DEBORAH BELLAM

September 25, 2026
Re: Scoping comment — Stand-alone BESS Programmatic EIS (Publication 26-06-017)
To the Department of Ecology, Clean Energy Coordination:
I am writing to submit comments re the DOE's "scoping" document relating to the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for stand-alone, utility-scale, lithium-ion battery energy storage system (ie BESS) projects in Washington (Publication 26-06-017).
To WA Dept. of Ecology:
I am a third generation WA resident and voter. My family has lived on our Snoqualmie acreage in unincorporated KC for 32 years. Our family and about 50 homes in our immediate neighborhood rely on private wells for all drinking and cleaning water, and on both well and rainwater for watering crops and animals. Families in my immediate neighborhood raise chickens, goats, and sheep; eat vegetables and fruit grown in our soil, as well as eggs from hens that drink our well water. My property is immediately NEXT DOOR to the proposed Jupiter BESS plant. The issues I believe must be included in the scope of your BESS study, are the following:

1. Safety Related Issues:
a) Wind and its impact on safety in the event of fire. Our area has huge wind storms every year; one or more trees has blown down on or near our property every year over the past 32 years;
b) Impact of Terrain on likelihood of fire spread-though the trees immediately around the plant may be cut down, all of us on acreage live in the woods. Our property next door is foreest. One of my neighbors has replaced trees with grape vines and has a 5 acre vineyard. Wind will carry fire to our properties;
c) Noise and light impact on rural neighbors-Rather than merely complying with city noise and lighting ordinances, industrial plants should not be allowed to increase noise or light pollution in the rural areas next door. Light and noise pollution interferes with the quiet enjoyment of our properties;
d) Impact of BESS plants on local wildlife-here on our property, we have everything from elk and deer and cougars, to rabbits, beaver, fish, coyote, and bobcat;
e) Impact on local trees and plants;
f) Impact on soil-particularly on properties downhill (which mine is) from a proposed BESS plant;
g) Fiscal impact on neighbors-both public and private property owners, if a BESS fire or soil or water or air contamination occurs;
h) The length of time any water or soil or air contamination from a BESS fire or leak will be present, before the water, soil and air is safe for families-including children, infants, elderly, people with breathing issues and illness, and animals;
i) Impact of BESS plant staffing levels on safety: Is a tech remote monitoring system as safe as monitors on the ground 24/7 at the plant? Are remote monitors out of state (say for example in Illinois or Texas) as safe as requiring monitoring be done in Washington?
j) Impact of building surrounding batteries: Would requiring the entire plant to be enclosed in a building (rather than individual units side by side) reduce risk of pollution or fire spreading via wind?
k) Most important of all, because water is life-Potential impacts on wells and sources of drinking and cleaning water nearby. In addition to our private well, we also have a creek (which the County has identified as carrying fish, and which also carries beaver and serves as a water source for all the

local wildlife) running on and parallel (west to east) to the north side of our property.

2. Mitigation related issues:
a) The potential effectiveness of long term monitoring and results reporting- by a qualified and neutral expert, of water quality and quantity-both for private wells, public water supplies, and streams and creeks, of the health of area vegetation, of noise levels, and of soil and crops grown on nearby properties;
b) Guaranteed fire prevention and suppression and response for all neighboring properties. Here in unincorporated KC, the city fire and police respond to the property within city limits, but these unincorporated properties are not protected by a fire district. Neighbors should be guaranteed protection from BESS fire.
c) Liability limits/bonds: What impact do liability limits have on corporate safety measures? If every home near a BESS plant is worth a minimum of $1 million, how does a $1 million liability limit impact the company's motivation to invest money in safety? How would the requirement to put up a liability bond for potential damage to neighbors, or even a prohibition on liability limits, compare with respect to the company's motivation to invest money in safety?
d) Drinking water supply: What actions would need to be taken, and what actions should the state require of the corporate developer if drinking water supplies are contaminated? How would that contamination be rectified? The state should at a minimum, require clean and safe drinking water to be provided to households until a replacement well can be built, or another remedy can be implemented.
e) Are people in nearby homes, schools, and parks less likely to suffer negative impacts from BESS plant(ie fire, air or water or soil pollution and breathing difficulties resulting therefrom)failures or harms, if they are further away? from the plant? What is a safe distance from a home with small children who play outside, elderly family members, or members with respiratory illnesses?
f) Does the potential danger to neighbors increase with the size of the plant? Is a 500 battery unit plant potentially more dangerous to neighbors than a 25 unit plant? Would a state limit on the maximum size of these plants increase safety for neighbors?

As this BESS issue is literally a matter of life and death, as well as physical and fiscal safety for those of us nearby who have devoted the better part of our adult lives into living, raising our families, and improving our local properties, I sincerely hope the scope of your report will include the topics of concern listed by myself and others who have submitted comment.
I look forward to reading your report.

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah Bellam