

From: [Jen Beaulieu](#)
To: [Chace Pedersen](#)
Subject: Schnebly Coulee Solar Farm Project CU-24-00003 comment
Date: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 2:13:36 PM

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Dear Kittitas Co Staff Planner Chace Pedersen,

We're writing in regards to the proposed Schnebly Coulee Solar Farm Project CU-24-00003 . Our family lives at and owns the single family residence located at 2280 Sage Hills Dr. Our house is located directly to the east of and less than 500 feet from the proposed location of the solar farm.

In general, our family supports green energy production when produced responsibly with care for local wildlife, residents and minimizing destruction of native habitats. While we don't outright oppose this project, we do have concerns.

Firstly, due to the close proximity of the proposed solar farm to our home, fire prevention and the ability for fire personnel to extinguish a fire before it spreads to our property is of utmost concern. It appears, based on the site plan of the solar farm that there is very minimal buffer between the solar panels and the property line/fence as well as very limited access for firefighting personnel and equipment to access much of the site. Given the strong and frequent WNW winds in our area, this project will significantly increase wildfire risk to our home. A Kittitas Fire Chief spoke at a recent HOA meeting and said that "it's not IF a wildfire occurs in our area, but WHEN". We are on wells here with water limited to minimal domestic use only. We don't have irrigation or adequate allowable use of well water to mitigate fire risk on our own by wetting surrounding vegetation in case of near by fire.

Secondly, not only will our family be financially negativity impacted by this project but our quality of life and ability to enjoy our property will be diminished. The value of our property and the marketability if we need to sell will decrease. Studies have been conducted showing that solar farms can raise the surrounding temperature 5 to 7 degrees fahrenheit. Due to the close proximity and the winds blowing the artificially heated air directly to our home, in the already hot summers we have, our AC costs will increase. In addition, due to the glare from the panels along with the hotter outdoor temperatures, the project may negatively impact the habitability of our property and surrounding land for both people and wildlife during summers.

Thirdly, given that solar panels have a life expectancy of approximately 30 years, if at that time or at any time, the project is abandoned, what guarantees will there be that it will be properly and responsibly decommissioned and that the land not be left to become a fire hazard as a field of cheat grass and weeds? If it's left unmanaged and abandoned, our fire risk will further increase and our property values will drop even more.

Fourthly, this project will certainly negatively impact local wildlife, especially the elk herds who utilize this land. The Sage Hills neighborhood keeps over 90% of the land as native shrub steppe and accessible to all wildlife. The proposed fence, which will not only enclose the solar farm and prohibit the elk from entering, will also fence the elk and coyotes within the Sage Hills neighborhood on the west and south sides, potentially creating a stressful situation for the wildlife and a dangerous situation for residents of Sage Hills.

While considering approving this project as it is proposed in its scope and location, we ask that Kittitas Co staff not overlook the negative impact it will have on near by residents, property owners and wildlife.

Thank you for your time,
Beaulieu Family
2280 Sage Hills Dr.