

Hood River Valley Residents Committee and Columbia Gorge Earth Center hosted a “wind forum” on May 13, 2010 at the Columbia Gorge Hotel. The forum was meant to be an opportunity for citizens to better understand the costs and benefits of wind energy. It also challenged citizens to consider how policy makers can plan for future energy needs amidst a rising population and climate change. About 100 people attended.

The evening had three major components:

1. 8-10 minute presentations by five panelists.
2. Written questions from audience asked to panelists.
3. Two-minute comments from audience.

A brief survey was handed out to all attending. Below are responses to that survey.

What is the most important point, regarding pending wind developments in the valley, that you think the Hood River County Commission should hear?

- Develop the east county wind not Middle Mountain.
- Need for visual impact standards.
- A community push to inspire conservation.
- Public should vote on it (wind turbines?).
- Wind turbines may be OK as long as they are out of sight/out of mind. Not on Middle Mountain.
- Renewable energy is important but not all areas are appropriate for wind turbines – especially forested areas.
- Harm to people and livestock from exposure to vibrations from the wind turbines.
- Wind issues need to be considered in broadest possible context.
- No good comes with this plan and we’re disappointed the public (voting public) was going to be left out of the loop.
- Encourage conservation not development.
- We need to use land use planning to preserve scenic valley and that means to wind turbines.
- Just keep all industrial wind-power development out of the Hood River Valley (period)!!! i.e. out of the Middle Mt and Fir Mt.
- Keep industrial wind power out of the Hood River Valley.
- Stop wind farms in Hood River!
- We cannot afford to invest in this project.
- This is one of the few progressive, forward-looking actions that the city/county has ever taken. I applaud them.
- All need to except limits on our lifestyle.
- Conservation First.
- No wind turbines of this size within two miles or more of any residence. No industrial-strength wind turbines in HR Valley.

- If the Middle Mountain proposal were to go forward, it would open a Pandora's Box as it would set a precedent that would make it almost impossible for the County to deny turbines elsewhere in the County.
- The NIMBY ideals of a few do not represent the views of the entire County – which desires to be 100% sustainable.
- The left wing NIMBY movement and supporters of Obama should heed his declarations on the campaign trail, “there are tough sacrifices each of us will need to make in order to create a better future for your community and America.”
- Because of the detrimental visual impacts on tourism for our award-winning natural scenery and the health effects on humans and wildlife, I think there should be a moratorium on any and all wind turbines in Hood River County on either county or private land. Because of the relatively higher concentration of people per square mile (cf. Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow and Union Counties) in Hood River County and because of the uncertainty of adequate set-backs in our mountainous terrain, the health impacts of the turbines will definitely be felt by a greater number of individuals.

What other Gorge issues would you like to see addressed in future forums?

- Economic Forum
- Decent housing for migrant workers.
- Reducing storm-water runoff.
- How can you reduce your carbon footprint while living in the Gorge?
- Zero carbon emissions for HRC. Limiting our lifestyles.
- Bike path thru valley; rail service to PDX.
- Continued forums with community involvement to encourage creative discussion on options.
- Affects of forestry and other activities on wildlife.
- Information about energy efficiency.
- Forum on energy conservation & lifestyle paradigm shift.
- Future growth impacts
- A community push to inspire conservation.
- Casino.

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