

Alaska Energy Security Task Force
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 10, 2023
Anchorage, Alaska

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom called the meeting of the Alaska Energy Security Task Force (AESTF) to order on October 10, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members present: Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom; Vice-Chair Curtis Thayer; Clay Koplín; Joe Byrnes for Commissioner John Boyle; Karl Hanneman; Jenn Miller; Duff Mitchell; John Sims; Robert Venables; UAF Chancellor Daniel White; Ex Officio: Anne Rittgers for Senator Click Bishop; Commissioner Keith Kurber; Representative George Rauscher; Erin Whitney.

Also present were Andrew Jensen, Policy Advisor to Governor Dunleavy; Michael Yaffee and Marc Luken, Michael Baker International (consultant); and Jennifer Bertolini, AEA. (Jennifer to confirm)

A quorum was present to conduct business.

3. Public Comments

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom stated that the purpose of today's meeting is to accept public comments on the draft Alaska Statewide Energy Master Plan. In the interest of time, we are limiting comments today from each person to three minutes. In addition, we are accepting written comments until 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 24th. Please send your written comments to:

info@akenergysecuritytaskforce.com

The floor was opened for comments from attendees in the room. Instructions were given to online folks to raise their hand in the Teams app to be recognized. Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom also asked Task Force members if they had any questions or comments to share.

June Okada (ph) - My name is June Okada, and I am commenting today on the draft Alaska Energy Security Task Force report. Specifically on Priority A-2.3 in the Railbelt Transmission Generation and Storage section. I speak on behalf of the Susitna River Coalition. And our more than 14,000 individuals and businesses who support our work.

Diversifying our local energy generation to conserve the diminishing Cook Inlet gas supply is a necessity at this point. However, we believe the proposed Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric project clearly warrants a no-go decision without moving forward with further feasibility assessments.

The Mat-Su dam is estimated to cost \$7 billion in 2023 value, according to a recent presentation by the Alaska Energy Authority. This is a gross underestimation, and it does not consider the new, costly transmission lines that would have to be built. Nor does it include the costs associated with purchasing or leasing native corporation lands that the dam would exist on. In addition, state funds would also be required to mitigate damages to the Susitna's salmon fisheries. These would all add a significant amount to the already hefty price tag.

Taking meaningful action to create economically responsible and clean energy systems for Alaskans means deciphering what projects will create the least harmful impacts for decades to come. Mega dams are not carbon neutral and therefore cannot be considered clean energy. Reservoirs release methane, and the EPA now includes dams in their greenhouse gas reports--disparaging claims that large hydro projects reduce carbon emissions.

With our rapidly changing climate, Alaska's glaciers are melting at an alarming rate and causing river flow pattern changes. Extreme floods and droughts are more frequent, and water availability fluctuates unpredictably. Without accurate understanding of the timing and magnitude of deglaciation, a dam's size and scale has uncalculated risks and is inadequately reliable, and unsafe. Above all, the Su Dam would embody the collapse of south central Alaska's river life, its economy and ecology. The eradication of its unique ecosystems, the destruction of one of Alaska's most valued salmon spawning and rearing habitats, and the flooding of 40,000 acres teeming with wildlife. The Su Dam is not a silver bullet for clean energy, carbon reduction and lower energy rates, and remains costly with (indiscernible--cough). Thank you for your consideration today and for the opportunity to make a public comment.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked June for her comments. And recognized Gretchen Keiser.

Gretchen Keiser - My name is Gretchen Kaiser (ph). I'm a board member for the Alaska Heat Smart. Annie Romanoff, the executive director of Alaska Heat Smart, testified earlier this summer, but is unavailable now. Alaska Heat Smart is a nonprofit organization that provides education and in home space heating technical assessments to Juneau homeowners on converting their homes to heat pumps.

