Requests for more detailed technical review and stakeholder education.

Siting / Development Regulation

Establish separate standards for utility-scale and smaller-scale BESS facilities.

Require emergency response plans, fire protection plans, and first responder coordination.

Require site access standards and circulation roads.

Require technology-specific safety documentation and shutoff systems.

Mitigation Measures

First responder training funded by applicants.

Fire containment design standards.

Gravel buffers and vegetation management.

Hazardous materials management and end-of-life disposal plans.

Geothermal

Comments

Generally viewed as a lower-impact technology, but concerns focused heavily on groundwater and water rights.

Questions about advanced geothermal technologies and fracking-related impacts.

Siting / Development Regulations

Differentiate among geothermal technologies.

Require consistency with Ecology and DOE permitting.

Require hydrogeologic studies, water rights review, and reinjection plans.

Mitigation Measures

Aquifer monitoring.

Water quality and groundwater protection measures.

Construction best management practices to avoid contamination

Nuclear (SMR)

Comments

Stakeholders repeatedly identified uncertainty around regulations, waste, security, water use, and environmental impacts.

Tribes raised concerns related to historic impacts from nuclear development and long-term waste considerations.

Interest in studying SMRs proactively before proposals emerge.

Siting / Development Regulations

Require detailed water supply and consumption analyses.

Require security plans and emergency management coordination.

Establish robust pre-application and interagency consultation requirements.

Require tribal consultation and cultural review.

Mitigation Measures

Waste management plans.

Water resource protection measures.

Emergency preparedness and security planning.

Appendix A Meeting Agendas and Notes

Agencies

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically, discuss the role of the Ecology PEIS and additional resources available to the County and project team for both the EIS and code development.

Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Diane Butorac	Department of Ecology	dbut461@ecy.wa.gov	Yes
Scott Downes	WA Dept. Fish and Wildlife	scott.downes@dfw.wa.gov	Yes
Michael Ritter		michael.ritter@dfw.wa.gov	Yes
Jennifer Nelson		jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov	
Danile Didricksen		daniel.didricksen@dfw.wa.gov	
Cassandra Weekes		cassandra.weekes@dfw.wa.gov	Yes
Emily Grabowsky	WA Dept. Fish and Wildlife – Solar & Wind Projects	emily.grabowsky@dfw.wa.gov	
Michelle Huppert		michelle.huppert@dfw.wa.gov	
		solarandwind@dfw.wa.gov	
Scott Nelson	WA Dept. of Natural Resources	scott.nelson@dnr.wa.gov	
Ana Shafer		ana.shafer@dnr.wa.gov	
James Woodward		james.woodward@dnr.wa.gov	
Lee Florea		lee.florea@dnr.wa.gov	
Luke Warthen		luke.warthen@dnr.wa.gov	
Martin Mauney		martin.mauney@dnr.wa.gov	
Amanda		sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov	Yes
Joshua Armetta			Yes
Jim Woodward			Yes
Talon Smith, Haily Martin	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

Meeting Details

Meeting/s Details: 1hr meeting, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Ecology, DNR	July 24, 2026	10AM	Ecology, DNR Webex Link
WDFW	July 23, 2026	10:30AM	WDFW Webex Link

General Agenda

Project overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied
- Current siting and permitting
  - Solar and wind overlays
  - BESS, geothermal, and SMRs not as clear of directions

Discussion & Questions ~30-40min

- Discuss resources available to aid this study: Ecology PEIS, WDFW, Geothermal potential and favorability maps from DNR, Least siting solar conflict map from WSU Energy program
- Siting considerations
  - Favorable conditions/areas in the County
  - Exclude unfavorable conditions/areas - but understanding that some are avoid not exclude

Next Steps and Follow Up

Additional Questions

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- Both WDFW and Ecology have studied utility scale wind and solar but have they received any direction surrounding small modular reactors in Washington?
- Technology is so new there is not a lot of guidance or info currently available; mostly federal
- Could DNR expand upon what they know for the County regarding geothermal?
- What future opportunities and challenges do you see for the County with these facilities or their siting?
- How to stay in the loop about the Geothermal Collaborative process?
- Are the map layers sent over available in GIS?
- Outside of the Ecology Programmatic EIS and WDFW solar and wind guidance, where might the County team find additional resources to assist in the following?
  - Siting criteria in the County
  - Permitting processes
  - Setting appropriate setbacks
  - Submittal requirements
  - Mitigation measures

Meetings Notes

WDFW Meeting

Concerns

Shared their Least Conflict Solar maps, which composite wildlife habitat, ranchland, farmland, and solar suitability layers to identify lower-conflict development areas; free signup required at database website

Updated solar and wind guidelines published last year, recommended for use as surrogate guidance for BESS and other ground-impacting technologies, since wildlife impacts are likely similar to solar (fencing, ground footprint)

Siting

Key areas recommends avoiding: biodiversity areas and corridors (PHS layers), areas of very high connectivity value; some edge flexibility is acknowledged

WISRY program (Washington legislature-funded, with WDFW, DNR, and State Conservation Commission): maps highest-priority shrub steppe habitat; dark red = core healthy areas, orange = restoration potential

Kittitas County sits at the center of the state, with significant east-west and north-south wildlife connectivity corridors running through it, resulting in extensive overlap of sensitive layers

Wind vs. solar comparison: wind farms typically lack security fencing so wildlife can move through; most solar facilities are fenced, blocking wildlife movement

WDFW GIS layers (PHS, WildCat, connectivity, WISRY) are accessible via a map viewer and can be downloaded; if download is unclear, contacting the database team directly (based in Corvallis) is recommended

Megawatt Thresholds

Questioned whether parsing projects by megawatt output is meaningful from a wildlife impact standpoint, a solar facility has wildlife impacts regardless of size

County acknowledged the basis for existing megawatt thresholds (e.g., the "seven" figure) is unclear due to staff turnover and is being revisited

Solar Parks (European Model)

Raised the concept of "solar parks", smaller (≤40 acre) facilities with panels elevated 6–8 meters, allowing smaller tractors to operate underneath and preserving agricultural productivity

Noted as a potentially useful model for areas where small parcels could be solar-suitable but are important for irrigated hay/alfalfa production

Industry has noted elevated panels carry significant added financial cost

Early Engagement with WDFW

Emphasized contacting WDFW early, before lease commitments are made and at early project design stages, to allow layout flexibility and minimize conflict

Noted willingness to do informal reviews of draft maps or code language before formal SEPA commenting, as they have done for the county's CAO and comp plan

WDFW can quickly consult internal biologists (e.g., Ellensburg office) and return feedback to consultants

Balancing Competing Interests

WDFW acknowledged that many sensitive layers overlap across Kittitas County, making total avoidance unrealistic; guidance is to avoid the core of corridors and prioritize areas with multiple overlapping layers of concern

Flexibility exists even in sensitive areas if project layouts are adjusted (e.g., shifting east or closer to highways)

Appreciated the provision of the maps of lands and data we are considering for the project. Example: ranchland map

Ecology

Transmission is a challenge for clean energy development. Encourage options without transmission construction/ framework for siting existing t-lines. Difference between exploratory process requirements and development.

