

World Editorial Board | Substations, here

by World Editorial Board

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Commentary

The Chelan County PUD, lest we forget, is a public agency with statutory obligations and duties. One is to supply electricity to residents who need and want it. Another, is to listen to and consider the criticisms of those who object to the way they go about the job.

The PUD commission takes up both duties Tuesday as it considers moving forward with detailed analysis of proposed sites for a new substation off the north shore of Lake Chelan. One site off Boyd Road has drawn the ire of nearby property owners who say the substation will disturb and endanger them and reduce property values. Dozens packed a meeting in August and many are expected Tuesday.

We cannot say whether these not-near-us complaints are right or wrong, fair or unjust. We do not know if the site in question is the best, most efficient, and least disruptive.

We do know that to provide a reliable power supply to growing neighborhoods, you must build substations. By nature they are not picturesque. We have grown so accustomed to being served with an ample, highly reliable and inexpensive supply of electricity that we forget the nitty-gritty of supplying it.

Electricity does not come to us by some magic trick. It requires forethought, design, engineering, a plethora of less-than-beautiful industrial equipment, and a very large investment borne by all. It's all there, and if we can't see it somebody else will.

Most of us could imagine not being thrilled by the prospect of a substation and all it entails landing unexpectedly next to our property. But, it has to go somewhere, probably where someone won't like it. As a result, thousands of homes will have a reliable supply of power that likely they will take for granted. We know this because it already has happened everywhere else. Eventually those substations are ignored and mostly forgotten, part of the everyday scenery.

We are grateful for them. The electricity comes, just like magic.

This is the opinion of The Wenatchee World and its Editorial Board: Publisher Rufus Woods, Managing Editor Cal FitzSimmons and Editorial Page Editor Tracy Warner.