Alaska Heat Smart works communitywide and also operates programs focused on lower income households. In 2023, Alaska Heat Smart initiated a pilot project in Sitka, our neighboring community. Our results since beginning operation in 2020 indicate Alaska Heat Smart technical assistant yields about 75% conversion by participating homeowners to heat pumps. Home

energy cost savings average over 50%, or \$1200 to \$1,800 a year, depending on the previous heating system. And significantly, Alaska Heat Smart educated homeowners means streamlined upfront work required of local installers. These small businesses can complete more projects, hire additional technicians, and improve their bottom line.

With that background on Alaska Heat Smart, I support the following strategies and actions in the Draft Energy Plan. And I'll just enumerate them as they're identified.

Action B-1.6, which is Enhance Alaska Workforce for Beneficial Electrification. Alaska Heat Smarts experience has been that we have had to grow our own workforce over the past five years.

Action B 4.1 Promote Heat Pumps in Coastal Alaska. Alaska Heat Smart fields many calls if there is growing interest from Ketchikan to Kodiak. Heat punts are highly efficient and proven technology, and the cheapest energy source is energy efficiency.

Priority D - State Energy Data. We wholeheartedly endorse this priority. Alaska Heat Smart has been able to use its data mentioned above to justify successful local and federal grant funding.

Priority E Incentives and Subsidies, Strategy E-4.3 Alaska Heat Smart supports a state green bank for financing community energy efficiency projects. It's a question of scale. With more money, we could do more houses.

Strategy E-6.3 Increase State Resources for Community Energy Efficiency Programs. We would suggest that the state use established local organizations such as Alaska Heat Smart for cost effective delivery to Alaskan households, especially as substantial federal clean energy funding is now coming to state agencies. That concludes my comments. Thank you very much for your hard work on this draft plan and we're all go for it.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Gretchen for her comments. She recognized Steve Behnke for his comments.

Steve Behnke - Hi, I'm Steve Benke and I'm with the nonprofit Renewable Juneau. We're a 501(c)(3) that provides information and advocacy for renewable energy in the state capital. Projects that we work on include public support for benefits, electrification in Juneau, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, including heat pumps, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, cruise ship dock, shore power, all things that reduce energy costs, keep money circulating in the local economy, and reduce the price shocks of oil.

We've supported and advocated for the City and Borough of Juneau's (CBJ) renewable Energy Strategy. We've been partners in creating Alaska Heat Smart, who just presented. We've also

raised money for the installation of heat pumps to replace oil heat and reduce heating costs in lower income homes. In Juneau have done about 40 installations of heat pumps and we're expanding our program to Sitka and Ketchikan. We've been following the development of the State Energy Master Plan. Appreciate the chance to testify. We see some big opportunities for the state to improve Alaskans' access to lower costs and cleaner energy.

I'm just going to tell you briefly a little bit about Juneau's experience to make some points about the kinds of things that the state could really help more on. In 2019, the City and Borough of Juneau adopted the Juneau Renewable Energy Strategy, which calls for shifting total energy use in the community from about what was about 20% of the community's total energy use in 2019 to about 80% by mid-century. We just completed an update of the goals of the General Climate Action Plan and Renewable Energy Strategy, and we're actually now at about 25% renewable energy for the total energy use in the community.

There's been a significant shift in heating, which has been one of the major changes over the past decade, with heat pumps increasing from a couple of hundred heat pumps, five-six years ago, to approximately 2,000 now, which is almost 20% of the community heating with heat pumps. As Gretchen mentioned earlier, that has a big impact because every time somebody shifts from an electric resistance or oil heat in Juneau to a heat pump, they can save about 50% on their heating bill. So Juneau intends to make this shift by supporting Alaska Hear Smart's budget. It also is working on supporting electric vehicle adoption, supporting energy efficiency and increased electrification of local, state and federal government operations and by supporting electrification of industrial energy use, including local mining operations and connecting cruise ships to shore power while docked in Juneau.

