

Letter: Commissioners should listen to planning commission

East Oregonian

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The following is addressed to the the Umatilla County Commissioners:

As commissioners of Umatilla County, it should go without saying that you serve the whole populace of Umatilla County. That is what you were voted in to do and it is our tax dollars that pay your wages. It is time for you gentlemen to get your act together and listen to what the majority of citizens are asking you to do — namely, pass the Umatilla County Planning Commission's proposed amendments to wind facility sitings in this county. These proposed amendments, 152.6.15 and 616 (HHH), dated Feb. 24, 2011, were unanimously passed by the planning commission because they were listening to what the majority of citizens were asking them to do. This was two years' worth of work.

Commissioners, you do not serve the wind/energy companies that are not residents or voters of this county. Nor should you ignore the majority of residents in favor of a few large corporate land owners that are interested in nothing but personal gain at the expense of their neighbors properties and homes.

The majority of residents that have expressed opinions about wind turbines are as follows:

- They hate what the turbines have done to ruin the Columbia River Gorge.
- They do not want Umatilla county to look like Morrow and Gilliam counties, with miles of turbines.
- They do not want to live next to them or have them close to their houses.
- They do not like the noise.
- They do not like the red flashing lights at night.
- They are concerned with unknown health effects from wind turbines.
- Most are very angry that these are taxpayer funded and feel they are a huge rip off for taxpayers.
- Only a very few prosper from these wind projects.
- The neighboring properties, not involved in the turbine project, are impacted by a drop in property values if they are within the 2-mile foot print of the turbine project.

- Many were angry that the wind companies were suing BPA. They felt our hydro power was first and foremost for residents of the Northwest.
- Giving tax credits to wind companies while our state is having great difficulty making taxpayers money meet crucial services — schools, emergency responders, health care, etc. — was completely unacceptable.

So, county commissioners, this is your opportunity to show the residents of Umatilla County that you “get it.” Do the right thing for Umatilla County and pass the Umatilla County Planning Commission’s Feb. 24, 2011, wind facility siting amendments.

Robin and Cindy Severe
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