

June 3, 2015

State Representative Brad Witt
Chair, House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

Dear Chair Witt and Committee Members:

Renewable Northwest is a diverse member organization that is dedicated to the responsible development of renewable resources in Oregon and throughout the Pacific Northwest. Our members range from business and industry groups to educational institutions and conservation organizations.

We applaud the State of Oregon's leadership in developing the Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership and the "All Lands, All Threats" approach to sage grouse conservation and habitat protection. We believe the State is well on track to develop a plan that will protect sage grouse strongholds while allowing for the continued development of renewable resources in Oregon.

The rules currently under development by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, and relevant stakeholders will enable entities such as counties and the State to allow future large-scale development such as renewable energy projects or linear rights of way (transmission lines) in sage grouse habitat. The State proposes to adopt a threshold for "disturbance" in affected counties, strict criteria for where projects could be sited, and a "mitigation hierarchy" that developers will follow if a project is found suitable for a particular location. This approach will allow a pathway forward to developing Oregon's high-quality wind and solar energy resources and protecting sage grouse habitat.

The decision of whether to list the sage grouse under the Endangered Species Act is anticipated this summer. Therefore, now is a critical time to support the State's efforts to provide certainty for future development while safeguarding our state's iconic and ecologically crucial sagebrush habitat.

Sincerely,

Hillary Barbour
Policy Director
Renewable Northwest

3Degrees
American Wind Energy Association
Atkins
Blattner Energy
Bonneville Environmental
Foundation
Center for Energy Efficiency &
Renewable Technologies
Christenson Electric
Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon
Climate Solutions
Columbia Gorge
Community College
Community Renewable
Energy Association
DNV GL
EDF Renewable Energy
EDP Renewables
Environment Oregon
Environment Washington
Eurus Energy America
EverPower
FirstWind
GE Energy
Geothermal
Resources Council
Green Mountain Energy
HDR Engineering, Inc.
Iberdrola Renewables
Idaho Conservation League
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NextEra Energy Resources
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NW Energy Coalition
OneEnergy Renewables
Oregon Solar Energy
Industries Association
Orion Renewable Energy
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REC Silicon
RES America Developments
Solar Oregon
Stoel Rives, LLP
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SWCA Environmental Consultants
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Vestas Americas
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Water Enterprises
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