Obviously the CBJ can't do all of this alone. And it could do it a lot more effectively, I think, like almost all the communities, certainly all the rural communities and most of the smaller communities in the state, it really could be a lot more effective if it can join forces, if it can get broader support from the state, and a number of the items in the master plan head in that direction. So I'm just going to mention a couple of those things.

Certainly, the strategies that deal with providing better information on energy supplies and uses is a major element of that. We found we have to spend quite a bit of money on pulling that kind of data together. It's one thing for Juneau with our 30,000 people to do it, it's another thing for communities of 500 or 22,000 or 10,000 to do it. So that's somewhere the state could really help out and help everybody in the state.

The other thing is support for financing. Again, we've worked on financing programs within Juneau and have made some headway there with local community financial institutions supporting heat pump adoption loans for those. But again, it would be a lot more effective if there were the Green Bank, State Green Bank, for financing community scale energy efficiency

and beneficial electrification programs. So we think that the state could contribute a lot to those things.

The other big area the state could do is reduce some of its own institutional barriers to programs. Renewable energy projects are complicated. They often involve big upfront costs, but they also can get bogged down in the minutiae of utility regulation that really wasn't designed to deal with renewable energy development. I think looking back, we can see a number of cases where there have been useful projects that got delayed because the regulatory commission doesn't have a mandate to look at those elements of the public interest. So we support a number of the actions, particularly actions listed under the Strategy B dealing with coastal areas, a lot of which specifically target the kinds of areas that we care about. Thanks for the chance to testify.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Steve for his comment. She asked if anyone else wanted to share their comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Mr. Huckabee (ph) - (indiscernible--poor audio) Friday and the notice was for today. When people say the cheapest cost of energy available, is that as a cost analysis overall, as an energy supply, or to other people having that request? (indiscernible--poor audio)

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom advised Mr. Huckabee that his phone is cutting in and out and the team is not able to hear him. She also advised Mr. Huckabee that we are not answering questions today, we're taking public comment. And so we would be happy to take that for the record.

Mr. Huckabee (ph) - his public comment is that this is awfully short notice on an important topic. We saw the notice on Friday for the meeting today, and that's why I don't think you're having anybody call into this thing. It's middle of the workday when other people have to do their doesn't seem like an appropriate time. And my comment would be that it seems like people are talking about costs at the cost of others, whether it be the State of Alaska taxpayers, and I think if we were talking about energy costs in our homes, that the cost analysis without (indiscernible--poor audio) that's my comment.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Huckabee for his comments. She wanted him to know that we did advertise this meeting on social media starting last Friday. However, the meeting followed all the notification regulations, and it has been publicly noticed for the last 21 days.

She asked if anyone else wanted to share their comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom recognized Mr. Ken Griffin for his comments.

Ken Griffin - My name is Ken Griffin and I have no affiliation. I'm just an Alaska citizen. When will we be able to testify? I mean, listen, I'll be honest. I agree that the notice is very short. I paid into stuff like this, and I just found it out. Of course, I don't use social media, so I don't think that's necessarily an appropriate way to get a hold of people. But maybe you could mention where I could find the future dates. Because listen, I'm interested in reading this document you guys put out, but it's quite a large document in draft format, and I need days to go over something so important. But I definitely want to be able to testify. I definitely want to be able to make public comment.

I see there's another meeting coming up, looks like on the 24th. Obviously, I work a job during the day. I'm an everyday citizen, so I have to stop my job if my employer allows me to, to give public comment on such things. But I try to make time for it. But if you guys could find other ways to really get this out. I'm not sure if it's on the dot.gov or maybe I'm looking at the wrong place for it, but it was really short notice, and this is an extremely important topic since Alaska is super energy dependent. It's extremely important the cost of energy out here. And the choice of fuels that we all want to use. Obviously, this energy board is going to be a big deal, especially as I read some of the writings. So could you address a couple of those things?

