

12-11-08 La Grande Observer community comment

Subject: Politically Correct Energy

On our Eastern horizon our once open space range land view has now been forever changed by the recent completion of the Elkhorn Valley Wind Farm, near North Powder, Oregon. In the day these sanitary white pillars stand out in horrific contrast to the surrounding grassland, and at night we are enlightened by the multiple blinking red lights. It used to be a beautiful moon rise to see, but no more. It seems somewhat curious that all of these energy production facilities are in our rural landscape, and not near urban areas where the aesthetic value would be compromised, and the highest electrical usage occurs.

And now to further this idiocy, Idaho Power is trying to "convince" us of the need (?) for even more beautification by construction of a 500 kilovolt transmission line, with 140' to 180' skeletal towers. Their story is that the need already exists. Ask where is the extra generating capacity is coming, and they give you the bureaucratic two-step non answer. Rest assured, if we as citizens allow this transmission line, we will have horizon to horizon windmills.

If it were not that this "Green Energy" is so politically correct and the huge tax incentives to the parent companies, there would be no logical or economical merit to the 1.3+ million dollar per tower cost. No way will this form of energy ever be cost effective, and I am sure that our future electricity rates will bear this truth. If you doubt the political influence, why do the "Powers that Be" attempt to negate our truly efficient Hydro-power as renewable? We had better be warned by the blessing that occurred during the Sept. 2007 dedication, "If enough of these wind generators are built, we can let the rivers run free again." Any other segment of the economy attempting this massive footprint, hell would have frozen before it would have been allowed. Bio-fuels generation, using the aftermath of much needed thinning in our surrounding forests before we loose our Watersheds to catastrophic fire, would be productive power generation and an economic stimulus for our rural communities by creating family wage employment.

Our ranch goes back seven generations, and we are Stewards of our resources. We believe that one of these resources that we protect is the "Open Space" that all enjoy. If these production facilities continue to expand, everyone will loose the landscape we cherish.

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