SMRs; keep in mind the difference between SEPA and NEPA (currently changing) may be areas where they don't directly align

Just released legislative update on geothermal; final report June 2027. Can sign up for email list to get notifications of updates https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/clean-energy/geothermal

https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/summarypages/2606013.html

Developing mitigation that can be used for different projects

Will there be a socio-economic analysis?

Recommends agrivoltaics analysis

Permitting mostly through ecology for water impacts related to geothermal energy

DNR

When granting easements other ROWs must do analysis that activity is in best interest of trust

Developers must adhere to all relevant permitting departments

Asked about tribal outreach as part of this project. Project team shared ongoing conversations through tribal meetings

Agricultural Groups

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Anna Lael, District Manager	Kittitas County Conservation District	anna.lael@kccd.net	Yes
Mark Charlton	Kittitas County Farm Bureau	mark@charltonfarmsinc.com	
Kady Porterfield	Kittitas County Farm Bureau (2nd contact)	kadyporterfield@gmail.com	Yes
Ryan Stinger	Cattleman's Association	rjstinger@gmail.com	
Amber Charlton	Charlton Farms	amber@charltonfarmsinc.com	
	Cattlemen's Association	frontdesk@wacattle.org, kwinter@jccumming.com	
Ian Sims	USDA	ian.sims@usda.gov	
Erin O'Kelley, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

Meeting Details

Meeting/s Details: 1 hr virtual meeting

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Agricultural Group	July 24th	11:30AM	Agriculture Group Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss energy types being studied
- Share current siting and permitting process
  - Solar and wind overlays
- BESS, geothermal, and SMR considerations

DRAFT

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

- What interests, opportunities, concerns, or specifics would you like the County to address as part of the project's efforts?
- Such as siting areas, changes to current processes, concerns about technologies

Next Steps and follow-up

Additional Questions

- What are your thoughts on dual use of lands for agriculture and energy production?
- How might energy facilities impact agricultural production, grazing lands, or irrigation systems?
    - Are there specific concerns related to certain uses?
- In a case where dual use between agriculture/energy generation was a county option, what standards would be needed to balance both uses to avoid the conversion of ag lands?
        - What amount combined incremental impacts compromise the characteristics of agricultural lands in the County?
    - Examples can include the mix of economic factors, development pressures, and seasonal weather conditions/patterns.
    - Are their certain factors that play a larger role?

Meetings Notes

Agriculture & Grazing Land Coexistence

Raised the core concern: energy projects should not permanently remove viable agriculture or grazing land from production, given the already declining rate of agricultural land

Zone 2, while "not designated agriculture" from a solar permitting perspective, is still zoned as agricultural land (Ag 20 or commercial ag) and can be used for grazing

Strong interest in agrivoltaics, co-locating livestock grazing with solar panels, particularly by elevating panels high enough for cattle to graze underneath

Sheep are most commonly discussed for under-panel grazing; goats can damage panels by climbing; cattle require higher panel mounts and smooth poles to prevent rubbing

Maintaining healthy vegetation under panels benefits both fire management and panel efficiency

Shade from panels may reduce evaporation and extend grazing season

Suggested making it as difficult to site solar on actively farmed ground, and instead prioritizing higher desert and grazing lands on the valley edges

Farm Bureau stance: supportive of private property rights but advocates for encouraging agricultural land to stay in agricultural use; strongly prefers local control over state mandates

Solar Panels Over Irrigation Canals

Raised the idea of placing solar panels over irrigation canals, referencing examples in California

Benefits noted: shading reduces evaporation (a key concern for Cascade Irrigation District) and could significantly reduce aquatic weed growth

DRAFT

County noted that linear solar installations face challenges around switching infrastructure and transmission line connections, but the idea remains viable

BPA easement corridors were also mentioned as potential locations for linear solar, as that ground is already disturbed

Mitigation Measures Discussed

Agrivoltaic design requirements: require panels to be mounted high enough for livestock grazing; mandate smooth poles to prevent cattle rubbing

Maximum land conversion cap: calculate and establish a county-wide limit on the amount of land that can be converted to energy uses

Temporary vs. permanent use distinction: temporary energy installations (e.g., wind turbines with decommissioning timelines) could be treated differently; require land restoration after removal

Soil protection: require protection of soil during construction and operation; prevent contamination of soil and watershed from installed equipment

Developer–livestock producer partnerships: encourage or require developers to partner with livestock producers to maintain land around energy projects

Farmland protection easements: Yakima County discussions where developers would contribute to conservation easements as mitigation; North Yakima Conservation District explored this model

Neighboring County Benchmarks

Yakima and Grant counties highlighted as agricultural powerhouses worth examining for permitting precedents

Franklin County is beginning a critical area banking program (pay a fee to offset mitigation); Grant County already has such a program, County is monitoring these for potential application to agricultural land

DRAFT

Central Washington University (CWU)

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically geothermal energy and the CWU geothermal project status

Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Delano Palmer	CWU	delano.palmer@cwu.edu	Yes
Elvin Delgado		elvin.delgado@cwu.edu	
Michael Pease		michael.pease@cwu.edu	Yes
Clay Arango		clay.arango@cwu.edu	
Megan Walsh		megan.walsh@cwu.edu	
Jennifer Lipton		liptonj@cwu.edu	
Carey Gazis		cgazis@geology.cwu.edu	
Lori Sheeran		lori.sheeran@cwu.edu	
Susan Kasperi		susan.kaspari@cwu.edu	Yes
Erin O'Kelley and Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

Meeting Details

Meeting/s Details: 1 hr virtual meetings

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
CWU	July 23rd	1pm	CWU Webex Link

General Agenda

Project overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss energy types being studied
- Current siting and permitting pathways
  - Solar and wind overlays
  - BESS, geothermal, and SMRs not as clear of directions

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

DRAFT

- What thoughts, interests, opportunities, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities and related siting and permitting processes being studied?
- What can CWU tell us about the CWU geothermal energy facility and how that work has been going?
    - The county is reviewing whether emerging or advanced geothermal facility technologies are being considered. The Washington Geothermal Experience
    - What specifics would you like the County to address as part of this project with the studied uses?

      Examples
        - Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
        - Siting criteria in the County
        - Areas favorable/unfavorable to the county
        - Permitting processes
        - Coordination
        - Setbacks
        - Fees
        - Submittal requirements
        - Mitigation

Next steps and follow up

Meetings Notes

Geothermal

CWU is currently implementing geothermal on campus; the most intensive permitting involves DOE water rights, aquifer care, extraction depth, and reinjection plans, including public and tribal comment periods

County code does not currently differentiate between geothermal technologies (conventional vs. advanced, open vs. closed loop, fracking vs. non-fracking)

Recommendation: county permitting should be aligned with, and not conflict with, DOE ecology permitting

EIS Scope

Consider both open and closed systems at a high level and let project-level EISs address the specifics

Concern: Lumping Geothermal and SMR Together in Alternative 3, but County explained this was the conditions of the contract.

