

FOREST ETHICS



David
Suzuki
Foundation



March 2, 2009

Ms. Madeline West
Program Associate, WREZ Initiative
Western Governors' Association
1600 Broadway, Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202
U.S.A.
mwest@westgov.org; 303-623-9378 x 125

Dear Ms. West:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the findings and maps produced recently as a result of the Western Renewable Energy Zone (WREZ) project.

We represent five environmental organizations in British Columbia (B.C.) monitoring the Western Renewable Energy Zone (WREZ) Initiative of the Western Governors' Association (WGA).

We recognize that for all of the large gains that can be achieved through the maximization of energy efficiency and conservation efforts, there will be a need for more clean/renewable energy generation in B.C. and elsewhere. However, we are very concerned about the manner in which the development of new renewable energy generation has been occurring in recent years within B.C.

We believe the development of new power generation in B.C. needs to be managed through a rigorous, science-based and publicly-transparent strategic assessment of where new power generation plants should - and should not - be located. While we do not view the WREZ Initiative as an sufficient substitute for a rigorous, comprehensive, and transparent strategic energy resource development process by the government of B.C., we do believe that the methodology set out in the WREZ Charter and Workplan sets out a robust and effective framework to identify and assess potential low-impact renewable energy resource areas in B.C.

Our major concern with the preliminary assessment and findings of the WREZ Zone Identification and Technical Analysis Work Group (ZITA), is that the WREZ methodology was not applied for the B.C. part of the project. The actual analysis done - which we examine in depth in the technical appendix attached to this letter - weakens the prospects for effective planning in B.C. and undermines the overall credibility of the WREZ process. We strongly urge WREZ to re-do the B.C. energy renewable energy assessment in accordance with the WREZ methodology used for the U.S.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Heap
Climate and Energy Policy Analyst
David Suzuki Foundation

Dave Neads
Director, Bioenergy Program
B.C. Spaces for Nature

Merran Smith
Director, Climate Program
ForestEthics

Greg Gowe
Staff Counsel
West Coast Environmental Law

Wendy L. Francis
Director of Conservation: Science and Action
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

c:
Les Maclaren, ADM, B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
Ed Higginbottom, B.C. Transmission Corporation
Sue Bonnyman, B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

Attach:
Review of WREZ's analysis of renewable energy resources in British Columbia, and the results shown on the Draft Preliminary Qualified Resource Areas Map.