

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	23-OPT-01
Project Title:	Fountain Wind Project
TN #:	251922
Document Title:	Jaclyn White Comments - Testimony against the Fountain Wind Project
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Jaclyn White
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	8/25/2023 12:24:32 PM
Docketed Date:	8/25/2023

Comment Received From: Jaclyn White
Submitted On: 8/25/2023
Docket Number: 23-OPT-01

Testimony against the Fountain Wind Project

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

August 25, 2023

To: California Energy Commission

From: Jaclyn White, 21550 Big Bend Road, Montgomery Creek, Ca 96065

Re: Docket #23-OPT-01 Fountain Wind Project

My name is Jaclyn White and I have lived at 21550 Big Bend Road in Montgomery Creek s with my husband David Pitz for 25 Years. We have 17 acres of forest and pasture land in the community of Wengler in the Roaring Creek Drainage. While we support the development of alternative energy and acknowledge that our community has been negatively affected by climate change, we do not think that the Fountain Wind project is appropriate for timberland and our community.

1. Fire Safety: The project report identifies the area as a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone". After the Camp and Carr fire destruction in 2018, and the horrific fires burning in Canada and Maui this summer, we are very concerned about the fire risk in our community. As noted in the report this land is zoned as Timberland, but this land is not empty, and families have lived here for generations and thousands of years. Wengler is such a community as is Montgomery Creek and Round Mountain and fire is a grave concern for all the families that live in these mountains.

After the Fountain Fire of 1992 the land was a scorched moonscape. Roseburg replanted with mostly pine trees and the forest you see now is about 31 years old. It has been neglected. Trees, now 20-30 feet tall, grow 3-4 feet apart; deer brush and manzanita grow in the understory. Years of pine needles cover the forest floor. This forest is a wall of fuel. Take a short ride down Bootleg Road, which may be one of the existing roads used to construct the wind farm and you will see what I mean. In the description of building the roads that will be needed, words like scraping, grinding, blasting are used, which only invite fears of the spark that will set off the next blaze through our communities.

The record shows that transmission lines have been the cause of many of our most destructive wildfires. The original project proposal identified sixteen miles of overhead transmission lines from Hatchet Ridge, over Highway 299, across Hatchet Creek and throughout the timberland southeast of Montgomery Creek and Round Mountain also cause concern for fire. Fifty-six miles of underground cable proposed to snake along ridgelines throughout the project area, but only if there is no steep terrain, no streams or wetlands, and no rocky conditions. Since that pretty much describes the terrain, I would bet that we will have many more overhead transmission lines along the roads and ridgeline in this fuel laden forest. While the proposal has been reduced in size, the threat remains. The testimony that Calfire bombers and helicopters will be unable to negotiate the project area due to the size of these wind turbines is chilling.

Please consider whether this is a realistic environment for an electricity generating project. The reality is that fuel load in this forest land in light of the "new normal" for wild fires demands

that you seriously consider the advisability of putting more overhead power lines throughout an unmanaged forest with small communities scattered in proximity to this project.

2. Traffic: This project estimates that each turbine will require the transport of an estimated 15 loads per turbine and 8-9 of these loads will be oversized. That is 700 loads, 400 oversized, traveling Highway #299, a narrow two-lane river canyon for most of the trip, with the steep Montgomery Creek grade at the end. How long will this inconvenience exist? What happens when the oversized turbine meets the hay or lumber truck on Highway 299?

This will impact those who commute to Redding for work, entertainment or shopping on a daily basis, as well as those who just want to go to the post office. We experienced this with the Hatchet Wind Project.

1. Visual Impact and Impact on Our Community- This project is huge! It will transform the mountains that ring our community. on the north, east and south sides into a wind farm. How can this not turn our mountains into an industrial park from Moose Camp to Buzzard Roost? When I drive west on Highway 299 will my view of Snow and Round Mountains and the Montgomery creek valley be one of industrial lights and roads and transmission lines?

This community is already impacted greatly by the energy industry. The Pit River is damned in 7 places and parts are restricted for use; two major transmission lines (one 900 yards from my home) run through the community to Round Mountain where PG&E runs a huge transmission station. The Hatchet Ridge Wind Farm glows red on the eastern skyline when I drive home. Isn't that enough? I don't know how you assess the value of a rural lifestyle and environment to its residents, but I hope you will. We choose to live here, with all its drawbacks, because of the mountain vistas, the wildlife and the black, star- filled night skies.

2. Wildlife Conservation: One of the delights of living here is the witnessing of the migration of the Sand Hill Cranes in early spring and late fall. They sound their arrival in March and November as they migrate from or to the Sacramento Delta. I usually hear them before I see them around 10:30 am as they fly over our property, and they are flying low enough to count them. These are big birds, standing from 3-4 feet tall. They can be found foraging just north east in McArthur and Bieber on their way north. The wind turbines are 600 feet tall. I am concerned that the cranes may be harmed by the turbines.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the concerns we have about the Fountain Wind Farm Project. While I support the movement away from fossil fuels to renewable energy, I do not think a wind farm is right for this community and I support the County's exhaustive review and denial of this project.