Roofscapes / Distributed Solar

Public interest noted in rooftop solar on commercial buildings (e.g., WinCo, Fred Meyer)

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

No explicit code reference or precedent yet; jurisdiction depends on reaction type, fission must go through EFSEC, fusion may go through local government or EFSEC

SMR companies often require NDAs, which would likely need to be executed by each agency (university, city, county) separately

DRAFT

Recommend establishing an MOU between agencies before engaging SMR companies to protect inter-agency communications during early preliminary evaluations

SMRs are billions of dollars vs. geothermal at millions, scalability near-term lies with geothermal, but early SMR engagement is still worthwhile

Solar Overlay

Advocated strongly for revisiting the solar overlay, citing WSU's least conflict solar siting study

Current overlay pushes large projects to the valley outskirts, threatening intact shrub steppe habitat (e.g., Schnebley project, ~1,300 acres)

Suggestion: allow more solar on already-degraded valley floor agricultural or ranch lands, which can be returned to original use later, unlike destroyed shrub steppe

Agrivoltaics and dual-use solar/agricultural land has come up frequently in stakeholder discussions

The 7 MW threshold (distinguishing administrative vs. full conditional use permits) was questioned; origins of that number are unknown

No specific opposition to moving solar to valley floor has been heard yet, but ag stakeholder meetings have not occurred

Wind Overlay

Alternative 2 includes assessment of whether wind overlay boundaries need to be updated

The 7 MW threshold (distinguishing administrative vs. full conditional use permits) was questioned; origins of that number are unknown

Energy Demand & Capacity

BPA and PSE manage demand forecasting through master agreements and 10-year contract increments with entities like CWU and the City of Ellensburg

County is posing the capacity question to utilities in a separate stakeholder meeting

Mitigation

Concern raised that some energy projects have lacked transparency with the public (specifically Invenergy's wind project near Vantage)

Puget Sound Energy's Wild Horse project was cited as a strong positive example of habitat protection, bird safety, and public access

Schnebley-Cooley solar project (originally Invenergy) has been sold to PSE; still pending due to unresolved conservation land mitigation requirements

Suggestion: build a commissioning plan requirement and transparency standards into the code, modeled on Wild Horse's approach

Wildlife Fencing & Elk Passage

Concern raised about large solar/wind facilities building perimeter fencing that blocks wildlife movement, particularly elk and disrupting corridor connections

DRAFT

County is exploring what fencing regulations it can set locally vs. what is dictated by state/federal/homeland security standards

IRA Tax Credits & Incentives

Raised IRA direct pay tax credits as a potential financial mechanism for clean energy projects

For universities and institutions, tax credits are returned to the state rather than retained, unclear if the same applies to cities or counties

County code could potentially include requirements that a percentage of power generated stays local rather than being exported

Student Involvement & Campus Engagement

CWU expressed strong interest in student participation, environmental studies, data analysis, and public engagement during the draft EIS comment period

DRAFT

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Staff

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically discuss coordination, noticing, and thoughts/feelings/concerns with the energy uses.

Attendees

Name	Tribe or Organization	Email	Attended
Karen Capuder	Confederated Tribes of the Colville	karen.capuder.adm@colvilletribes.com	Yes
Sam Rushing		sam.rushing@colvilletribes.com	Not Available
Jordan Bovee		jordan.bovee.hsy@colvilletribes.com	Not Available
Darnell Sam		darnell.sam.adm@colvilletribes.com	Not Available
John Sirois		john.sirois.adm@colvilletribes.com	Yes
Milton Davis		milton.davis.adm@colvilletribes.com	Not Available
Kiana Sam		kiana.sam.adm@colvilletribes.com	Not Available
Zoë Tapert, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

Meeting Information

Meeting Details: 1hr meetings, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	July 21, 2026	3pm	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Webex Link

NOTE: At the time of the meeting, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation were under a wildfire evacuation order, which limited Tribal staff availability. The County intends to schedule a follow-up meeting to provide additional Tribal staff an opportunity to participate.

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied
- Share current permitting processes

  - Solar and wind overlays
- The current statuses with BESS, geothermal, and SMRs

Discussion & Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these facilities?
- Examples
  - Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
  - Siting criteria in the County
  - Areas favorable/unfavorable
  - Permitting processes
  - Cultural studies?
  - Coordination with the Tribe

Next Steps and Follow up

Additional Questions

- How can energy siting respect access to Tribal lands and cultural sites, especially those tied to treaty rights?
- What would Tribe like to see regarding permitting processes and long-term planning?
- What high-level resources or interests would the local Tribes be concerned or interested in as it relates to their impacts
  - If disclosed, assume confidentiality or high-level responses
- What Tribal resources or interests exist in the County for the County team to be aware of?
  - If disclosed, assume confidentiality or high-level responses
- How to account for Tribal cultural sites in siting considerations and permitting processes without requesting location disclosure?
- What processes would be beneficial to all parties (Tribes, County, potential developers)?
  - Cultural studies or coordination with Historic Preservation Officer with Tribe/s?

Meetings Notes

Grant County as a Model, Best Practices Shared

Example key practices from Grant County relationship:

SEPA mitigated determination of non-significance (MDNS) is conditioned on successful tribal cultural resource consultation under Section 106

Cultural resources designated as a critical area since ~2002–2004, triggering critical area review when cultural resources are present

Development agreement step beyond SEPA/CUP, including surety bonds for decommissioning

Mitigation banking code for shrub-steppe: proponents must fund purchase of 2 acres for every 1 acre disturbed; county must purchase within 6 years (not hold funds indefinitely)

Pre-application process, early landscape review before applications are deemed complete, modeled also in Clark County

Voluntary tribal consultation even without a mandate, always addresses letters to the tribal chair, CC'ing natural resources director and cultural resources director/THPO

Explained county commissioners can pass a resolution to override the 170-day SEPA clock on a project-by-project basis, important for tribes and understaffed counties needing adequate review time

Communication

The Colville Tribe's Traditional Territories Program plays a unique advisory role to the business council and should be included in communications about environmental or cultural resource matters

Tribal elections happen frequently, maintaining current contacts is essential; GOIA's website is often out of date, sometimes listing deceased chairs

Staff offered to broker introductions to the Colville Business Council for county partners rather than having counties approach cold

Concerns - Cultural Resources & Environmental

Concerns about EFSEC overriding local zoning (e.g., Whitman County's Harvest Hills Wind Project) and the importance of counties tightening code to prevent applicants from routing around local authority

Advocated for using the term "cultural wealth" rather than "cultural resources" to reflect that these are not simply extractable assets

Tribes often do not immediately know their concerns for a project area, Elders often must be interviewed, fieldwork conducted, and reports written; this capacity gap is not currently funded or accounted for in review timelines

Emphasized: even "low-value ag land" or shrub-steppe carries deep cultural, ecological, and intergenerational significance; early engagement is critical

Tribes support clean energy but stress it must be sited responsibly, not on culturally significant lands, not near freshwater sources, and with genuine consideration of seven-generation impacts

Example raised: Badger Mountain Solar Project, a site surrounded by Colville creation stories, was approved by the state despite tribal objections; the governor's response was dismissive.[1]

Explained recent Advisory Council on Historic Preservation announcement of new Section 106 regulations, increasing urgency for counties and tribes to work together to protect cultural resources at the local level

Economic & Agricultural Context

Water impacts are a major concern for all energy types, tribes and farmers both depend on reliable water and need to understand potential water use/contamination risks before projects are sited

Farmers in Douglas County are under economic pressure (diesel over $6/gallon, low CRP rates) and are entering solar leases to survive so responsible siting is important.