Vice Chair Curtis Thayer responded that yes, we did publicly notice this meeting through the normal State of Alaska in the proper notification time. These dates were also on our website and referred to the website for the last several weeks, if not months. And what we did is we also did social media posts and those were put up last week.

And sometimes if you look at those, it depends how they've been pushed or how people share social media posts when they do it. So the social media posts were within the last week. However, the actual notification of this meeting, and that was done in several weeks ago. And this report, in its entirety, was just available at our last meeting. And so we apologize if the social media posts were late, but we did go through the state system and through the proper notification with all the documents. The social media was just to add to encourage public just in case we miss people through the notification process. Apparently social media is a better hit. But we also allow written comments through the 24th at close of business. And then also we'll have more public comments on the 24th. So that would give you time to look and read the document for your next testimony. But thank you very much.

Mr. Griffin asked if the Task Force will take actual public testimony, where you guys will answer questions? I'm a little confused as to whether or not we're going to read this document, have questions of the validity of it or the content in it, and then be able to come to you guys for clarification of questions. Forgive me, it was a little harsh here. We're not answering questions,

you're just going to comment and that's what you get. I was a little astonished at that considering that somehow I feel like this is a state thing. So when will you guys let us testify to what we've read and ask questions and get questions answered about the material that you guys put out?

Vice Chair Thayer responded that we appreciate his comments. Just in context, we have met publicly since April, and we have met for over 200 hours in both full committee and subcommittee. Those meetings have all been publicly noticed and on social media and been available for the public to attend as we've gone through this process.

And the purpose for today's meeting was with the report in the draft format and that was to take public comment based on the draft format that is here to see if there's things that we might have missed or things that we need to hear from the public on particular questions on the task force. And our next meeting is October 24th.

For example, one of the subcommittees met today and another one met yesterday. They're all publicly noticed, and some subcommittees have been meeting for 7-8 hours. So we've had over 200 hours of public meetings thus far on this document, where we started with a clean slate to where we are today with a document before you.

Mr. Griffin asked if he will be able to ask questions on the 24th and have those answered if the answers can be provided. It just sounded like the last person that spoke was asking question, and I'm not sure I didn't catch because I don't see everybody's video. Sounded like someone said, we're not answering questions today. So on the 24th, as I go through this document, will you be answering questions then?

If you have questions of the document, I would appreciate if you could do that in writing so we can consolidate and provide answers.

Mr. Griffin stated you will not provide answers in audio format. I don't know. Listen, no offense, but I'm a father, I'm a husband. I have two jobs. It's very difficult for me to sit down, write a letter, send it off to you, and get it answered in time before or even hear time. I barely heard about this notice, and as I said, I pay attention to these things. So I'm kind of surprised you don't answer questions in the Zoom meetings. I mean, I've stopped my whole workday just to get to this Zoom meeting.

Vice Chair Thayer responded, again, we've had over 200 hours of public meetings and have dressed comments there. Plus we have a symposium series that took questions for 16 hours on various topics throughout this process. But I understand your concern. If you would email your concerns or email your questions, then we can attempt to answer the questions. And keep in mind, everybody on the task force is a volunteer in a similar situation. And so we want to be

sensitive of their time to make sure we do answer the public's questions, but also have time to respond too. To make sure you have the most accurate information.

Mr. Griffin responded, I thank you for your time. But as I sit here and this meeting is completely silent, maybe one or two people spoke, I would think there'd be plenty of time for citizens to ask questions. And it sounds like you guys are unwilling to do that in an audio format where it's the most convenient for citizens to do.

Vice Chair Thayer asked Mr. Griffin if he has a particular reference or section on one of the strategies or numbers that you would like to have addressed?

Mr. Griffin responded that he will on the 24th. I printed out this huge document, and I've been going through it all night. So, yeah, on the 24th, I will have some serious questions. I already found a bunch, but I'd like to have them all coordinated and ask the most important ones, since even in public testimony as important as this one, it sounds like we're only going to get roughly three or four minutes to ask these questions. So I wanted to make sure I asked the most important ones, the most highlighted ones, if you will.

