

April 14, 2013

House Committee on Land Use

Re: HB 2106 Negative Consequences

Dear Committee Members:

Please review and change the language in ORS 469.501(3)(a)

The change in language to this section which appears to be insignificant will be devastating to wildlife and all resources impacted by a wind farm development. Currently the language requires the weighing of overall public benefits of the facility against the overall damages to the resources impacted in order to allow an exception to rules the facility does not meet. The change in language would require a weighing of overall public benefits against each individual resource or interest the facility doesn't meet. The isolation of resources and weighing each one against all positive impacts of a wind farm will mean there will be no assessment of cumulative damages and it will mean wind farms can be very damaging, but virtually all rules can be ignored when siting is occurring.

I asked Margi Hoffman to respond to my request to know what motivated them to think this change was necessary and described the above concern. She indicated she would get back to me, but never did. I think this is one of those areas where the devil is in the details and a close read of what appears to be an insignificant language change is really very damaging.

I have reviewed the original bill as well as the proposed amendment. I am strongly opposed to the development of renewable energy zones in Eastern Oregon. Those of us who live in that part of the state should not have to be burdened with additional wind farms when the energy is not even baseload, but merely a supplemental, unreliable and costly addition to the states energy.

I do support the amendment language that would establish a mitigation bank for Sage Grouse which need unfragmented areas of habitat in order to thrive. It makes sense to protect larger areas of habitat as opposed to small ones scattered throughout the state.

Sincerely,

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