

January 27, 2023

Ms. Kathleen Drew
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
Horse Heavens Wind Farm
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
P.O. Box 43172
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

RE: Horse Heaven Wind Project

Dear Ms. Drew:

The Visit Tri-Cities Board of Directors is in opposition to the proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm Project in Benton County. Our Board includes 45 members who represent the businesses, public agencies, communities and government in the Tri-Cities.

After reviewing the DEIS from the EFSEC, the Board has a number of concerns including flaws and misrepresentation in the DEIS and lack of local involvement in the process. The focus of this letter is to represent the board's concerns about the negative impacts the project will have on the tourism economy, visitor experience, small business growth, and quality of life in the region.

The Tri-Cities provide a unique and often unexpected visitor experience in Washington. The wide-open spaces and beautiful rolling vistas and vineyards are an essential component in the destination's brand. The immense wind turbines proposed by Scout Clean Energy contradict this long-established brand and would destroy the solitude and beauty of these vistas – robbing the region of its scenic landscapes and the visitor experiences they afford.

The Tri-Cities is in the Heart of Washington Wine Country where 80% of the State's wine grapes are grown. The wine industry is a staple to our visitor economy. Here, you can truly have an authentic grape to glass experience while embracing the incredible views of the Horse Heaven Hills from the beauty of the estate wineries and vineyards. The adverse impacts on the wine industry in this region would be significant.

Research shows in today's tourism dynamics the majority of visitors are looking for travel that includes outdoor recreation, getting away from crowds, and destination experiences that leverage the senses and provide personal transformation. Our destination is tailor made to capitalize on these types of travelers. A project like the Horse Heaven Wind Farm would be a significant deterrent to travelers as they determine destinations to visit. Our tourism businesses believe the wind farm would have adverse impacts on our tourism economy for years to come.

Visitors currently bring nearly \$500 million in outside revenue into our economy each year and provide



nearly 5,000 meaningful jobs. Visitors contribute \$51 million to state and local tax coffers. The wind farm project would disrupt this proven economic foundation. It is our position that the Horse Heaven Hills Wind farm project is a detriment to the tourism economy and allowing the project to happen will translate into a loss of permanent jobs, businesses and the quality of life impacts the visitor economy provides.

We respectfully ask that you deny the application from Scout Clean Energy. Please feel free to contact us for additional details on these or other concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Corey Pearson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Corey Pearson
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Lewis', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kevin Lewis
President and CEO