

Sandra Wynhoff

My husband's family has had ties to this beautiful corner of this country for four generations, soon to be five. His family arrived in the Colville area in 1902, and were prominent in the development of Colville as a new community. His grandfather built a fishing cabin at the Little Pend d'Oreille Lakes in 1915. As a young bride, I was told, with reverence, of this modest cabin in "God's Country". It was described in such glowing terms, I didn't really believe it could be that beautiful. But, Oh yes it is! Every summer, family from all over the country come together to vacation, and take in the beauty, fresh air, and enjoy fishing, hiking, the abundant wildlife; but most of all, the peace that comes being in an unspoiled environment!

My daughter and her husband bought a home in Newport, and moved there in August. She loves the Northwest, and she wanted to be close by our beloved Cabin at the Lakes.

We were appalled to find out about the proposal for the Silicon Smelter! I have been trying to get eyes on anything to glean more information. What I have read so far leaves me angry and what greatly distressed about the huge negative effects it would have on the environment.

The PUD is bending over backwards to give PacWest cheap Electricity. That's surprising as Canada could not do this, nor was Addy (Avista) willing to charge their customers more, just to grant a very low rate for the Smelter.

There are some very toxic emissions that will come from this process, and I read that PacWest can not guarantee they will not go over limits at times.

Initially, the request from PacWest was for 8,000 gallons of water a day. Then later, it was 240,000 gallons a day. Why the discrepancy, and can we really believe what they are saying? That's a tremendous use of water! What does that do to the aquifers? Then where does the effluent go? Ultimately it will wind up in the rivers, and have an adverse effect on the entire ecosystem.

The toxic emissions, the depletion of water, the pollution of water and soil all adversely affect the health of people who live close to the site, and for many miles distant. A study of climate patterns would reveal just how far reaching this pollution would be.

The cost is just too high for this Project. It would provide a few jobs, yes. But for how long? The REC Silicon Smelter in Moses Lake had to shut down part of it's operation due to competition from China. And how long will the materials being produced be used by the Solar Industry. This is a very fluid business. New research yields improved methods daily, and in a few years this technology could be outdated.

That's too high a price to pay, in exchange for the harm it would cause to this piece of "God's Country".