[1] The application for Badger Mountain Solar Project was withdrawn as of August 3, 2026.

Transmission capacity remains a bottleneck, there is a rush to build generation without the grid infrastructure to support it (e.g., Han Royal Slope queue not expected until 2032)

Environmental Groups

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Nicky Pasi	Mountain to Sound Greenway Trust	nicky.pasi@mtsgreenway.org	Yes
Mitch Long, Executive Director	Kittitas Conservation Trust (KCT)	mlong@kittitasconservationtrust.org	
Steve Loitz	Kittitas Audubon	boardmembers@kittitasaudubon.com	Yes
Norm Peck		shkwavrydr@gmail.com	Yes
Melissa Mark, Executive Director	Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council	melissa@washingtonrcd.org	
General Information		info@washingtonrcd.org	
General Information	Kittitas County Field & Stream	admin@kittitasfieldandstream.org	
Cheri Marusa	Forterra	cmarusa@forterra.org	Yes
Connor Currier		info@forterra.org	Yes
Erin O'Kelley, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

Meeting Details

Meeting/s Details: 1hr meeting, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Environmental Groups	7/23/26	9am	Environmental Group Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied

DRAFT

- Current permitting pathways
    - Solar and wind overlays
- BESS, geothermal, and SMR – more uncertain in process

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these uses?

Next Steps and follow up

Additional Questions

- What adjustments to current overlays they would be interested in?
    - Thoughts on the dual use of lands for wind and solar? If so, what thoughts do they have on ensuring preservation of agricultural lands is kept in mind?
- What siting criteria (favorable/unfavorable) would they be interested in for these facilities?
    - Already have criteria in mind, but from their perspective...
        - What areas need to be completely excluded?
        - What is an area to avoid and prepare mitigation for if approached?
        - What areas feel favorable?
- What other people or resources should the project team be talking to/reviewing?
    - Data/resources planning on using
    - Already aware of the Least Conflict Siting tool by WSU Energy Program
    - PEIS for utility scale wind and solar by Ecology
    - Geothermal potential and favorability maps by Dept of Natural Resources

Meetings Notes

Data Centers and Behind-the-Meter Energy

Raised concerns regarding potential future development of data centers and server farms.

Acknowledged that data centers are outside the scope of the current study but suggested the County should evaluate its future policy approach toward these facilities.

Asked whether the project is intended to proactively address emerging energy technologies before significant development pressure occurs.

Asked whether data centers could independently develop behind-the-meter clean energy facilities on their own property.

Interested in understanding whether permitting requirements differ for behind-the-meter energy systems compared to utility-scale energy facilities.

Noted that Energy Northwest is working with Amazon on data center development and Small Modular Reactor (SMR) initiatives in Benton County.

Shared that Amazon is exploring SMRs as a potential behind-the-meter energy source for future data centers.

Suggested following up with Commissioner Kory regarding how data center development relates to the scope and objectives of this project.

DRAFT

Agrivoltaics

Expressed concerns about agrivoltaic development and associated land use impacts.

Asked whether the County is incorporating findings from the Washington State University solar research into its analysis.

Questioned whether regulations could encourage solar development in urban and commercial areas rather than focusing solely on utility-scale facilities.

Suggested exploring solar co-location opportunities within utility transmission corridors and powerline rights-of-way.

Shared support for agrivoltaic approaches.

Asked whether regulations could be established to ensure agrivoltaic projects remain appropriately scaled and managed.

Interested in guardrails that would prevent projects from overextending agricultural lands or intensifying uses beyond intended purposes.

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

Raised concerns regarding the life cycle impacts, security risks, energy consumption, and disposal of battery storage systems.

Emphasized the importance of ensuring mitigation measures are proven effective before being incorporated into County code.

Requested additional analysis of BESS technologies, noting they are emerging technologies and stakeholders may not yet know all the relevant questions to ask.

Expressed interest in more detailed information regarding potential environmental and operational impacts.

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Nuclear Energy

Expressed concerns regarding waste management, security, and long-term environmental considerations associated with fission technologies.

Requested special mitigation measures addressing nuclear waste and facility security.

Requested more detailed study and evaluation of SMR technologies as part of the project's review of emerging energy technologies.

Environmental Protection and Habitat Conservation

Raised concerns about groundwater contamination, particularly related to fracking activities.

Emphasized the importance of protecting shrub-steppe habitat and other sensitive ecological resources.

Noted concerns regarding potential impacts to threatened, endangered, and species-of-concern habitats.

DRAFT

Requested assurance that proposed mitigation measures are practical, effective, and enforceable before implementation.

Solar

Asked whether solar facilities could be compatible with utility transmission corridors and rights-of-way.

Suggested linear solar arrays may be suitable in certain disturbed or managed landscapes.

Asked whether solar facilities contribute to localized heat island effects and what environmental impacts may result.

Noted that portions of Zone 2 are located within the I-90 Scenic Byway corridor and expressed concern that solar development may conflict with viewshed protection requirements.

Economic and Community Benefits

Asked whether the project is evaluating potential economic benefits associated with renewable energy development.

Expressed interest in whether project revenues or mitigation contributions could support public purposes, including shrub-steppe protection and other environmental programs.

Requested consideration of how community benefit programs or mitigation funding could be incorporated into project implementation.

Project Scope and Process

Referenced the Teanaway Solar project as an example where some mitigation measures were not successful.

Asked about the planned public engagement process after mitigation strategies are developed.

County team explained the project schedule and anticipated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) release process.

Asked whether the study applies only to County-owned lands or also evaluates energy development opportunities and impacts on private lands.

DRAFT

Fire Districts

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically, discuss battery energy storage systems (BESS) and thoughts for the siting and permitting of these facilities.

Attendees

Name	Organization/Position	Email	Attended
Dan Young	Kittitas County Fire Marshall	dan.young@co.kittitas.wa.us,	Yes
Marvin Douvier		marvin.douvier.sh@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Brandon Schmidt	First District 1 (Thorp)	kcfd1@fairpoint.net	Yes
Dan Johnson	Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue (District 2)	johnsond@kvfr.org	Yes
Jeremy Haberman		habermanj@kvfr.org	Yes
		prevention@kvfr.org	
Chris Moen		moenc@kvfr.org	
Pat Clerf		clerfp@kvfr.org	
Chris Helgeson	Kittitas Valley Fire District 3 (Easton)	kcfd3102@yahoo.com assitchief.eastonfd3@gmail.com	
William Rose	Kittitas Valley Fire District 4 (Vantage)	vantagekcfd4@gmail.com	
Jay Wiseman	Kittitas Valley Fire District 51 (Vantage)	jwiseman@spfire.org	
Troy Jackson	KCFD #6 (Lake Cle Elum)	tjackson@kcfpd6.com	
Savannah Davies	Fire District 7	sdavies@kcfd7.com	Yes
Aaron Lowe		alowe@kcfd7.com	
Matthew Lund	Cle Elum Fire Department	mlundh@cleelum.gov	
Ed Mills		emills@cleelum.gov	Yes
Jeff Adams Henry Mosiman	Roslyn Fire Department	jeff.adams@ci.roslyn.wa.us henry.mosiman@roslynfire.org	
Colton Kerns	South Cle Elum Fire Department	colton_kerns180@outlook.com sfiredept@gmail.com	
Dallas Barron	DNR (Southeast Region)	dallas.barron@dnr.wa.gov	
Court Martin		court.martin@dnr.wa.gov	
Erin O'Kelley and Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

DRAFT

Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

When are we meeting?

