

<b>DOCKETED</b>	
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October 19, 2021

Re: Fountain Wind Project Fire Safety Enhancement and Assessment

Dear Board of Supervisors,

My name is Darin Quigley, and as you may know, I have conducted an in-depth review of the Fountain Wind Project from a wildfire risk reduction and wildfire risk mitigation perspective. As a former CAL FIRE Battalion Chief with over 40 years of firefighting experience in northern California, I am writing to reaffirm my conclusion that the Fountain Wind Project will have comprehensive wildfire protections in place and that ConnectGen and the County have taken pro-active steps to resolve fire concerns associated with construction and operation of the Project. The EIR is valid in finding that Project-associated wildfire impacts would be less than significant.

I have reviewed the mitigation measures and conditions of approval submitted for consideration to the planning commission and I commend Chief Gouvea and the rest of his staff at CAL FIRE/Shasta County Fire for doing an excellent job at assessing the risk and requiring mitigation where appropriate. With the Project's fire safety requirements in place, I agree with the County's conclusion in the EIR that the threat of risk from wildfire related to the construction and operation of the project will be less than significant.

**The measures required for this project go above and beyond what was implemented at Hatchet Ridge**, which has not had a fire event since commencing operations over 10 years ago.

I was part of the CAL FIRE response that fought the Fountain Fire in 1992. At the time, the Fountain Fire was the largest and most destructive of its kind in the history of wildfires in Shasta County. Since then, I've been on the front lines fighting dozens of catastrophic fires in northern California. I've seen firsthand how wildfires can decimate communities and have learned many valuable lessons throughout my career. With the required wildfire risk reductions, proposed shaded fuel breaks and other fire mitigation measures, this Project will have a positive impact on the current and future wildfire risks. **Overall, it is my professional opinion that this project will enhance fire protection and firefighting capabilities in the area within and surrounding the Project.**

Regarding aerial firefighting capabilities, the significant increase in road access, implementation of strategic shaded fuelbreaks, and the many other wildfire risk reduction measures combined with the available air space that is provided by the modified project proposal, there is a net increase in wildfire suppression capabilities.

As we reflect on the 2021 wildfires, including Dixie, Monument, River Complex, Antelope, Lava, McCash, and many others, aerial assets and airspace were plenty however they were not effective during initial attack due to the lack of access for ground resources, to support the aerial firefight. This project creates all-weather access for firefighters such as engine crews, dozers, water tenders, handcrews, etc. The Project will also provide accessible water sources in strategic locations for firefighting purposes.

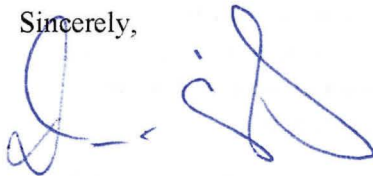
The Fountain Wind Project will provide excellent access opportunities in these remote timberlands along with an extensive network of shaded fuel breaks, as recommended by CAL FIRE/Shasta County Fire and required by the County as conditions of approval.

In conclusion, the Fountain Wind Project will provide the following fire protection benefits;

- Increase access for ground firefighting resources and improve egress routes for occupied inholdings; increase wildfire detection capabilities;
- Reduce hazardous fuels in strategic locations, including along key access roads and along strategic ridgelines;
- Break up the continuity of the homogenous stand of young pines that presents its own wildfire hazard; increase available/accessible water sources for firefighting;
- Upgrade bridges and roadways to accommodate heavy vehicles including water tenders, dozers and transports, fire engines, and crew vehicles;
- Increase the presence of authorized personnel, including during times of very high fire danger;
- Provide a comprehensive fire prevention plan; and,
- Include sophisticated fire protection and suppression systems in the Nacelles.

I am including with this letter my original analysis that was provided to the Planning Commission for their consideration. I plan on being present at the October 26<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors hearing and I will be available and happy to address any questions that the Board may have.

Sincerely,



Darin Quigley  
*Quigley Consulting LLC*  
*CAL FIRE, Retired*

Enclosure: FWP EIR – Wildfire Effects Review by Darin Quigley and Syndy Zerr