

D.ANDREW FINAL ARGUMENT

I am leaving the majority of the final argument to NAFS, but I must comment on the direct route – Arawana route options for routing the transmission line and one distribution line on the agricultural lands of D. Andrew, B. Thompson, and H. Wright.

My two fellow landowners and I are most definitely against the “preferred direct route” through our agricultural lands. The route will have a most negative aesthetic impact on our small acreages. The present and future legal rights that right-of-ways give FortisBC are also of major concern. There has been absolutely no evidence that FortisBC will willingly consider our rights now or in the future if they obtain a right-of-way. We do not trust their corporate goodwill, nor trust their repeated statements of positive corporate-landowner negotiations in the past. I suspect that the landowners had a choice of the lesser of two evils, because who would willingly give up control of their land to another party with the resultant impact on future land value, land use, and aesthetics?

My wife’s and my vineyard will be most negatively aesthetically affected because the transmission lines will cut through our view of Okanagan Lake and also the mountains beyond. Our house was situated to take advantage of this unsurpassed vista. Not one visitor to our farm has failed to remark upon the view, especially to the northwest where the transmission lines would be very evident. We sit on our front and back decks to look to the east, to the north, and to the west to enjoy the forests, mountains, and the lake. The sunsets are spectacular. We have an unobstructed lakeview for over 20 miles. The proposed direct route crosses our views to the east, to the north, and to the west along 766 feet of our north fenceline, and a major obstruction will be within 150 feet of our house.

My wife and I have lived here for nineteen years. In all that time we have never failed to enjoy our luck to be so privileged as to have such a desirable piece of land with such a panoramic view. Over the last year, however, we have looked at this beautiful view with sadness coupled with anger because FortisBC wishes to take this magnificent view away and give us money for our loss. No money can replace our million-dollar view and peace of mind. Once the view is destroyed it is gone forever. That is why we have fought so hard for our land. We are not wealthy in money, but we are rich in the beauty of our vineyard where we spend a great deal of our retired time working to make our place attractive. FortisBC is insensitive to our love of our land. FortisBC sees our land only as a means to connect a poorly placed substation to the power grid. FortisBC looks at our land as a potential FortisBC asset. Our needs are not relevant to the goals of “... serving its customers in the most cost effective manner...” FortisBC wishes to denigrate nineteen years of effort and caring for the land with no consultation and only corporate objectives in mind.

Often walkers and sightseers stop to see the lake. Many photographs have been taken by passers-by. All this enjoyment and appreciation of natural beauty will stop if FortisBC is allowed to construct an eye-catching transmission line on the “direct route”. The power lines will be most assuredly non-conforming. They will be a blight on the landscape. They will be the focus of negative attention by all. There is no way to “mitigate” power lines despite what FortisBC repeatedly states.

Nobody should have to experience what my wife and I, and others, have gone through over the past fourteen months to protect our lands from violation for profit and convenience. Donna and I have never looked at our land as a disposable asset; it defines who we are. We appreciate natural beauty and have worked hard to achieve it. We will continue to fight for our land through whatever legal processes are left to us.

Submitted by David Andrew

