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To Whom it may concern,

I am commenting to you today concerning the Humboldt Wind, LLC proposed construction and operation of a wind energy project located atop Monument Ridge and Bear River Ridge, south of Eel River Valley.

I myself am finishing up my final year as a Student at Humboldt State University, and am completing my degree in Environmental Science, with an emphasis in renewable and sustainable energies. I understand more than many others the necessity and importance of the implementation of projects like this one in order to combat climate change, ocean acidification, and to reduce the overall CO2e emissions of the State of California. I also understand that we must invest in more projects like this one, quickly, if we are going to reach the goal proposed in 2018 (SB100) to have “100% of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100% of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045.”

Throughout my education, I have also come to understand the importance of protecting our biological resources, especially in the State of California; it is containing some of the most diverse ecosystems in the world. That is why I am commenting today to request that further study be conducted upon the impact of important Avian species, and specifically the protection of the endangered species Marbled Murrelet. This project is planned close to two Globally Important Bird Areas, Humboldt Bay and Cape Mendocino Grasslands. This project is also planned within the area of the Northern Pacific Flyway. Both these IBA’s, and the Pacific Flyway are important to numerous avian species, two of which to note are Federally listed as threatened; the Northern Spotted Owl, and the Bald Eagle. The Bald Eagle is listed as endangered in California, along with the Marbled Murrelet.

I understand that a study was conducted to determine the amount of Murrelet’s that passed over the proposed project site. If my understanding of this study was correct, it was only conducted between April, and September 2018. In my personal this is not nearly enough time to determine on average how many Murrelet’s fly over this specific area, nor what factors may increase or decrease this type of behavior. Also, it would be prudent to conduct a study to determine what Raptor species, and also if either of the previously mentioned threatened species (Northern Spotted Owl, and Bald Eagle) will be passing over this project area at any time throughout a given year.



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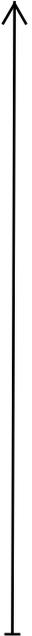
Just this last winter, I saw a Bald Eagle in my childhood hometown of Los Osos, CA for the first time in my life. I was in shock at the encounter, because I was so excited that an individual of that species had made to back to our region. I knew that they have returned in very limited numbers, but not in a significant amount to allow me to justify seeing one. It was a rare site, and a very rewarding experience. Many scientists, biologists, ecologists, and natural historians etc. spent countless hours, days and years to help nurture and save this species from extinction, along with a large sum of Federal and State funds. This is the exact same case with the Marbled Murrelet.

Please, conduct a longer study, and find a proper mitigation effort that would not allow for the loss of any threatened or endangered avian species. Perhaps this could be a time for engineers to design some sort of sheath or casing around the blades to protect them from birds. This obviously would cut down on efficiency, and would cost a large sum in research, development, production and installation, but it is necessary.

This is a problem that will occur with a large portion of all Wind Turbine energy projects, and I know that Humboldt County is resourceful enough to find a solution if they are so willing to attempt one.

Thank you,

Christopher Zotovich



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(Cont.)