



# ADVISORY BOARD CHARTER AND GROUND RULES

## Low Carbon Energy Project Siting Improvement Study

### BACKGROUND

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is conducting a study to inform how to improve environmental review, permitting, and siting processes for low carbon energy projects in Washington. To understand issues surrounding the permitting and siting of these projects, Ecology and its partner, the Department of Commerce (Commerce), are engaging with a variety of stakeholders and forming an advisory board representing a broad range of interests. The advisory board will share ideas, identify issues, and discuss solutions to inform the study. A third-party consultant will facilitate advisory board meetings. Stakeholders will also be engaged through the website, an email distribution list, and an online comment site.

The advisory board discussions and online comments will provide stakeholder input and insights on how to improve environmental review, permitting and siting processes for low-carbon energy projects in Washington. Input from the advisory board and stakeholders will inform a study being undertaken by Ecology, which will be used to prepare legislative reports.

The study is focused on industrial clean energy projects such as:

- Bio-refineries and refineries producing alternative fuels
- Solar and wind farms
- Solar and energy storage major component manufacturers, including electric vehicle batteries
- Pumped storage hydropower and battery energy storage facilities
- Green hydrogen facilities
- Offshore energy facilities (e.g., wind, tidal)

Through this work, Ecology is actively affording stakeholders an opportunity to:

- Support good in-state jobs
- Contribute to low-carbon economic development
- Reduce potential adverse impacts to the environment and local communities
- Preserve tribal consultation and treaty rights

### CHARTER

#### Advisory Board Purpose

The Low Carbon Energy Project Siting Improvement Study Advisory Board (Advisory Board) will provide a collaborative forum for members to provide insights and feedback on improving low-carbon energy project permitting and siting processes. The Advisory Board will help identify and document concerns, perspectives, and recommendations to be considered for Ecology's study related to:

- Systemic issues related to siting of projects, environmental review and permitting processes, tribal treaty rights and cultural resources processes, and consideration of highly impacted communities.
- Opportunities as well as roadblocks in current processes.
- Potential options for resolving systemic issues and characterization of high-level implications, trade-offs, and opportunities associated with implementing proposed options.



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- Developing guidance and tools for project applicants to improve siting processes, including a mapping tool prototype.
- Identifying additional studies or actions needed.

### Desired Outcomes

The process will support:

- Consideration of the insights and perspectives of Advisory Board members in a meaningful way.
- Advisory Board input that aligns with Ecology's and Commerce's identified purpose for the study.
- Documenting a fair and accurate record of members' insights, advice, and deliberations.

## GROUND RULES

### Advisory Board Operating Guidelines

- To support candid and fluid dialogue during Advisory Board discussions, individual member observations are presumed to represent their personal, not organizational, perspectives. Members can, at any time, specifically indicate that an observation reflects their affiliated organization's official policy or messaging.
- Members are encouraged to reach out in a timely manner to constituencies whose interests they represent and, as appropriate, to other interested and impacted parties to communicate about the study and gather input and ideas.
- While convergence on issues is desired, members will not be asked to come to consensus or vote on any proposal. A multitude of viewpoints will be reflected in documentation of the Advisory Board process.
- Participation does not imply or presume agreement with, or support for, any action taken in response to input from Advisory Board members.
- Members are encouraged to frame observations in terms of needs and interests, instead of positions. Opportunities for finding solutions increase dramatically when discussion focuses on needs and interests.
- Members are encouraged to come to the process to work together and offer ideas and solutions toward a positive future: to reduce potential adverse impacts to the environment and local communities, preserve tribal consultation and treaty rights, and contribute to low-carbon economic development.
- Members will refrain from revisiting state greenhouse gas reduction goals or questioning the validity of climate science or the state's commitment to reducing greenhouse gases.
- Recognizing that public characterizations of Advisory Board deliberations could affect the committee's collegiality, members are specifically requested to refrain from characterizing the views of other members in any public statements they may make.
- Media inquiries about the process must be directed to Ecology's communications manager.

### Advisory Board Meeting Logistics

- Monthly advisory board meetings of up to four hours, will be held from October 2021 through November 2022.
- Due to COVID-19 precautions, Advisory Board meetings will be virtual until Ecology decides it is safe to meet in person. Virtual meetings will use Zoom, Teams, or other widely available online meeting formats. In-person meetings may be held in various locations around the state. Ecology will provide remote viewing options by phone or web for in-person meetings.



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- Board members will be asked to prepare for meetings by reviewing documents, meeting summaries, and the agenda. Members are expected to provide information to their stakeholder groups and share views from the stakeholders they represent.
- Alternate members are not needed. A member may invite someone to observe the meeting. If a member is unable to attend, they are encouraged to offer thoughts in advance, based on materials distributed prior to the meeting, and can catch up through meeting summaries and, when requested, through briefings from the facilitator or other staff.
- The times, dates, and registration or meeting information will be posted on Ecology's website at least a week in advance of meetings.
- All Advisory Board agendas, summaries and materials will be posted to Ecology's website. Materials will be posted at least a week in advance of meetings while summaries will be posted within two weeks after meetings.
- At Ecology's discretion, Advisory Board meetings may include subject matter experts, such as staff, technical consultants, or other organizations.
- Public observers, whether in person or virtual, are welcome at Advisory Board meetings. However, observers cannot participate directly in board discussions. Meeting agendas will include time for public comments, which will be limited to two minutes for each speaker.

#### Advisory Board Facilitation

- Advisory board meetings will be supported by a neutral third-party facilitation team with no stake in the outcome of the discussions. While the facilitation team is under contract to Ecology, they work for the process and will treat all members equitably.
- The facilitator will notify members of meeting details and distribute materials by email in advance of meetings and will provide summaries via email following meetings. Meeting information will also be posted on the Ecology website.
- The facilitator will manage any meeting disruptions, as needed.
- Summaries of each meeting will include general descriptions of discussions. Individual perspectives and differences of opinion will not be attributed to individuals or organizations, unless specifically identified for such purpose.