Dale Dalbey

Please see my attached comment.

Subject: Public Comment Opposing the Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Facility in Snoqualmie (Cascadia Ridge Proposal)

To: Washington State Department of Ecology & Local Permitting Authorities

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the installation of a utility-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility in the Snoqualmie area. While clean energy storage initiatives are essential for our state's broader climate goals, placing a industrial lithium-ion battery array near residential neighborhoods, schools, and critical natural resources presents unacceptably high risks to health, public safety, and the local environment.

My primary concerns focus on the following key areas:

1. Fire Safety and Thermal Runaway Risks

Lithium-ion energy storage systems carry an inherent risk of thermal runaway—a self-sustaining chemical reaction that causes fires that burn at extreme temperatures and are notoriously difficult to extinguish.

- **Fire Response Capabilities:** BESS fires often cannot be put out with traditional water deluge techniques. All local fire departments who would be responding have said they would not be able to extinguish a potential fire and have opposed this proposed development.
- **Wildfire Escalation:** Located near forest land and residential parcels, an any industrial battery fire in Snoqualmie creates a severe threat of igniting a larger wildland-urban interface fire during our dry summer months.

2. Public Health and Air Quality Hazards

When lithium-ion batteries undergo thermal runaway or burn, they release toxic gases into the surrounding air column, including hydrogen fluoride, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds. The immediate area around the proposed site includes multiple schools, daycares, a hospital, and thousands of homes who would be immediately impacted.

- **Toxic Air Plumes:** Smoke and invisible emissions from a BESS fire pose immediate danger to nearby residents, schools, and first responders, causing acute respiratory distress and long-term health hazards.
- **Noise Pollution:** Industrial BESS operations require continuous heavy-duty HVAC cooling systems, pumps, and high-voltage inverters. The persistent low-frequency hum and tonal noise generated can cause chronic disruption, sleep disruption, and stress for nearby residents living in close proximity.

3. Environmental and Groundwater Contamination

The proposed site sits within critical ecological corridors and sensitive watersheds.

- **Chemical Runoff:** Contaminated firefighting water runoff, packed with heavy metals and toxic chemical residue from suppression efforts or damaged battery cells, poses a direct threat to local soil, wetlands, and Fisher Creek / Snoqualmie River tributaries.
- **Ecological Disruption:** The clearing, grading, and industrial operation of a high-density battery bank degrades local wildlife habitat and disrupts sensitive forest hydrology.

Conclusion & Requested Action

Industrial-scale energy infrastructure must be sited responsibly—in light-industrial or remote utility zones away from residential communities, schools, and environmentally fragile watersheds.

I urge the Department of Ecology and reviewing agencies to enforce strict Environmental Impact Statement requirements, conduct comprehensive health hazard evaluations, and deny permitting for high-density BESS facilities at this location to protect the Snoqualmie community.

Sincerely,

Dale Dalbey