

August 4, 2022

Meg Bommarito, Regional Planner
Department of Ecology
Ecology Northwest Regional Office
15700 Dayton Ave. N.
Shoreline, WA 98133

Re: Goldendale Energy Storage Project Draft EIS

Dear Regional Planner Meg Bommarito,

I am a proud member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and although the Draft Environmental Impact statement does not speak to the positive social and economic impacts of this project, I think it is essential to note that this energy storage facility will be built by over 3 thousand skilled union workers from the area. The jobs created by building this project will allow those tradespeople to support their families, and their local spending will support the families of business owners in the area. The 14 million dollars in annual tax revenue generate by this facility can be used for improvements to roads and schools, and will provide funding for local essential services. This project will also allow Building Trades Unions the opportunity to start more apprentices, giving those folks a chance to start rewarding careers that come with the quality wages and benefits needed in today's economy.

I understand that moving forward with this project will impact environmental and Tribal resources, and that is not something to ignore. The Draft EIS states the environmental impacts can be reduced through mitigation, but the Tribal impacts are more challenging to address. I am hopeful that the parties can work together to find an equitable compromise, because the alternative is a loss for us all. And I'm not just referring to the members I represent who would miss out on years of employment if this project isn't permitted, although that is important. I live in an area that is significantly economically depressed and a project like this would literally change people's lives. But jobs are only a small piece of why I support construction of this facility.

Washington has committed to a renewable energy future. We cannot add more renewable energy sources to the grid without ways to store that energy. Lithium-ion batteries are not going to be able to provide all the storage we need, and mining lithium comes with its own environmental concerns. If we truly intend to combat climate change, we need this project, and more projects like it. If we don't start moving forward with actual ways to make our goals into reality, we are going to fail.

And that failure doesn't just mean we blew an arbitrary deadline in a law – it means we are not doing what we need to do address the impacts of climate change. The land throughout our state, whether sacred or not, will be impacted negatively by inaction. So I support this project

continuing to move forward. To prevent its construction means we are maintaining the unacceptable status quo we have now, and no one – not Union workers, not Tribal members, not small business owners, not members of this community, not Washingtonians throughout the state – will be served by that failure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Winther', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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