

Eureka Times Standard, May 17 2019 ; Opinion □ Columnists

My Word: New wind farm a big surprise; By Rick Pelren; Posted May 17, 2019 at 6:24 pm

I attended the Rio Dell city Council meeting on May 7, and was surprised to learn about the Humboldt wind farm that is to be built on Bear River Ridge above Rio Dell. I was also informed that the public comment period ends on June 5. If I hadn't been at the city council meeting, I never would have known about the proposed wind farm.

Why was I not informed about this? The developer, Humboldt Wind LLC was required to aggressively contact the citizens of this area and informed them of the project. Upon checking with my friends in Rio Dell and Fortuna, I found that they were as shocked as I was that this wind farm above Rio Dell has been in the works, and is scheduled to break ground in a matter of just a few months from now. My friends and I are all sophisticated people (or at least we like to think we are), and we all feel that we've been left in the dark about this. We feel that, instead of a small notice in the back of the paper, Humboldt wind LLC should have sent a notice by mail to each and every household in the affected area. They did not do their due diligence.

Additionally, there are several problems associated with building the 600 foot tall windmills on Bear River Ridge:

1. High seasonal rainfall combined with a rapid runoff rate on unstable soils deliver large amounts of sediments from these and other drainages that may discharge into the Eel River (This came directly off their own draft EIR).
2. The 500 foot tall structures will be an eyesore.
3. The proposed project is located in a seismically active zone, with many documented landslide areas. This would only cause more sedimentation in the Eel River.
4. The 117,000 volt overhead transmission line (40 foot) right-of-way would require the clear-cutting of trees for 38 miles.

The above four items represent only a portion of the problems inherent in this project (to get more information the reader can google HUMBOLDT WIND). You may also call the COMMITTEE FOR SENSIBLE DEVELOPMENT at 707-476-3249 for more information.

I, for one, will be at the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors' meeting Tuesday, May 21, to demand that the public input period be extended to July 5, and that every household receive a notice by mail. I request your support at the Board of Supervisors' meeting.

The public has the right to be informed about this project so that we can make an informed decision about it. Rick Pelren resides in Fortuna.