

Jeffrey and Paula Byrd

name

39376 Opalocka Rd Boulevard CA 91905

address

2.28, 2011  
date

MAR 03 2011

Mr. Iain Fisher, CPUC  
Mr. Greg Thomsen, BLM,  
c/o Dudek  
605 Third Street,  
Encinitas, CA 92024

**Draft EIR-EIS Comments/ Opposition: Tule Wind, ECO Substation, Energia Sierra Juarez**

Dear Mr. Fisher and Mr. Thomsen,

This letter is being provided to ensure that our concerns and strong opposition are documented in the record for these large wind turbine, substation, and power line projects that your agencies are reviewing as the Proposed Project, alternative projects, and cumulative projects. We may need to join in filing a future lawsuit for damages related to nuisance, loss of property value, quality of life, the use and enjoyment of our property, and other potential adverse effects.

We reside in the neighborhood off Ribbonwood Road north of I-8, in Boulevard. When we moved here, this was a beautiful and quiet place to live and to invite family and friends to join us. Easy access to our adjacent public lands in the McCain Valley Resource Conservation and Recreation Area has been added benefit of living here. All that has changed and we are now very concerned for our own future and that of our neighbors, pets, livestock, and the local wildlife.

We are already impacted by the existing Kumeyaay Wind turbines on the Campo Reservation 2 miles or so to the west of us. We hear and feel the thumping of the giant blades that sometimes disrupts our sleep and creates a nuisance. We also deal with the visual blight of the whirling blades skyline on the ridgeline and the day and night strobe and aviation lights--none of which seem to work properly since the catastrophic failure of all 25 turbines in December 2009. Those almost 4 months of turbine downtime were some of the best days and nights we have had since the turbines started operation around 2005.

A moratorium on industrial wind turbine projects should be initiated by local state, and federal agencies, unless and until science-based peer reviewed health and safety tests are conducted to determine a safe setback distance. To date, those studies have not been done and industrial wind energy supporters cannot claim otherwise.

You are now reviewing three energy projects, along with the additional proposed wind turbine projects on the Manzanita and Campo Reservations and Greg Lansing's ranch lands on Ribbonwood Road and Jewel Valley Road. The Jordan / Enel Jewel Valley Wind Project on Ribbonwood Road would be within several thousand feet of our neighborhood homes. San Diego Gas & Electric's large 500 kV Sunrise Powerlink towers and lines will also be installed all along the eastern edge of McCain Valley Road east of us, and will also loop around to the north and west of our neighborhood, placing us down wind of many potential turbine, power line, and /or substation related fires / firestorms.

The up to 134 Tule Wind turbines, that will stand almost 500 feet tall, are planned to be installed approximately 1 mile from our home along the top of the ridge just east of our property, and to north at across the top of McCain Valley.

The new Tule Wind 138 kV transmission line is also planned to run right next to the Sunrise Powerlink lines along McCain Valley Road, *or along the western edge of the BLM project site* and ridgeline to the north east of our home.

A new 5 acre substation and 5 acre operation and maintenance building, for the Tule Wind project, are also planned for private land on McCain Valley Road, or for the Rough Acres Ranch property just to the southeast of us.

Ribbonwood Road, our only access road, will be the adversely impacted by the related Project construction traffic, noise, and road damage from overweight vehicles and equipment. Our quiet neighborhood road will become an industrial highway of sorts, creating much more dangerous and invasive conditions for local residents.

