

June 7, 2019

From: Frances Ferguson
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To: Humboldt County Wind Project Planner
County of Humboldt
Planning and Building Department
3015 H St.
Eureka, CA 95501
CEQAResponses@co.humboldt.ca.us

RE: Comments on DEIR for Terra-Gen Humboldt Wind Project on Monument Ridge/Bear River Ridge

Dear Humboldt County Wind Project Planner:

I am a long-term Humboldt County resident who in years past has visited the proposed project site. I am concerned about climate change and am therefore in favor of alternative energy development. However, after reviewing the DEIR for the above project, I have concluded that it does not justify the industrial-scale despoliation of the environment that would occur if the magnificent landscape of Monument Ridge/Bear River Ridge was converted to a wind farm. The following are my major concerns:

Visual blight

The wind turbines, up to 60 in number and possibly 600 feet high, would be visible for miles. The accompanying concrete pads, road development, transmission lines and operations and maintenance facility would convert a gorgeous, minimally developed landscape near the coast, increasingly rare in California, into an industrial zone. The rural beauty of Monument Ridge/Bear River Ridge is of high value to both Humboldt County residents and the tourists who help support our economy.

Threats to birds

The DEIR notes threats to birds. The wind turbines would kill raptors, rare marbled murrelets and bats and would disrupt bird migration routes. I am particularly concerned about the California condors that will soon be re-introduced here by the Yurok Tribe and Redwood National Park. I suspect they will be soaring in that area.

Degradation of coastal grassland

Coastal grasslands have become increasingly rare on the California North Coast. With the cessation of traditional Indian burning, many have been invaded by forest and scrub. These grasslands support native plants and birds and are enjoyed by humans. The massive turbine complex described in the DEIR would destroy even more grassland habitat. The earth-moving

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and road building equipment used in construction of the facility would carry seeds, facilitating invasion by invasive, non-native plants. Since the concrete pads would remain in the ground after the towers are dismantled, the grassland soil would be permanently impacted.

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(Cont.)

Wiyot cultural issues

Although the wind farm would be on private land, it would completely overlap the Wiyot Bear River Ridge Ethnobotanical Area/Cultural Landscape Area. Plant species used historically by the Wiyots are there. The ridge top provides a sweeping view of former Wiyot territory. I am aware of no mitigation proposed in the DEIR that would compensate the Wiyots for degradation of this site.

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Carbon emissions

The purpose of wind energy is to reduce America's carbon emissions from the use of fossil fuel. However, considering all the industrial processes, truck travel and use of earth-moving equipment involved in manufacturing of turbine components, transportation of components to the site, construction of the towers, maintenance and eventual decommissioning of the wind farm, it is obvious that the total carbon emissions created would be substantial. The DEIR does not tell us what the net carbon emissions would be. Would the project actually reduce our use of fossil fuel? Without that information and with the wind farm providing less than 1 percent of California's needed electricity, I see no justification for this mammoth project. We need a much better reason to destroy a beloved and irreplaceable rural landscape.

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I recommend the no-project alternative. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Frances Ferguson,
Humboldt County resident