

DIANE BLACK
6TH DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES

355 NORTH BELVEDERE DRIVE
SUITE 308
GALLATIN, TN 37066
(615) 206-8204
(615) 206-8980 (FAX)

321 EAST SPRING STREET
SUITE 301
COOKEVILLE, TN 38501
(931) 854-0069

May 19, 2016

The Honorable Daniel M. Ashe
Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Ashe,

I am writing in regards to a wind energy project proposed by Apex Clean Energy in Crab Orchard, Tennessee. This project would encompass 1,800 acres on the edge of the Cumberland Plateau which is home to the beautiful Cumberland Mountain State Park.

It is my understanding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) may need to conduct an environmental assessment to fully understand the effects of this project on species protected under the following federal laws: the *Endangered Species Act*, *Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act*, *Migratory Bird Treaty Act*, and the *Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act*.

Considering that this project would be built within 10 miles of the Cumberland Mountain State Park, many of my constituents have contacted me with serious questions and concerns. This area has been frequented by local residents since 1938 to enjoy the natural beauty of the landscape and outdoor recreational activities such as camping, hiking, canoeing, and fishing. This treasure of a region not only belongs to the residents of Cumberland County, but to all Tennesseans who travel across the state to participate in events such as Pioneer Days, Fishing Derby and admire its beauty while gazing upon the Ozone Falls.

Given this, the Cumberland County community and Tennessee as a whole will bear some form of cost from this project. While these costs may not be economic, they will certainly be tangible. The Cumberland Mountains have an importance that reaches well beyond the borders of the county and its preservation should not be mortgaged on short-term interests. As such, I cannot recommend that USFWS allow Apex Clean Energy to proceed with this project. Therefore, I strongly urge USFWS to host hearings for residents of Cumberland County in order to address these concerns before granting Apex Clean Energy approval to move forward with this project.

I respectfully request that you carefully consider these ramifications and all of the affects that this wind farm will have. This project will have far reaching consequences for the residents of Cumberland County and all Tennesseans who visit the Cumberland Mountains. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Black".

Rep. Diane Black
Member of Congress