**There are several main concerns that we want your agencies to address and respond to:**

- 1) Increased risk of fire; increased fire insurance rates or total loss of coverage due to new high risk development near our home; reduced fire fighting access due to increased potential for electrocution to fire fighters. Power lines, wind turbines, substation transformers can all start fires. This can translate into a life or death situation for us, with only one dead end access road and limited local fire fighting staff availability, equipment, and funding.
- 2) Noise and low frequency pollution from industrial wind turbines, some below the level of human hearing, can and does make people and animals ill when turbines are placed too close to homes, livestock, and sensitive wildlife areas. It has been reported that families have even abandoned their homes to escape the unbearable living conditions that are inflicted by these power generating turbine. Increased medical expenses and long-distance round trips for medical attention can really add up. Impacts to pets and livestock can also be severe and expensive.
- 3) No safe distance has been scientifically determined for industrial wind turbine set-backs. We do know that we don't want them anywhere near our home or the homes of other families. They should be placed miles and miles away from any occupied buildings, livestock, public recreation areas, campgrounds, and protected wildlife areas.
- 4) Electrical pollution, stray voltage, has been documented in and around other wind turbine and substation projects and homes within 1,800 feet and much more. There are indications that wind turbines and the substations that serve them are more prone to generate electrical pollution due to the intermittent nature of the energy they produce.
- 4) Shadow flicker from turbines can extend several thousand feet during certain times of day and can create a harmful pulsing light effect that can result in vertigo, seizures, or other adverse effects. That strobe effect also has adverse effects on pets, livestock and wildlife. Our home and property will likely be impacted during the late afternoon and evening hours.
- 5) Property value losses are being recorded at other wind turbine projects. We join others in requesting that Tule Wind be required to enter into binding Property Value Protection Agreements to ensure that we do not suffer lost value or the inability to sell our property, if rendered necessary, due to the adverse impacts generated by the proximity of their massive wind turbines, power lines, and substations that will surround us. Their current

wind testing equipment, highly visible from our homes and neighborhood, must be disclosed to potential buyers.

6) We are requesting that any project approvals include binding contractual agreements for adequate and ongoing funding for third party unbiased pre-construction testing for ambient noise, low frequencies and infrasound, and dirty electricity levels to be taken both inside and outside our home and at all our property lines. We are also requesting ongoing monitoring and enforceable compliance guarantees that include shutdown of non-compliant turbines--in the event these projects are approved over our objections.

7) The County noise ordinance and turbine setbacks are currently inadequate to protect public health and safety and cannot be relied upon for these projects. Compliance with those standards, as stated in the Draft EIR/EIS will NOT insure against the generation of a nuisance. Your agencies must address this issue. Our rural ambient noise levels are much lower than stated in the Draft EIR/EIS. Complaints have been generated at other wind energy projects with only minimal increases in noise levels. All ranges of noise levels, audible and inaudible need to be documented at pre-construction levels--and protected for public health and safety.

8) We also have concerns over adverse impacts to both the quality and quantity of our well water. Tule Wind will be clearing, grading, and blasting for turbine footings and new access roads. They will also be drawing large amounts of well water from several wells on Rough Acres Ranch for cement batch plants and other operational uses. Their turbines, substation, transformers, and maintenance buildings will contain hazardous fluids that can spill or leak into the water table. Our water levels should be documented by a licensed unbiased third party prior to commercial uses at nearby wells. We have no economically viable alternative source of water available to replace what we currently have. Cumulative impacts include the Sunrise Powerlink and other projects proposed in this area.

9) Day time strobe lights and red blinking night lighting on the turbines and some of the transmission towers will create another nuisance both day and night ,and take away from our beautiful dark night sky, one of the few left in Southern California.

In short, we strongly object to and oppose the introduction of any additional commercial industrial scale wind turbines, the related infrastructure and power lines, and all the adverse impacts that go with them, into our quiet rural neighborhood.

Any approvals of such would constitute a nuisance based on bulk and scale, blinking lights, noise levels (including low frequency and infrasonic), disruption to the peaceful use and enjoyment of our home and property and the very real potential for adverse health effects. While ignored, denied, and dismissed by the wind energy industry, growing evidence documents that some home owners have been bought out by wind energy companies due to undeniable adverse effects. The problems are real and must be addressed by your agencies prior to any project decisions.

We strongly support and encourage the efforts of Backcountry Against Dumps to protect and defend our rural community from the unnecessary, expensive and invasive commercial industrial energy projects, including potential future litigation.

Sincerely,

  
signature here

cc: Donna Tisdale  
Backcountry Against Dumps  
PO Box 1275, Boulevard, CA 91905