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Washington State Senate

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Senator Kirk Pearson
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John R. Norris, Commissioner
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20426

MAR 5 2013

Dear Commissioner Norris:

February 26, 2013

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposal to build a small hydroelectric dam above Sunset Falls on the South Fork of the Skykomish River in Washington State.

In my view, and the view of many of the constituents who live in the area that would be affected by this dam, the potential harm of this project far outweighs its intended benefits.

The small community surrounding Sunset Falls at the base of Mount Index experiences frequent and devastating flooding. Constructing a dam on the river will possibly further constrict water flow and make these issues for the community worse. I have become aware that some homes above the falls escape devastating flood levels by no more than a few inches and I fear that if this project is pursued they will no longer be able to escape the devastating damages of flooding.

Another concern of mine is that this dam project will take away from Washington State's scenery. Sunset Falls, Canyon Falls and Eagle Falls offer truly breathtaking views, showcasing our state's natural beauty. It is my understanding that the project would greatly affect river flow over both Sunset Falls and Canyon Falls which would also take away from our state's beautiful scenery.

Finally, I am concerned that the high cost of the project is not indicative of its benefits as a source of electricity. I would like to point out that I am not opposed to all small hydroelectric projects, but I think that when designing these projects it is important that they have minimal impact on the residents and environment of those areas. I believe that these types of projects must be considerate of the citizens of our state and must be cost effective. Neither of these criteria are met by the current proposal.

I hope you will consider my concerns with this project.

Sincerely,

Kirk Pearson

Committees: Natural Resources & Parks, Chair • Human Services & Corrections, Vice Chair • Law and Justice

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