And I haven't completely gone through the document. So, some questions that I have may be answered in that document, I don't know, because I just got my hands on it. So I will love to hear that in audio format. We could ask them on the 24th, because for me, that's the most convenient way, being that I have to stop my work to do everything to get into these meetings. That's very crucial for me. I appreciate that.

Vice Chair Thayer responded that he understands the situation and thanked Mr. Griffin for his comments. Again, if you wish to email anything so we can respond to you directly, we can do that too.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom asked if anyone else wanted to share their comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Vice Chair Thayer asked Mr. Griffin if he had another comment. Mr. Griffin asked when the 130-page document was released to the public. He found it on Friday. Vice Chair Thayer responded you found it on social media as an attachment. It was released through the State of Alaska Public Notice System earlier in that week with proper notice. And then also, as previously stated, it's been an ever evolving document throughout the course of the summer and the fall.

Mr. Griffin responded that somebody sent it to me. I don't do social media. I just don't. I don't have a Facebook or whatever. But somebody did send it to me. They texted it to me as it's an

area I like to read about. But the final draft, the draft, I'll call it the final draft, which is the last draft I received that was released when? You said earlier this last week?

Vice Chair Thayer responded yes. It was done through the public notification system, and then we augmented it through social media. And it sounds like you received it through social media.

Mr. Griffin stated he received it through a third party. Actually, I got it through text message. Again, I don't have social media, but I just received it recently. And I'm just trying to figure out how much actual time was given to the public to review 130 pages. That's all. Just curious. Vice Chair Thayer stated that the report has been available in different formats for the last several weeks. But I don't know the version that you have in hand that was provided through text.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom asked if anyone else wanted to share their comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Ken Huckaba (ph) - Ms. Bertolini stated that Mr. Ken Huckaba (ph) has submitted some comments online, and I'm going to read them into the record.

1. There is a statement repeatedly made as an assumption that electrification lowers costs. Probe that supposition or remove it from the plan.
2. Why push to develop renewables on federal land and develop and not develop and produce oil and gas?
3. Why should the state be in the business of workforce training. If it's truly competitive and cheaper, wouldn't generating companies do this themselves?
4. There is an inaction item to identify burdensome regulation. Isn't this more burdensome regulation?
5. Is there a program to pay for the 70% of the generation that renewables can never make? Why should we adopt net metering to pay for renewable when they often make power when it's not needed?
6. Lastly, he states, does this establish authority over utilities and co-ops?

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom stated that it's 3:30 p.m., and we don't have any hands raised. She asked the Subcommittee chairs if there's anything that you would like to report out. And if those of you who are online could also state the time and location of your next meeting.

State Energy Data - Chancellor White stated that he's happy to bring up that the subcommittee on data produced a report. We had a very broad group of stakeholders that was called the Technical Advisory Committee, which was led by Brittany Smart at the Alaska Center for Energy and Power. We came up with a SWOT analysis and a number of goals that we thought would

help the state in analyzing energy needs and the energy position of all of our locations. So I think there's a lot there and there's a lot of opportunity.

We don't currently have a next meeting scheduled. We'll respond as needed from the Energy Task Force overall. But I think a lot of very good work was done and a lot of stakeholders were involved in producing the SWOT analysis and the recommendations. And we appreciate the work of the task force and look forward to modifying or adjusting as appropriate. Thank you very much.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Chancellor White for his update. She asked Mr. Duff Mitchell for an update.

Coastal Generation, Distribution, and Storage - This is Duff Mitchell. I'm the co-chair of the Coastal Subcommittee. And I would just like to point out that the Coastal Subcommittee met numerous hours, took public testimony, listened, and listened well, incorporated public comments in our meetings into our recommendations, and feel like we've come together with some good recommendations for the coastal sections of our Alaska and our economies. Like Chancellor White said, we have October 20 scheduled as the next date. However, it's to primarily listen and take incorporation of the public comments forward and discuss those as they need to be discussed in relation to the Coastal Committee. So that's my report, Madam Chair. Thank you.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Mitchell and asked Karl Hanneman for an update.

