



Fountain Wind Project (CEC Docket 23–OPT–01)

Why the CEC record supports denial

1) What it is (grounded facts from the docket)

Fountain Wind is an onshore wind generation proposal in unincorporated Shasta County near Burney on private, leased working forest land. The CEC's published notice describes up to 48 turbines up to ~610 feet tall and up to ~205 MW nameplate capacity. efiling.energy.ca.gov

It is being processed under the CEC's Opt-In Certification authority created by AB 205, which consolidates permitting and allows the state to act even amid local opposition. efiling.energy.ca.gov+1

Why the state's own record says it should be denied

Two official statements are the clearest "why this is bad" backbone:

- The CEC's Draft EIR notice states the project has **"multiple significant and unavoidable impacts"** including:

Biological Resources (bird/bat collisions; plus knock-on ecological risk because turbines can **impair aerial firefighting**)

Cultural + Tribal Cultural Resources (significant, unmitigable impacts including **visual impacts to an identified tribal cultural landscape**)

Forestry Resources (permanent conversion of **high productivity** forest lands; not conforming with timber production district LORS)

Hazards/Wildfire (turbines as an **impediment to aerial firefighting**; significant unavoidable impact remains)

Land Use (nonconformance with county LORS prohibiting large wind; no feasible mitigation to conform)

Visual Resources (FAA lighting and scenic vista degradation; significant unavoidable; additional nonconformance issues). efiling.energy.ca.gov

- The CEC Executive Director formally recommends the Commission **deny certification**, explicitly because of (1) the **numerous significant/unavoidable impacts** and (2) the lack of a defensible **statement of overriding considerations**—i.e., staff does **not** believe the benefits justify approval here. efiling.energy.ca.gov+1

- The CEC record flags **impairment to aerial firefighting** as significant and unavoidable. Anything that predictably increases catastrophic harm risk is disfavored—even before politics. efiling.energy.ca.gov
- The administrative record frames this as a working forest / timberland siting conflict—i.e., a project that markets as green but triggers conversion impacts on Site Class I/II forest and raises TP-district nonconformance issues. In your terms: a “looks-green / functions–destabilizing” trade—short-run gains that undercut the long-run economic substrate (forest productivity, sustained-yield economics, and regional stability) that the region actually runs on. efiling.energy.ca.gov
- Siting large vertical infrastructure in a high-fire landscape while introducing aviation constraints degrades response capacity when the system is under maximum stress. efiling.energy.ca.gov
- The state’s own notice acknowledges **significant and unmitigable impacts to tribal cultural landscape / visual integrity**. efiling.energy.ca.gov+1
- AB 205’s opt-in process is built to **override local land-use denial** when the state decides the statewide need is higher. The Executive Director memo is unusually explicit that this authority exists because local opposition can obstruct clean energy development. limits local and Tribal decision power unless protections are enforceable efiling.energy.ca.gov
- The Pit River Tribe’s objection highlights a direct policy clash—while one arm of California funds **tribal land return / stewardship**, another arm can site adjacent industrial infrastructure that undermines stewardship and cultural landscape integrity. efiling.energy.ca.gov

TAKE ACTION: Attend / Comment

Fri Dec 19, 2025 | 10–3

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