



July 1, 2010

The Observer
Community Comment

The Friends of the Grande Ronde Valley want to thank all of the people that attended our presentation of the Reality of Wind Power. For those that did not attend, please go to www.granderonde.tv where you can see the power point presentation and the question and answer session.

Meanwhile, we find that Horizon Wind continues to do false and misleading advertising in the news media regarding jobs and tax revenue paid into the county. They claim they are paying \$108,000 in property taxes and \$426,000 in community service fees. Upon obtaining the tax revenue documents from the assessor's office, we find the documents show \$71,288 in property taxes and \$283,765 in community service fees that were paid in 2008-2009. The documents also show that we lost \$332,000 in tax revenue due to the Strategic Investment Program.

Horizon continues to claim there will be 50 full time jobs once the Antelope Ridge project is completed, with 20 being employed at the wind farm. Where are the other 30 jobs? We have requested from Horizon numerous times to provide the supporting documentation to back up these claims. To date, we have yet to receive a response. Horizon also claims that the Elkhorn project has resulted in 40 full-time jobs with 15 of them at the Elkhorn Wind Farm. Where is the proof of any job benefit except for the employees at the wind farm? We have requested this documentation as well, and still have received no response.

In Union County, our annual tourism is \$33 million which provides 380 jobs. In other areas where wind farms have been built, the loss of tourism is as high as 25%. Should Union County lose 25%, it would amount to \$8.5 million annually. To lose \$8.5 million in revenue along with 95 jobs, that far outweighs any possible tax revenue of \$5-6 million (if the SIP is not awarded) and the possible "50" jobs received from the ARWF.

This seems to be a common practice for Horizon to make deceptive claims in The Observer without any substantiating proof. It was indicated by Valerie Franklin of Horizon Wind in an article dated June 24, 2010, that there will "only be 250 acres" actually consumed by the Antelope Ridge Wind Farm...since when is 250 acres "only"? Ms. Franklin failed to include the 57 miles of roads, some up to 36 feet wide, the revised exit ramps off the main thoroughfares, component lay down areas, rock crusher sites, and equipment storage locations.

Ms. Franklin also commented in this same article that there were three Golden Eagle kills at the Elkhorn Wind Farm. It causes one to wonder how many other birds and bats have been killed that are on the Endangered Species list at Elkhorn? It is an established fact that there are several endangered species of birds and bats in the site where the Antelope Ridge Wind Farm is to be built. Craig Mountain is also a documented migratory bird and bat flyway.

Did Horizon obtain an Endangered Species Act/Incidental Take Permit that is required for any project that may kill endangered species? We have requested proof that they have these permits for the Elkhorn and the Antelope Ridge projects and make them public. This permit has to be obtained from the Department of Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service. If not obtained, legal action can be pursued to stop the project from being developed and possibly shut down Elkhorn. With this license to kill, how many birds and bats does the permit allow to be killed and who does the counting?

Last week, it was brought to our attention by a water resource expert that the development of wind farm projects has created serious water aquifer issues when blasting was used to build roads and especially for the tower pads that are 80 X 80 feet by 10-12 feet deep. The 164 pads to be blasted into the bedrock at the Antelope Ridge site could have a devastating affect on the water aquifer of Union County. If your spring goes dry, ask why!

Does Horizon think that they can get away with damaging our countryside, our lives and our pursuit of happiness? We are not going to just sit back and let them. Educating our residents on the truth about wind power has stirred us into action. We may live in a rural community, but we are not hicks.

Dennis Wilkinson