Meeting/s Details: 1hr meeting, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Fire Districts	July 23rd, 2026	2:30PM	Fire District Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied
- Current permitting processes
  - Solar and wind overlays
  - No explicit references to BESS or SMR technology under current County Code.

Discussion & Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these facilities?
- Examples
  - Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
  - Siting criteria in the County
    - Areas favorable/unfavorable to the county
  - Permitting processes
    - Coordination
    - Setbacks
    - Fees
    - Submittal requirements
    - Mitigation

Next steps and follow up

Additional Questions

- Are there energy uses the fire districts are more interested and/or concerned about than others?
- Do you have concerns about wildfire threats to these facilities?
- Are there specific siting areas, access considerations, or fire response capacity issues the County should consider?
- Current procedures for solar facilities require a Fire Marshal-approved fire management plan. Does this still work, or should the County consider additional details or updates?
- Are there specific design or operational standards that need to be addressed for containment, fire safety, environmental impacts, or emergency planning?
  - Should there be certain containment measures required for BESS facilities?

DRAFT

- What mitigation measures would you like to see considered?

Meetings Notes

BESS (Battery Energy Storage Systems)

Primary concerns: thermal runaway, shutoff systems, and training for fire agencies, Savannah Davies noted this based on experience from California

Fire districts are not able to suppress BESS fires, strategy is containment, wetting surroundings, and letting the fire burn out

A new fire code update in May (Dan Young, via State Building Code Council) will include significantly more BESS provisions

An existing BESS proposal in Kittitas County required training for first responders as a permitting condition, this is a model to build from

Recommendation: require roads around BESS facilities and gravel/no grass surface treatment

Solar

Fire access roads around solar facilities are needed to minimize wildland fire spread, particularly with prevailing winds and dry grass

Visited a solar site recently where weeds were tall enough to block sunlight on panels, a major ignition risk

Concern about absentee solar companies that secured grants to build but are no longer present to maintain vegetation

Current fire management plan requirement (approved by fire marshal) exists for solar but is considered insufficiently enforced

Recommendation: county code should set enforceable weed height/management standards that apply even to EFSEC-permitted projects, since county code can apply post-installation

Striking the right balance between vegetation clearance for fire safety and conservation/habitat protection is important

Wind Turbines

Sagebrush Wind Farm experienced two electrical fires in turbines about six months apart, fire burned internally from bottom to top; suppression was limited to blocking air vents

Wild Horse turbine was monitored for risk of collapse and did eventually collapse before a demolition permit was issued; power was shut off beforehand

Concern about a catastrophic collapse during summer when the turbine is charged, current code may not adequately address this scenario

Training provided by wind companies has been limited to walkthroughs, not operational fire response training

DRAFT

- Smoke/heat detection inside turbines is becoming standard, but suppression systems (clean agents, condensed aerosols, inert gases) are not currently required
- No current fire code regulates suppression systems in wind turbines; this could be addressed via county ordinance (can be more restrictive than state code)
- Decommissioning concern: wind turbines approaching 20-year lifespans, unclear if EFSEC process covers teardown obligations, or if the county could be left with the cost

Geothermal

- Fire risk is primarily the building itself, pumps and heat exchangers are mechanical and containable
- Considered lower risk than BESS; fire agencies have more familiarity with geothermal systems
- CWU's geothermal plant is close to going online, already present in the county

SMR / Advanced Nuclear

- No fire codes exist for small modular reactors, a major gap noted by Dan Young
- No known interest in siting SMRs in Kittitas County currently, but included in study to get ahead of potential future applications
- SMRs already being developed in Benton/Franklin County (associated with Amazon facilities), proximity makes preparedness relevant

Cross-Cutting Themes

- Training for all first responders (including sheriffs who often arrive first) is a critical need across all energy types
- "Million flavors" of batteries and solar panels, different products have different fire and environmental toxicity profiles; code could potentially specify acceptable technology types
- Proximity vs. remoteness tradeoff: siting facilities near population centers improves fire service access, but remote siting is harder to service, both need to be weighed
- Undergrounding powerlines (as in the Palisades fire context) is a mitigation option; PSE is already investing in undergrounding in the Cle Elum area
- Data centers are a growing energy demand driver and may attract co-located energy generation, worth tracking
- Local control is the primary goal: keeping permitting local allows Kittitas County to build meaningful mitigation plans and maintenance enforcement into approvals
- Mitigation plans must have enforcement teeth, plans that exist on paper but cannot be enforced are insufficient

DRAFT

General Stakeholders

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

Attendees

See the attendee list at the end of the document.

When are we meeting?

Meeting/s Details: 1hr virtual meeting

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
General	July 21, 2026	10AM	Stakeholder Meeting Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP Project and EIS Study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss energy facilities being studied
- Share the current permitting procedures
  - Solar and wind overlays
- BESS, geothermal, and nuclear

Discussion & Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these facilities?
- Examples
- Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
- Siting criteria in the County
- Areas favorable/unfavorable to the county
- Permitting processes
- Coordination
- Setbacks
- Fees
- Submittal requirements
- Mitigation
- Workforce development

Next Steps and follow up ~ 3-5 min

DRAFT

Meetings Notes

Agrivoltaics & Co-location

- Raised experience with solar/ag co-location in the Midwest, specifically grazing animals (sheep) beneath solar panels on a lease basis
- Co-location not currently well incorporated into Kittitas County code but was raised during scoping comments
- Noted grazing (sheep) co-location is workable, but hay production (timothy hay) is incompatible with solar panels due to harvesting equipment constraints
- Beehive/honeybee co-location raised by Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce; Washington State's agrivoltaics definition includes livestock and beehives, to be assessed in environmental review
- Shared experience with community-scale solar (1–3 MW arrays) on 25–30 year leases that returned land to ag use without conversion, lower impact and better community reception than large commercial projects
- Reference documented studies on agrivoltaics and offered to share them

BESS Regulations (City of Ellensburg)

- Raised concern that there are no environmental risk or safety guardrails for battery storage in current county code
- BESS is a rapidly changing landscape with real risks; regulations seen as important to get ahead of
- Raised the question of tiered BESS regulations, distinguishing large-scale standalone facilities from small rapid-deploy units at substations
- EIS approach: analyze large-scale BESS impacts first, then apply a size-down approach for smaller scale; specific code tiers to be determined after draft EIS release and BOCC direction
- More stakeholder consideration anticipated once the Draft EIS is issued

Aviation

- Military (including Navy Growlers) fly as low as 200 feet in Kittitas County airspace
- Requested a viable notification and coordination process for any projects in low-altitude airspace used for training
- Offered to share a Best Management Practices document for all WA state jurisdictions and conceptual language, plus map data of training routes
- Concerned about staff turnover breaking coordination continuity and potential life-safety issues
- Aviation impacts (height, bird/bat migration) confirmed to be considered as part of wind facility environmental review

