

October 24, 2018

Grant Pfeifer, Regional Director
Department of Ecology
Eastern Regional Office
4601 N Monroe Street
Spokane, WA 99205

Scoping for EIS on PacWest Silicon Smelter

Dear Mr. Pfeifer,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed HiTest/PacWest Silicon Smelter.

My husband and I fell in love with Newport and the surrounding area 24 years ago and purchased a 26+ acre tree farm four miles north on LeClerc Road. We came here 2-3 times a year to work our property and survey the wildlife living there. Then, three years ago, we bought a home in the city and moved up from Oregon to retire here. This pristine healthy community with clean air/clean water and abundance of natural resources was perfect for our outdoor lifestyle. We highly value the outdoor recreation opportunities of this rural area. People experience outdoor related activities year-round and tourism is the 4th largest industry in Washington state.¹ Our family and friends who visit also enjoy exploring the out-of-doors on the Colville National Forest, Idaho Panhandle National Forest, state and county parks as well as the numerous lakes, rivers and campgrounds with hiking trails throughout. When the noise and smell from a smelter comes to town, our relatives and friends could opt out of those cherished visits.

According to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, outdoor recreation is a \$26.2 billion revenue source for the state with boating, fishing, bird-watching, mushrooming, huckleberry picking, camping, hunting, hiking, biking, skiing, wildlife viewing, photography, etc. as the major activities. "The direct tourism and travel expenditures for Pend Oreille County have continually increased since 2001, reaching \$24.8 million in 2009."² "In 2011, total state and local hotel/motel lodging tax distributions for Pend Oreille County were \$64,450; a 215% increase since 2004."³ This does not include restaurants, souvenirs, camping fees, etc. Colville NF and Idaho Panhandle NF have a unique landscape attracting a variety of recreational opportunities. Visitor spending statistics show that in these two national forests; Day trips for non-locals (traveling more than 50 miles) visitors spend \$139/trip/day, non-local overnight trips \$694/trip/day, locals (traveling 60 miles or less from home) day trips \$76 and local overnight trips \$368 per trip.⁴ Loss of this revenue source would be detrimental to our rural communities. Recreation revenue means jobs for our businesses.

Pend Oreille Region Tourism Alliance (<http://www.porta.us/>) with a mission "To promote a responsible tourism economy in ways sensitive to the local lifestyle and environment", and the newly formed Washington Tourism Alliance (<http://watourismalliance.com/>) whose mission is "To advocate, promote, develop and sustain the economic well-being of the Washington tourism industry" are partners in enhancing the continued increase in tourism which depends on environmental sustainability.

Questions: What are the long and short-term effects of the smelter on lodging availability, air quality, noise, lighting 24/7, smog/particulates, visibility/scenic value? Will the construction/operation traffic of the smelter impede tourist traffic? What are the effects on short-term lodging (B&B's, motel/hotels/rental accommodations/campgrounds)? Will visitors go elsewhere if these sources are full? Will visitors continue to come with the perception of heavy industry in an area that used to be pristine? How will vehicle traffic affect the tourists who travel through our town to recreate here or elsewhere? Will they stop coming because of the traffic congestion in Newport?

Question: How will PacWest compensate northeast Washington and the Idaho panhandle residents for lost tourist revenue when the smog covers a 180 mile radius around the smelter and reduces participation in all types of outdoor recreation in our area?

It is the lack of truthful information from HiTest/PacWest that is tearing at the fabric of our peaceful community, pitting neighbor against neighbor and destroying their faith in our County officials. Permitting this facility 1.5 miles from a hospital, schools, businesses, day-care centers and Assisted Living facilities could put the citizens at risk causing irreversible health issues with all the emissions, not to mention the added stress that misinformation causes. We have a friend with asthma who suffers breathing issues from wildfire smoke. How will she survive the smog?

Questions: Will PacWest pay for the infrastructure required to transport materials to and from the facility? Will the coal rail cars or trucks be covered to avoid the dust from discharging en-route to and from their facility? Who will pay for the road repairs required when potholes develop with the weight of the trucks?

In the November 2017 presentation by HiTest Silicon posted on the Pend Oreille County Economic Development Council website (pocedc.org) showed "Comparable Facility" pages. There were examples of facilities shown in Burnsville, MS, Norway, Germany and Niagara Falls, USA all residential areas of larger population and lower air quality than Newport's rural landscape. In fact, levels of pollution near those locations are all higher than Washington state's pollution standards as a whole.

Rural Pend Oreille County, WA has air temperature inversions throughout the year that will severely affect healthy air in Newport and surrounding areas. The PacWest smelter will be releasing NO_x, CO₂, and SO₂ which will react with water plus oxygen to form sulfuric and nitric acids. These then mix with water and other materials before falling to the ground as acid rain, thus harming the health of our citizens, plants, wildlife, air and water all natural in our pristine environment.

Question: How does PacWest plan to mitigate damages to the health of our citizens and the environment once 700+ tons of toxic particulates are released into the atmosphere? There is no mitigation that can assure our pristine environment remains when 700+ tons of pollution is released into the area and travels the air currents (including inversions).

Question: How does PacWest plan to monitor and mitigate the damage to the environment once this plant is online and spewing these elements into the atmosphere?

Question: How does PacWest Silicon plan to mitigate damages to the health of our citizens and the environment when thousands of tons of toxic particulates are released into the atmosphere? There is no mitigation that can assure our pristine environment remains when this amount of pollution is released into the area creating acid rain which ruins everything.

Question: Who will monitor the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and Washington states Clean Air standards to assure that PacWest will be meeting or exceeding these clean air standards? What will the penalties be if these are not met? Who will enforce these penalties? There is no mitigation that could clean up the air/water and environment once these toxins are released and destroy our pristine area like they have in other areas where smelters have been located.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Elly Styskel
Newport, WA 99156

References:

¹ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office <https://www.rco.wa.gov/>

² Pend Oreille County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan December 2013 (2014 - 2019)Page 161 <http://pendoreilleco.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Pend-Oreille-County-Parks-and-Recreation-Plan-2014-2019.pdf>

³ Pend Oreille County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan December 2013 (2014 - 2019)Page 162

<http://pendoreilleco.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Pend-Oreille-County-Parks-and-Recreation-Plan-2014-2019.pdf>

⁴ Spending Patterns for Outdoor Recreation Visitors to National Forests USDA publication PNW-GTR-961 page 58