

Letter: Two-mile setback for turbines deserve support

East Oregonian

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The proper siting of wind generation needs to be done. Not improper siting left to the victims to live with, be it landowners, elk, birds, bats, fish or landscape.

Landowners that have been run over by the siting of wind turbines in Morrow County had to take it upon themselves for protection. Now, after the fact, the state laws are still being deciphered with the state and county trying to figure out what to do. Have the wind turbines that are out of compliance in Morrow County been turned off? No.

It took over two years' time for the Umatilla Planning Commission to reach a consensus and pass it on to the commissioners.

The Umatilla Board of Commissioners are holding a hearing again on what to have as setbacks from rural homes and towns. With what was mentioned as a consensus of two miles at the last meeting, it looks as though we are headed in the right direction.

While the recommendation from the Umatilla Planning Commission did include some provisions for habitat, the Board of Commissioners took it upon themselves to look at development in the watersheds and critical habitats, which is a huge step forward in the proper planning process.

Wind development has had developers running for leases along existing transmission lines instead of first looking for the best and constant wind areas with the least environmental impacts with proximity to transmission lines as should be done.

Causing damage to streams from extensive road systems in the watersheds, relocation of elk herds wintering and calving ground, blocking the way for bird migration north and south and from higher to lower elevations, tampering with the viewscapes that accent our communities. These are some of the reasons, I, like your editors of this newspaper, support the two-mile setback, as well as a maximum protection of the Blue Mountain watershed and Walla Walla watershed.

Richard Jolly

Blue Mountain Alliance Member

Weston