

**DOCKETED**

<b>Docket Number:</b>	23-OPT-01
<b>Project Title:</b>	Fountain Wind Project
<b>TN #:</b>	252523
<b>Document Title:</b>	Stephen Allen Fitch Comments - Fountain Wind Project Aesthetics
<b>Description:</b>	N/A
<b>Filer:</b>	System
<b>Organization:</b>	Stephen Allen Fitch
<b>Submitter Role:</b>	Public
<b>Submission Date:</b>	10/6/2023 9:41:31 AM
<b>Docketed Date:</b>	10/6/2023

*Comment Received From: Stephen Allen Fitch  
Submitted On: 10/6/2023  
Docket Number: 23-OPT-01*

## **Fountain Wind Project Aesthetics**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*

October 5, 2023

Leonidas Payne, Project Manager  
California Energy Commission  
Environmental Office, 715 P Street, MS-15  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[leonidas.Payne@energy.ca.gov](mailto:leonidas.Payne@energy.ca.gov)

Re: Fountain Wind Project (23-OPT)

Dear Mr. Payne,

I wanted to alert your review team that the Fountain Wind Project is surrounded on three sides by Congressionally established lands with the objective of preserving scenic qualities. These include a National Recreation Area to the west and north, the Pacific Crest Trail to the east and the north and the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway one of the nations All American Highways passing just to the east.

I'm Stephen Fitch, former Forest Supervisor of the Shasta Trinity National Forest. I managed the National Forest the National Recreation Area and the Pacific Crest Trail all of which are adjacent to this project. Upon retiring I was on the California State Assembly staff helping to establish the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway.

Together these are key parts of California's legislated scenic features all impacted by this project.

Often the Governor notes the great scenic values of California and importance to tourism. Your staff reviewing the Fountain Wind Project has properly noted that the proponents "Key points" are inadequate. (KOP's)!

This project will seriously compromise one of the major gateways into the great scenic forests of Northern California. Shasta County and the

Planning Commission have already turned down the proposal's for its scenic desecration and for other significant reasons.

Keep in mind that "Shasta Cascade Wonderland" is the theme and title of the County. Tourism is the economic foundation of Shasta County.

I spent over 10yrs making sure proposals within and around the National Forest and especially the National Recreation Area (NRA) did not destroy it's scenic values. Your staff may want to note the wording in the 1st paragraph of the **Law** establishing the **NRA**. **Scenic** is the 1st word describing "values contributing to the public enjoyment". It says:

"In order to provide, in a manner coordinated with the other purposes of the Central Valley project, for the public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of the Whiskeytown, Shasta, Clair Engle, and Lewiston reservoirs and surrounding lands in the State of California by present and future generations and the conservation of **scenic**, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of such lands and waters, there is hereby established, subject to valid existing rights, the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area in the State of California

Millions of visitors each year would have their views from the NRA to the east toward the mountains and Lassen Peak destroyed not to mention looking directly down from the Pacific Crest Trail on this proposal and to the west from the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway.

I've managed National Forests from the Angeles in the South to Shasta in the North and can tell you that the Memorial Highway climbing Mt. Shasta is one of the most scenic trips in all of California. Can you imagine the shock of people making this trip only to look south and see all these whirling towers.

Mitigation:

Disguising these swirling giants twice the height of the Statue of Liberty, interrupting our landscape views from the above areas will simply be impossible. Turbines, to be effective, must be on ridge tops and clear of vegetation and other obstructions. They will extend at least 600' above the highest tree, eliminating any possibility of screening. They will be in view of millions of travelers looking east as they travel up interstate 5. They will be perfectly framed by Mt. Shasta and Mt. Lassen.

They will be impossible to hide along highway 299 and to virtually all those that visit the scenic amenities mentioned above.

In Shasta County two of four scenic routes into these forests have been essentially destroyed by fire in recent years.

This project will severely degrade one more route (State Highway 299 east) leaving only Highway 44 unscathed. The County's review of the proposal mentions that It will violate 3 scenic elements of our County General Plan. It will destroy views on key access routes to each of the above amenities plus two National Forests, a National Park and a State Park and 3 Nationally legislated scenic areas.

Our scenic attraction that draws recreationists to this area is one of the **keys** to the stability of the economy of Shasta County and Northern California.

It is hard to imagine a project more disruptive to the visual quality of the county for visiting recreating public. The economic impact on this recreation dependent county will be very significant and not mitigable.

Please ensure that these concerns are adequately considered by your staff as you review this project already turned down by our Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Fitch

Shasta Trinity Forest Supervisor retired