

Humboldt Wind Project Planner
Planning and Building Dept., County of Humboldt

June 11, 2019

Dear Wind Project Planner,

I live in Pepperwood on the Avenue of the Giants. I have resided there with my family for 40 years. I have reviewed the dEIR for the Humboldt Wind Project proposed by Terra-Gen.

I support the “No Project Option to Alternative” for many reasons. First, I do not believe that any of the proposed wind energy project alternatives are feasible to construct, operate, or maintain without significant environmental harm. With the extreme rainfall we experience on steep slopes, there are always landslides and slumps in wet weather. A massive industrial project such as this one will cause erosion damage: the widening of roads, site preparation, building of tower footings, transportation of heavy and oversized structures, and erection and maintenance of wind turbines.

Adam Canter, a biologist for tribal concerns, found 81 different plant communities in the proposed project scope, 31 of which were classified as rare for their unique biodiversity. We have no idea of how to measure the loss and destruction of these plant diversities, and how that loss will affect the other species that depend upon them.

The “incidental take” quota of Marbled Murrelets is at this point a calculation, but until we count the dead birds on the ground we’ll not know if we are doing more harm than this project anticipates. The Brown Pelican, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, White-tailed kite, American peregrine falcon, Ring-tailed cat, and California Condor are “Fully Protected” species which may be affected by this project.

I132-1

Second, the ability of the Humboldt Wind Project to meet the goal of displacing emissions of approximately 372,000 metric tons per year of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas [GHG]) will definitely not be realized in the construction phase. Has a study been done to calculate the carbon sequestering of the trees and other plants currently existing where the footprint of this project will be? And how does this compare over time with the life of this project that will remove, in some areas, any chance for vegetation to occur again? This assessment in my mind is critical in determining the worth of this project.

Next, Bear River Ridge is one of our family’s most cherished places to enjoy together. Every season holds it own special memories. I know too, that there are many sacred sites for the Wiyot People, and "Constructing WTGs on Bear River Ridge would be a significant visual impact on this sacred high place. No feasible mitigation is available to reduce this significant impact; therefore, this impact would be significant and unavoidable."

Also, this proposed wind energy facility by Terra-Gen in Humboldt County does not increase local job growth enough to justify defacing some of our prime mountaintop vistas. The initial short term employment for construction will be brought in from out of the area. Only 15 long term employment opportunities will be added for Humboldt County citizens.

In addition, the drilling of a potable water well for the 15 employee management station from the Pepperwood Basin water supply will impact mine and my neighbor's wells. Although it is noted in the dEIR that the water aquifer holds enough water for this station and will not be of significant impact, no one actually talked with the local residents of Pepperwood or Elinor to find out the actual results during years of drought as we've had recently. I know of two neighbors who actually had their wells go dry during these hot summers and autumns. This increased use of the Pepperwood Basin water supply could only impact us even more, especially since agriculture is reemerging in Pepperwood.



1132-2

The Humboldt Firesafe Council just completed a comprehensive inventory of all of the available fire services and fire management areas needed to be addressed within the county. Humboldt Wind was not in this report. The mitigation for fire danger was not adequately met nor available for public preview in the dEIR. This is crucial in this time of extreme fire storms.

The north exit of the Avenue of the Giants, or the Jordan Creek exit, is commonly used by myself and local neighbors as well as the immense number of tourists that visit our area each year. If the project commences, we will see and feel the impacts. Tourism and agricultural produce sales are major income generators for this part of the county. Even though the dEIR states that the transportation of turbine components will mostly be done at night to reduce traffic interruption, the lack of, or disturbance of access to this exit is yet to be measured.

1132-3

As you can see, I believe the best option is the "No Project Option to Alternative" for the Humboldt Wind Project proposed by Terra Gen. There are significant and unavoidable impacts. The benefits stated do not outweigh or even balance the negative impacts that would result if the project goes forward.

Sincerely,
Margaret Plant
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