

Susan VanLeuven

Dear Ms. Park,

Thank you for the invitation to participate in the scoping process. Although this project has been enthusiastically promoted by industry and Klickitat County officials, important details need to be examined before informed consideration can be given to approval of this project.

This project is being advanced as an economic opportunity by some of its strongest proponents, and most of the economic benefit seems to be associated with construction. If economic benefits are to be included in an environmental impact assessment, then economic liabilities must also be included. What will be the costs of operating and maintaining the system? What will be the cost of decommissioning the infrastructure when the facility reaches the end of its service lifespan? A realistic accounting of both benefits and costs needs to be done, along with disclosure of who would realize the benefits and who would bear the costs.

Regarding water use, the project description calls for annual supplemental fills to replace lost water volume. The project is sited in a hot and windy location, and water loss from the open reservoirs will be significant. How much of the water volume will have to be replaced annually? How is water loss by seepage into the soil addressed?

This facility will require energy to pump water to the upper reservoir, as well as maintain a control system and shelter for workers onsite. It is unlikely that the hydropower output will offset the power needed to operate the facility. What is the differential in units of power (not cost or price of electricity) to operate the system over the course of a year? The energy required for supplemental filling of the lower reservoir should be included in computations. This information will be helpful in consideration of the value of the project for advancing a green energy initiative. A facility that uses more energy than it produces is not an energy efficient system, and therefore lacks credibility as a green energy project.

The construction of the project will permanently alter the landscape and habitat for native flora and fauna on this site. What measures are proposed to minimize disturbance? What will be done with the excavated material from the tunnel? This is a unique landscape and offsite mitigation will not be sufficient to replace lost or adversely impacted habitats. What is the expected service life of the project? A short-term project that results in permanent loss of other values must be carefully considered.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Susan VanLeuven