Statutes and Regulations Reform - Karl Hanneman here for Statutes and Reg Subcommittee with Robert Venables. And we had a meeting today where we haven't taken public testimony in our work because we've primarily been looking at the recommendations of the other subcommittees. But we did seek input from Alaska Power Association, and we participated in several of the symposiums that gave different perspectives on a number of issues. So we have another meeting next Tuesday, October 17th, and look forward to wrapping up our work on schedule.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Hanneman for his update. And asked Tony Izzo for an update.

Railbelt Transmission, Generation, and Storage - Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor. As co-chair of the Railbelt Subcommittee, pleased to report that we are in the process of fine-tuning our recommendations primarily in the areas of infrastructure meaning transmission generation and the diversification of fuel supply as well as economic development options to grow load, which will help spread costs and as a result reduce the cost of power.

We do not have meetings scheduled. As mentioned by Mr. Thayer, our meetings have been attended by a wide variety of people. All of them have been subject to the Open Meetings Act. We've received public input from a variety of stakeholders, including railbelt utilities, the Susitna River Coalition and others. Greatly appreciate that input. We're looking forward to this and the next scheduled public comment session, which will inform us in how we finalize those recommendations for our full Task Force meeting, I believe, on October 31.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Izzo and asked Clay Koplin for his update.

Rural Generation, Distribution, and Storage - This is Clay Koplin for the Rural Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Storage subcommittee with Co-chair Andrew Guy. We also had fairly good public participation and comments, and we did incorporate those into our strategies. I think some of the positive comments in today's public testimony reflected some of those items.

We do have one more Rural Subcommittee meeting this Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Primarily, there were a few expected outcomes that we hadn't populated in the matrix. So we're just putting some placeholders in there for discussion. And that should be our final meeting before the meetings of the Task Force as a whole in the next public testimony on October 24th. Thank you.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Koplin for his update. She stated that we have about 25 more minutes of time available for public testimony. But I'll go ahead and announce that our next meeting is going to be Tuesday, October the 24th, and we did hear the request that was made earlier by a few about the time of the meetings. And so we are going to adjust our time. And the meeting will be held Tuesday, October 24th from 5:00 to 06:00 p.m. for public testimony.

Some of us will be here in this room and anyone is welcome to come here, or you will be able to join the meeting by Teams and that dial in information will also be online.

Ken Huckaba (ph) - Ms. Bertolini stated that Mr. Ken Huckaba (ph) has submitted additional comments online, and I'm going to read them into the record.

1. How does hydrogen lower cost? It is eight times less efficient than just burning natural gas.
2. Who pays for distribution and infrastructure that does not exist?
3. What happens when the IJA and IRA money runs out?
4. And lastly, everywhere renewable portfolios have been adopted, costs have gone up drastically. Will benchmarking on other programs be conducted?

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom asked Clay Koplín if he had any additional questions or comments? He responded no additional questions or comments at this time. I was glad to see fairly good public participation and glad that there's a second opportunity on October 24th for people to review materials and as Curtis pointed out, opportunities to post testimony online through the email address, their written comments, and to prepare for that second bite at the apple on the 24th. Thank you to all the committees for their many, many volunteer hours of work on this project.

Vice Chair Thayer commented that he was looking at his notes and realized that the Rail Belt does have a subcommittee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 17th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., which is publicly noticed. And it will be available through Teams. So we do have that one coming up.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom asked if anyone else wanted to share their comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom recognized Mr. Matt Jackson.

Matt Jackson - My name is Matt Jackson of Sitka, Alaska. I'm here to comment mostly on Action B 2.1 about the Alaska/Federal Energy Renewable Policy Task Force to coordinate plans between the state and the federal government. I think this is a noteworthy goal to try and coordinate between the state and the federal for the purposes of developing renewable energy. I think that's a very worthwhile goal.

