December 2, 2019

Re: Humboldt Wind Energy Project

Dear Supervisor Wilson,

After years wasted in denial of the physical reality of climate change, it has become obvious to almost everyone that climate change presents a real threat to human society. The consensus among atmospheric scientists is that we have only a dozen years or so to reverse the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, after that, positive feedback loops are likely to become irreversible.

In addition to climate change the UN Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has said that we are at risk of losing a million additional species in the next couple of decades if we continue to destroy ecosystems needed for species survival. This panel concluded that further loss of species presents as grave a threat to our civilization as does CO2 related climate change.

We have a lot to learn if we are to survive let alone adapt to the accelerated global climate crisis that we are facing.

There are two major ways we in Humboldt County can contribute to mitigations in order for our (collective) possible survival from climate change: the preserving of our amazing biodiversity and mostly intact landscapes and most importantly indigenous wisdom. The wisdom that comes from living in one place for thousands of years, the wisdom that comes from surviving physical, cultural and spiritual genocide.

My concern is that with this project we are moving so quickly and in emergency mode that we are willing to be reckless and short sighted. Approval of this plan is saying we will be forced to further sacrifice the health of the land, land that is relatively intact and contributing a buffer against climate change. This project's impact on wildlife is too great. We should not place species already seriously at risk owing to human actions at even greater risk in trying to further assure our security.

And most importantly approval of this project disregards the needs, concerns and objections from the Wiyot people.

To be more specific I will list the issues that I feel are problematic in this plan besides the most important of honoring the Wiyot's objection.

- It has NOT been shown in this plan that the energy gained from the Terra-Gen wind project will be more than the energy spent building and maintaining it. If there is no gain or if that gain is minimal what is the point in all the destruction? Tax Credits?

*Roads – new roads, and enlarging existing ones. We now know that roads are one of the most destructive impacts on a landscape.
This project will enlarge roads to 24 feet in width with a 10 -20-foot shoulder. In steep slopes the total width of the disturbance area along access roads could be up to 200 feet. Permanent disturbance could be up to 60 feet wide.
There will be 9,670 heavy truck trips weighing 110 tons each – 90 feet long.
There will be a total of 29,250 truck trips.

*Clear cutting of the forest for the roads.

*The creation of high-risk fire situations from the power lines traveling on these new roads through the forest.

*The creation of high-risk fire situations from the change in weather brought about by the large turbines.

*The creation of high-risk fire situations from the turbines, which have a recorded history of fire danger. Our area can have a severe dry period (no rainfall) for almost half of the year. Taking an already very dry landscape and putting high-risk fire elements in it is too great a risk for our community.

*The building of 2 concrete plants – Air pollution
There will be 11,000 cubic yards of concrete used in the project. The stands for the turbines are 10 feet deep.

*Water Use – 10,000 – 15,000 gallons of water per day. It is unclear if the water that they plan to use is even safe for use.

*The PG&E substation will need to be enlarged and upgraded. Who pays for that and when will that be done?

*The possible dangers on the human brain from infrasound (sub-audible vibrations created when the wind turbine blades pass the tower) from large wind turbines. This sound can travel 12 miles. This needs a lot more study before we subject ourselves and the wildlife to its potential danger.

*Very importantly this project will not allow Humboldt County to be energy independent. This power will go into the larger grid for the larger need.

- Local municipalities and residents of the immediate area surrounding Monument Ridge and Bear River Ridge are opposed to the plan for many reasons, including but not limited to loss of property value and degradation of their view-shed. These towns are working hard to recover from the loss of their economic dependence on timber. Tourism is one of the main paths open to them. The Humboldt County General Plan requires as a necessary finding for project approval that the projects' permanent industrial constructs not impair the public convenience or welfare, and not materially damage or prejudice other property in the vicinity.

- Decommissioning responsibility, cost and impacts are not addressed. We will not regain the health of the land. Thirty years is the longest these towers are expected to work.

*The plan is not complete – how can you make a decision on a plan when you do not have all the information? This includes a lack of consultation with the federal government regarding the impacts on birds, bats and other endangered wildlife. And the use of outdated studies done in areas with a completely different environment. They used studies from Europe for some of their bird "mitigations". Terra-Gen has repeatedly stated that more studies are not cost effective.

For example of the studies that Terra-Gen is willing to include in the project plan they will “study” the impacts of bat mortality by counting dead bats for one hour, once a month. Obviously this is unacceptable.

This is not an exhaustive list of problems; these are just the most important to me.

The objections from the community are long and serious. The opposition to this project is overwhelming. There will be lawsuits to stop it if it is approved. The people of Rio Dell and Scotia will have no choice; they are desperately working to make a welcoming community for tourism. The cost of lawsuits and public demonstrations will have to be borne by the Humboldt County taxpayer.

Please deny this project.

At this point the healthiest step forward is to work together on a project that we can embrace as a community. The Humboldt Wind Energy Project is being Fast Tracked for the financial well being of a corporation from New York. **This plan does not help us gain energy independence, nor does it offer a measurable gain in combating the global climate crisis.**

Let’s put our community first and make decisions that we know will not cause further division and pain. There is general positive agreement to move forward on the Redwood Coast Off Shore Wind Project – it has the potential to help us survive and adapt to climate change by becoming more energy independent on renewable energy. Let’s go all in on that one.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Robie Tenorio