Transmission & Solar Scale Considerations

DRAFT

Transmission scope in EIS includes generation tie-in lines but not broader regional transmission infrastructure

EFSEC has prepared a Transmission Programmatic EIS for regional transmission; referenced as the relevant resource beyond project scope, Transmission Programmatic EIS | EFSEC

Noted important distinction between commercial-scale and community-scale solar, different impacts, transmission needs, and community reception

Some agricultural-designated zones in the Midwest experience did allow community-scale solar via conditional use with requirements such as glare studies and soil studies

Follow-Up Needs

Public Health

- Are there specific points of interest for public health as it relates to the CESP Project?
  - Are there interests or concerns regarding the selected energy uses to study?
  - Does public health have thoughts on siting criteria for such potential uses? Such as…
    - Proximity to/from certain uses, facilities, natural features.
    - Areas that are favorable, unfavorable, exclude completely

Noxious Weed Control Board

- Are there specifics the Noxious Weed Control Board would like to provide input in as part of the CESP Project?
  - The current procedures call for a noxious weed management plan, should there be an update to this process or requirement?
- Are there specific areas of concern in the County for noxious weeds?

List of Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Kimberly Peacher	Northwest Training Range Complex	kimberly.peacher@navy.mil	Yes
Robert Bright		robert.d.bright10.civ@army.mil	
Mark Flores		mark.d.flores4.civ@army.mil	Yes
Jenae Churchill		jenae.n.churchill@usace.army.mil	
Mark Gardwohl	Yakima Training Center	mark.a.gradwohl.civ@mail.mil	
DAHP	Washington State DAHP	sepa@dahp.wa.gov	
Russell Mau	WA State Department of Health	russell.mau@doh.wa.gov	
Jacob Prilucik	WSDOT	jacob.prilucik@wsdot.wa.gov	
		scplanning@wsdot.wa.gov	
		aviationlanduse@wsdot.wa.gov	
Jennifer Hoff	Bureau of Reclamation	jhoff@usbr.gov	

DRAFT

Ken Graham	Washington State Parks	ken.graham@parks.wa.gov	
John Ernster		john.ernster@parks.wa.gov	
Rachel Mazzacavallo		rachel.mazzacavallo@parks.wa.gov	
Real Estate		real.estate@parks.wa.gov	
Andrew Kerlee		andrew.kerlee@parks.wa.gov	
	Bureau of Land Management	blm_or_sp_mail@blm.gov	
Jenae Church	Army Corps of Engineers	jenae.n.churchill@usace.army.mil	
Jeff Adams	City of Roslyn	jeff.adams@ci.roslyn.wa.us	
Planner		planner@ci.roslyn.wa.us	
Public Works		publicworks@ci.roslyn.wa.us	
Mike Engelhart	City of Cle Elum	mengelhart@cleelum.gov	
Debbie Lee		dlee@cleelum.gov	
Virgil Amick		vamick@cleelum.gov	
Shannon Johnson		planning@cleelum.gov	Yes
Ryan Bakers	City of Kittitas	ryan.baker@cityofkittitas.com	Yes
Christa Stream		christa.stream@cityofkittitas.com	Yes
Scarlett Young		scarlett.young@cityofkittitas.com	Yes
Darin Yusi	City of Ellensburg	yusid@ci.ellensburg.wa.us	
Public Works		pubworks@ci.ellensburg.wa.us	
Community Development		comdev@ci.ellensburg.wa.us	
Paul Meyer		meyerp@ellensburgwa.gov	
Craig Jones		jonesc@ci.ellensburg.wa.us	
Stacey Henderson		hendersons@ellensburgwa.gov	
Rebecca Springer		springerr@ellensburgwa.gov	Yes
Buddy Stanavich		stanavichm@ellensburgwa.gov	
Kelle Vandenberg		vandenbergk@ellensburgwa.gov	Yes
Ryan Lyyski		lyyskir@ellensburgwa.gov	
Mark Rud		rudm@ellensburgwa.gov	Yes
Town of South Cle Elum	Town of South Cle Elum	townofsouthcleelum@gmail.com	
Federal Communications Commission	Federal Communications Commission	pra@fcc.gov	

DRAFT

EFSEC	EFSEC	efsec@efsec.wa.gov	
Amy McGuffin	Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce	amy@kittitascountychamber.com	Yes
Kelee Hodges	Kittitas County Department of Public Works	kelee.hodges.pw@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Candie Leader		candie.leader@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Tate Mahre		tate.mahre@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jackie Sharp		jackie.sharp@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Samantha Cox		samantha.cox@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Josh Fredrickson		josh.fredrickson@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Rebecca Cruse		rebecca.cruse.pw@co.kittitas.wa.us	
	Kittitas County Department of Public Health	publichealthinspectors@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jeremy Larson	Kittitas County Building Dept.	jeremy.larson@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Steph Watterson		steph.mifflin@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
	Kittitas County Noxious Weed Control Board	weeds@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Kimberly Larned	Forest Service	kimberly.larned@usda.gov	
Zoë Tapert, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
David Goltry	Aviation Safety, Vagabond Heliport, Yakima Training Center		Yes
Amy Moon	EFSEC		Yes
Sara Randolph	EFSEC		Yes
Melissa Schumaier	Environmental Health Manager for Public Health		Yes

DRAFT

Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Staff

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically discuss coordination, noticing, and thoughts/feelings/concerns with the energy uses.

Attendees

Name	Tribe or Organization	Email	Attended
Adam Osbekoff	Snoqualmie Tribe	adam@snoqualmietribe.us	Yes
Steve Moses		steve@snoqualmietribe.us	
		dahp@snoqualmietribe.us	
Erin O'Kelley, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	Chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jeremy Johnson		Jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jamey Ayling		Jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Bradley Gasawski		Bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Ellie Myers		Ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	

Meeting Information

Meeting Details: 1hr meetings, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe	July 23, 2026	4:00pm	Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied
- Share current permitting processes
  - Solar and wind overlays
- The current statuses with BESS, geothermal, and SMRs

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these facilities?

- Examples
  - Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
  - Siting criteria in the County
  - Areas favorable/unfavorable
- Permitting processes
  - Cultural studies?
- Coordination with the Tribe

Additional Questions

- How can energy siting respect access to Tribal lands, cultural sites/resources, especially those tied to treaty rights?
- What would Tribal staff like to see regarding permitting processes and long-term planning?
- What high-level resources or interests would the local Tribes be concerned or interested in as it relates to their impacts
  - Assume confidentiality or high-level responses
- What Tribal resources or interests exist in the County?
  - Assume confidentiality or high-level responses
- How to account for Tribal cultural sites in siting considerations and permitting processes without requesting location disclosure?
- What processes would be beneficial to all parties (Tribes, County, potential developers)?
  - Cultural studies or coordination with Historic Preservation Officer with Tribe/s?