There are two points that I wanted to make, though. In the background opening paragraph, it states that some of America's highest cost energy communities are in the Tongass and Chugach national forests. I feel that's a little bit of a disingenuous statement because some of the United States's cheapest energy also comes from communities within the Tongass National Forest, for example, in Sitka, where I live, or in Juneau or elsewhere. And there's even more expensive energy coming in other parts of the state in western and northern Alaska. So it's clearly not the Tongass that is the problem. It's just simply the geography of remote villages, and that extreme circumstances, even more extreme in other regions that are not surrounded by national forests. So that background, I just simply don't think that's an accurate or useful statement.

As far as how we get there, there was an action item. I'm scrolling through the plan now regarding a federal seek and negotiate obtained through agreement or federal legislation a renewable energy land use designation and transmission line land use designation or what overlay on the Tongass and National Forest Land Use Management plan. If I didn't mention it in my introduction. I work for the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, and we've done a lot, a lot, a lot of work on national forest plans. And to propose a new renewable energy land use

designation (LUD) for the National Forest is, in my mind, a little redundant with the municipal watershed LUD that already exists. So I don't see a strong need to create a whole new type of LUD when municipal watershed LUDs already exist.

If there's a project that a community or utility wants to develop, there's an existing mechanism for doing so. The Tongass National Forest, also in their current LUD map, already has existing and proposed transmission lines shown on their west, including even pretty intensive, I might say almost radical ideas like a proposed transmission line going from Sitka to Angoon, which is almost certainly not going to happen for economic reasons.

So again, creating a new transmission line LUD is unnecessary. It would also have the effect of fracturing other LUDs because transmission lines are narrow, linear things. They don't have the same shape as other land use designations. So it would kind of just throw a wrench in the whole LUD map making process to have these narrow, skinny LUDS dividing up all the other LUDs. It's kind of impractical.

And the final comment I had was just on the idea that these two proposed LUDs would have priority over all other LUDs. That's just unworkable. Even if these two types of LUDs were good ideas, the idea that they would have priority over all other land uses is just not a reasonable, balanced approach to land management or land use planning. That being said, I don't particularly think those two LUDs are even good ideas to begin with. But even if we did get that far, to propose that they have priority over all other land uses does not seem wise to me.

I guess a final procedural point would be that I actually didn't know that this meeting was happening until about 15 minutes ago. And I intend to provide some more detailed comments on the rest of the plan at your October 24th meeting. But I would love to see better notice, more public notice, more lead time and more opportunity for public comment on such an important document as this energy plan, which, in the short time I've been able to skim the plan looks mostly fantastic. I'm very excited, I'm very grateful that you all are working on this. The state obviously needs a lot of investment in planning it's renewable energy and energy security. So thank you for all that work. I just want to make sure the public has time to digest it and make it as good as it can be. So thank you for this opportunity.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom thanked Mr. Jackson for his comments. We appreciate them. She announced that we have seven minutes remaining, if there are any other public comments. Hearing none, we will mute the microphone until someone joins us and wants to speak.

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom stated that it is 4:00 p.m. We are going to end this session of the Energy Task Force public comment. We appreciate all those who called in and gave their testimony today.

4. Next Meeting Date - Tuesday, October 24, 2023, 5:00 p.m. via Teams

Chair Lieutenant Governor Nancy Dahlstrom announced again that our next meeting is going to be Tuesday, October 24, from 5:00 until 06:00 p.m. for public comment on the draft energy plan.

Please look on the website for the mailing address if you wish to send written comments and for the address of our meeting location if you would like to attend in person on the 24th. Also on the website is the Teams link, if you would like to call in. We look forward to hearing from folks.

5. Adjourn

There being no further business of the Task Force, the Alaska Energy Security Task Force meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.