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FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION

Kimberly D. Bose
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First St. NE, Room 1A
Washington, D.C. 20426

Docket number P-15056-000

Dear Ms. Bose:

I am writing as a resident of Moonhaw Valley in West Shokan, which is a hamlet of the town of Olive in Ulster County, NY. Premium Energy Holdings of California has proposed to build a hydroelectric power plant in this community near the Ashokan Reservoir that feeds New York City. When I say "in this community," what I actually mean is that the proposed project – which would include a new reservoir of some 300 acres – would *replace* this community. West Shokan, as it is now known to our friends and neighbors, would be gone. The proposed reservoir and the tunnel leading from it would render unlivable or severely disrupt approximately 100 homes in this area.

The town of West Shokan has already been moved once – in the early part of the 20th Century when New York City built its Ashokan Reservoir. We are in this location today because of that event. There are gravestones without names in our local cemetery over the bodies removed from cemeteries now under the Ashokan. Perhaps those bodies will have to be moved again. We sincerely hope it does not come to that.

Part of the Moonhaw Valley is designated as a Wilderness Area of the New York State Forest Preserve. It is protected though the New York State Constitution by the "forever wild" clause, prohibiting any kind of development. These laws, these protections, either mean something or they mean nothing.

Furthermore, any change to the transportation networks in and around West Shokan will have a ripple effect on surrounding communities. The dramatic topography that makes West Shokan a potential location for a higher elevation reservoir also limits the possible locations for roads, homes, and businesses. Therefore, the proposed power plant will reduce the ability of local residents to secure livelihoods, which is already severely limited by the restrictions placed on reservoir land controlled by New York City.

I respectfully urge you to recommend the full rejection of Premium Energy's proposal, which appears to have been submitted with little consideration of the history or present-day realities of this area. Descendants of those who lived through the first destruction of West Shokan still carry the grief of their recent ancestors. Destroying West Shokan for a second time must not be allowed.

Sincerely,

Mark Donato

Mark Donato
194 Watson Hollow Rd.
West Shokan, NY 12494