Meetings Notes

Concerns

Solar

Siting in culturally sensitive areas is the primary concern; limited ground disturbance overall

Wind

Viewshed impacts are a concern

Geothermal

Tribal sovereignty must be respected; potential aquifer/groundwater contamination is a major concern; government-to-government consultation required (not just staff-level)

Nuclear/SMR

Historical harm to tribal nations (e.g., Navajo Nation and uranium/yellowcake) cited; concerns include uranium mining, waste disposal, maintenance byproducts, not just energy production

Cross-cutting concerns

Sacred sites and culturally sensitive areas for all energy types; air quality, water quality, plants, animals deemed sensitive or relevant; above- and below-ground cultural resources

Environmental and cultural resources are considered one and the same by tribes

Communication

- Communicate with each individual tribe separately; tribes are sovereign nations, not part of the general public
- Reach out to as many relevant tribal departments as possible: cultural, environmental, fisheries, hunting/gathering, and tribal council
- Each tribe approaches project reviews differently, do not assume a one-size-fits-all process
- Recommended study types: ethnographic studies, archaeological studies, and environmental studies
- For cultural site disclosure: treat sensitive site identification as case-specific during individual project review, rather than requesting general disclosure upfront

Mitigation

- Funding ethnographic studies
- Restoration work (e.g., shrubsteppe habitat)
- Grants for language revitalization or other cultural programs
- Youth programs
- Access to energy for tribal communities

Other Comments

- Encourage solar on parking lots and flat/south-facing rooftops to reduce heat island effect; vertical axis wind turbines (VAWTs) on north sides of buildings for micro wind generation

Utility Meetings

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

Attendees

Name	Organization	Email	Attended
Matt Boast	Kittitas PUD	matt.boast@kittitaspud.com	
Kyle Bennett		kyle.bennett@kittitaspud.com	
Jamie Murray	BPA	jcmurray@bpa.gov	Yes
Nancy Wittpenn		nawittpenn@bpa.gov	Yes
	Northwest Power and Conservation	info@nwcouncil.org	
Carryn Vande Griend, PSE Local Government Affairs	PSE	Carryn.VandeGriend@pse.com	Yes
Patrick Robinson		Patrick.Robinson@pse.com	Yes
Brian Carrico		Brian.Carrico@pse.com	Yes
Zoë Tapert, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		Yes
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	Chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jeremy Johnson		Jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Jamey Ayling		Jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Bradley Gasawski		Bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes
Ellie Myers		Ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	Yes

When are we meeting?

Meeting/s Details: 1hr virtual meetings

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
General Utility Group	July 21, 2026	12pm	General Utility Webex Link
PSE	July 21, 2026	1:30pm	PSE Webex Link

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
    - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project

    - Discuss energy facilities being studied
- Current siting and permitting
    - Solar and wind overlays
    - BESS, geothermal, and SMRs

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

- Are there interests, concerns, or specifics they would like the County to address as part of the project's efforts?
    - Such as siting areas, changes to current permitting processes, concerns about technologies
- What does the current energy portfolio breakdown look like for the County?
    - Current energy supply, demand, and types
- What does the future energy generation portfolio look like for the County?
    - As in the overall energy generation makeup/mix
    - What is the likelihood of certain energy uses coming to the County? If known.
        - What input is there surrounding agrivoltaics and dual use of lands?
- Do they have data to share surrounding expectations for future energy demand?
- BPA: That would be with transmission planners and engineers – different group
- Are they available to help the project team with the following information/questions:
    - How much energy is produced locally vs elsewhere?
    - How much of this energy stay locally vs exported?
    - Where is it exported to? (in state vs out of state)

Next Steps and Follow up

Additional Questions

- What mitigation measures would help protect a facility should it be threatened or impacted by a wildfire?
- What is the status of County public services and utilities? Is there sufficient capacity to support energy facilities during emergencies or peak demand periods?
    - Any barriers currently faced?
- What energy capacity does PSE and Kittitas PUD have currently/what is the current and future energy need?
- What workforce is typically generated from the construction and operation of these facilities?

Meetings Notes

July 21, 2026

General Utility Meeting

BPA's Role in the Permitting/Interconnection Process

> Applicants seeking to connect to BPA facilities must go through the local utility (e.g., PUD) first; the local utility then works with BPA to design the connection
>
> BPA may still require a land use application even if a project isn't directly connecting to BPA equipment, e.g., if facilities cross under BPA transmission lines or access roads

Obtaining a project agreement with BPA to bring a system online can take several years; land use review is typically faster if designs are ready

Two separate BPA processes are required for grid connection: (1) an interconnection request (connecting to the system) and (2) a transmission service request (moving power from point A to point B)

BPA is not a land manager and does not control siting decisions, but has authority over its easements and rights-of-way

Siting consideration: Locating facilities closer to existing BPA (or local utility) infrastructure is significantly cheaper for developers, as they avoid building long transmission lines

Grid Access Transformation (GAT)

BPA is developing a Grid Access Transformation (GAT) initiative to streamline and speed up the process of bringing new customers and projects online, driven by growing Pacific Northwest energy demand and policy priorities

More information available at bpa.gov → Transmission → Grid Access Transformation

BPA Observations on Emerging Energy Technologies

BPA has not yet processed a completed final environmental review for geothermal facilities and has not seen SMR projects come through yet

BESS projects have come through BPA, most commonly in conjunction with solar or other generation projects rather than as standalone facilities

BPA's typical interconnection projects remain solar and wind

PSE Meeting

BESS

Confirmed BESS does not need to be tied to a renewable generation source, standalone BESS is a distinct product with its own developers

County gets inquiries about BESS every few months, sometimes standalone, sometimes tied to solar

Offered to share their model ordinance for BESS facilities as a reference

Focus of this EIS is utility-scale BESS; residential/small commercial scale was agreed to be a separate matter not requiring the same land use permitting framework

Geothermal

PSE has no geothermal resources in its fleet

PSE raised the question of whether Kittitas County has suitable geology for geothermal, noting it may not be worth significant study time if the geology doesn't support it

Wild Horse wind project went through EFSEC, so PSE has no direct experience with the county's local permitting process for generation facilities

Community interest in geothermal appeared high at scoping events due to its perceived low visual and land impact

Solar & Agriculture (Zone 1)

PSE raised the idea of solar as an interim land use in Zone 1 agricultural areas, given that solar has a relatively light touch on land (piles can be removed, soils can recover) and changing water availability may make some land less viable for farming

Suggested pairing this with water rights banking while solar is operational, preserving landowner rights and irrigation infrastructure

Agrivoltaics / co-location discussed: two scenarios identified, active grazing (e.g., sheep for vegetation management) vs. crop production under elevated panels

Sheep cited as the most practical livestock for co-location; cattle require much taller, costlier panel mounts

PSE referenced a 130 MW Montana project using sheep for vegetation management

Vaughn Hill project (Klickitat County) cited as a local agrivoltaic example with a PSE power contract

Community comments showed a divide: some oppose using farmland for solar, others oppose using shrubsteppe; finding balance will be challenging

County noted obligation to balance Growth Management Act agricultural protections

Solar over irrigation canals / floating solar: Raised as a concept worth ensuring code doesn't prohibit;

Yakima Tribe received a federal grant for a canal solar project (funding issues prevented construction); floating solar referenced in China and Oregon

Code Quality & Process Considerations

Setbacks identified as one of the most contentious and legally vulnerable code elements; must be evidence-based and justifiable (e.g., Whitman County's 7-mile wind setback cited as extreme)

