



Pend Oreille County

Board of Commissioners

Karen Skoog
District #1

Mike Manus
District #2

Stephen Kiss
District #3

Rhonda Cary
Clerk of the Board

Phone: 509-447-4119
FAX: 509 447-0595

PO Box 5025
625 W. 4th Street
Newport, WA 99156-5025

E-mail: commissionersoffice@pendoreille.org

February 27, 2018

Kalispel Tribe of Indians
Tribal Council
PO Box 39
Usk, WA 99180

Mr. Holmes:

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) appreciates Curt Holmes and the Kalispel Tribe of Indians for their interest in economic development and for bringing concerns to us about the proposed HiTest Silicon project. Attached you will find an editorial written by the BoCC on the proposed project.

As we stated in our meeting, we are welcoming and polite to HiTest in an objective manner. We believe that the Department of Ecology's (ECY) permitting process allows for concerns and questions to be addressed and perhaps mitigated based on the submitted plan. As a plan has not yet been submitted and reviewed, it is inappropriate for us to have a stated position other than waiting for the process to begin.

We must follow the law and the legal process on land use and cannot use an opinion to make our determinations. Several of your comments relate to the ECY permitting process and standards which we are not able to address. We hear your concerns relating to air quality monitoring and have sent a letter to ECY and HiTest asking for more conclusive monitoring (see attached).

The BoCC initiated the request by Northeast Tri-County Health Department (NETCHD) of a Health Impact Assessment (see attached). This assessment is not a requirement of the state for HiTest to receive a permit to operate, but our board wants scrutiny of the project even beyond what is required. Our current understanding is that the Health Impact Assessment will be paid for by the company but the oversight will be by the Department of Health. The assessment would be done by a competent third-party analyst who is not chosen by the company. NETCHD and the BoCC will stay apprised of this process once it starts.

Moving Forward

Because of community concerns with the HiTest project, interest in economic development is growing. We welcome the opportunity for community engagement in economic development and for your involvement!

We believe that the work the Economic Development Council is doing is crucial. A study of community impacts of Pend Oreille Newsprint and Tech American Mine and a professional community survey will be very helpful. In addition, the county will be working on its own budget projections and variables to assist in long term planning. With the required Comprehensive Plan update starting, data provided by the Employment Security Department <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/county-profiles/pend-oreille#labor> will be very important to understanding what labor force projections and budgets could be in 20 years and how to prepare.

As this research is taking place, we have an opportunity to rally the community to look at the facts whatever they may be. We are committed to finding the best way forward for our community. It is a perfect time to reach out to our partners and community members for an important conversation: our future. It is a perfect time to help our constituents know the county better; the services we provide, our obligations and our limitations. It is a perfect time to share with the community how the Tribe and the County partner together and support our community in ways they may not be aware.

We are pleased to work with our neighbors and friends to find workable solutions for a brighter future.

Respectfully,

PEND OREILLE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Stephen Kiss, Chair



Mike Manus, Vice-Chair



Karen Skoog, Member

cc: Senator Shelly Short
Representative Joel Kretz
Representative Jacquelin Maycumber
Community Development Director Greg Snow

Enclosures: OpEd
Air Quality monitoring request
NETCHD Health Impact Assessment request