PSE recommended reviewing Grant County's renewable code as a strong reference

Yakima County recently passed a solar and BESS code that allows agricultural use with property owner permission, noted as a useful recent example

Amendment process: PSE emphasized the need for a streamlined minor amendment pathway within the conditional use/hearing examiner process, since project designs often change between permitting and final engineering without materially affecting public impacts

Programmatic EIS benefit: PSE suggested the EIS could proactively dismiss certain impact categories (e.g., traffic for solar) so they don't have to be re-litigated in individual project reviews

DFW Guidelines: PSE's position is that Fish and Wildlife guidelines are guidance, not code criteria, and should not be codified as mandatory requirements

Biomass generation was raised as a relevant topic given wildfire mitigation thinning in upper county but was not included in this study, it was not selected by the BOCC when the initial list of technologies was scoped

Transmission & Infrastructure

PSE emphasized that many factors must align for a project to be viable, interconnection, landowner participation, transmission distance, and overly restricted siting areas further limit viability

Washington State ranked 49th out of 50 in renewable additions due to development difficulty

County asked about PSE GIS data for substations and transmission lines to inform suitability mapping; PSE willing to respond to a formal written request with appropriate security considerations

Other Topics

Local vs. exported energy: Community sentiment noted around electricity being generated locally but transmitted elsewhere; Ellensburg has a small community solar program at West Rotary Park

PSE offered use of their Wild Horse Renewable Energy Center meeting space and a facility tour

Yakama Nation Staff

Purpose

Learn more about the project, ask questions, and share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas to help inform the EIS and potential code updates.

- Specifically discuss coordination, noticing, and thoughts/feelings/concerns with the energy uses.

Attendees

Name	Tribe or Organization	Email	Attended
Timothy Batin	Yakama Nation Fisheries	batt@yakamafish-nsn.gov	Yes
John Martin		marj@yakamafish-nsn.gov	Yes
Jeff Kozma		kozj@yakamafish-nsn.gov	
Paris Valdez		valp@yakamafish-nsn.gov	Yes
Jessica Lally	Yakama Nation Cultural Resource Program	jessica_lally@yakama.com	
		enviroreview@yakama.com	
Zoë Tapert, Talon Smith	Kimley-Horn		
Chad Bala	Kittitas County	Chad.bala@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jeremy Johnson		Jeremy.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Jamey Ayling		Jamey.ayling@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Bradley Gasawski		Bradley.gasawski@co.kittitas.wa.us	
Ellie Myers		Ellie.myers@co.kittitas.wa.us	

Meeting Information

Meeting Details: 1hr meetings, virtual

Group	Date	Time	Meeting Link
Yakama Nation	July 21st	9am	Yakama Nation Webex Link
Yakama Nation Energy and Natural Resources	August 13th	11am	Webex

On August 13th, a follow-up meeting was held with additional Yakama Nation staff.

General Agenda

Project Overview ~20min

- Introduce the CESP project and the EIS study
  - Discuss goals and potential outcomes of the project
  - Discuss the energy types being studied
- Share current permitting processes
  - Solar and wind overlays
- The current statuses with BESS, geothermal, and SMRs

Discussion and Questions ~30-40min

- What thoughts, interests, or concerns do you all have regarding the energy facilities being studied?
- What specifics would you like the County to address with these facilities?
- Examples
    - Large big topic challenges with the energy uses/facilities
    - Siting criteria in the County
    - Areas favorable/unfavorable
    - Permitting processes
    - Cultural studies?
    - Coordination with the Tribe

Next Steps and follow up

Additional Questions

- How can energy siting respect access to Tribal lands and cultural sites, especially those tied to treaty rights?
- What would Tribes like to see regarding permitting processes and long-term planning?
- What high-level resources or interests would the local Tribes be concerned or interested in as it relates to their impacts
- If disclosed, assume it would be confidential or high-level response
- What Tribal resources or interests exist in the County?
- If disclosed, assume it would be confidential or high-level response
- How to account for Tribal cultural sites in siting considerations and permitting processes without requesting location disclosure?
- What processes would be beneficial to all parties (Tribes, County, potential developers)?
    - Cultural studies or coordination with Historic Preservation Officer with Tribe/s?

Meetings Notes

Water Resources

Water use is a primary concern, particularly for nuclear fission facilities which require large amounts of water (e.g., proximity to the Columbia River)

Staff emphasized preserving both water quality and water quantity ("water is always very important")

Critical Areas & Shrubsteppe Habitat

Concern raised that wind and solar facilities are often pushed into shrubsteppe areas because they are perceived as less valuable, but shrubsteppe is ecologically important habitat

Shrubsteppe is critically important to the Yakama Nation for cultural resources and traditional foods - it is not considered undesirable

Noted that large energy facilities involve significant ground disturbance (trenching for wiring, roads, etc.), which can have major cultural resource impacts

A project in the Columbia River Gorge was cited as a cautionary example - it is viewed very unfavorably by the Yakama Nation, including a perceived discrepancy between commitments made to tribal council and the governor's final approval

Even small disturbances can significantly impact cultural plants and resources; it "doesn't take much to impact them"

Suggested that opening privatized traditional lands for traditional practices could be a mitigation measure

SEPA & Tribal Participation

SEPA is often the only formal tool the Yakama Nation has to participate in the permitting process

SEPA cultural resources sections are frequently filled out incorrectly by private landowners

SEPA is being progressively eroded through legislative exemptions and alternate processes, which reduces tribal participation opportunities

Administrative reviews often have no public notice or comment period, cutting tribes out of the process entirely

Streamlined Permitting Concerns

A streamlined permitting process is a "two-edged sword" - it benefits project proponents but can disadvantage the public and consulting parties like the Yakama Nation

Consultant clarified that the EIS outcome does not exempt future projects from SEPA; individual projects will still be subject to environmental review

Communication

The county already has a positive practice of proactively contacting the Yakama Nation on Shoreline Master Program proposals with a comment window; this model could be extended to clean energy permitting

A government-to-government meeting between county commissioners and tribal council was suggested as an option

Concern - internal mail delays at the Nation mean comment periods need to be sufficiently long

Timely, early sharing of the draft EIS across Yakama Nation departments (energy, cultural resources, natural resources) was strongly encouraged.**Follow-up Meeting Notes**

Energy Demand

Questions were raised regarding how data centers relate to the CESP process and energy infrastructure planning. Clarification was provided that data centers are outside the scope of the EIS and the County has a 6-month moratorium in place.

Discussion emphasized the importance of considering energy generation, transmission, storage, and energy demand holistically when evaluating future energy development.

Tribal Engagement

Tribal engagement throughout the entire project development and permitting, from pre-application through final approval, was shared as an important consideration.

Geothermal Energy

Questions were raised regarding staffing capacity and technical expertise needed to review and permit geothermal projects.

Ongoing geothermal collaborative process efforts and lessons from other jurisdictions with more established geothermal programs were identified as potential resources for future permitting considerations.

Small Modular Reactors

Radioactive waste management and long-term waste storage were identified as important considerations for SMRs

Historical and ongoing contamination concerns associated with nuclear waste in Washington State were discussed as relevant considerations when evaluating nuclear technologies within the EIS.