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I am not for the preferred alternative which leaves the Wahluke under federal control. The interests of Grant County and particularly Mattawa are not considered under this alternative.

I worked at Hanford in the Environmental Sciences Department at Battelle as a Research Scientist for some 18 years before becoming a full time orchardist. My expertise is in risk assessment and have degrees in Wildlife biology and Radiological Sciences. I grew up in Richland and moved to the Mattawa area over 20 years ago.

Having permanently left Hanford a few years ago, I am continually using my technical expertise to look for potentially new economic developments which would add diversity to my orchard operation. I know what resources are available to new business startups in Benton County. There is a perceived perception by most officials I've spoke to that Hanford benefits to new business startup are only for Benton and Franklin Counties (the rich counties), while Grant County is mostly ignored. The transfer of buildings and property in north Richland to business and university personnel is evidence of this.

The ignorance by the Federal Government in the land use proposals for the Wahluke furthers the inequality of treatment by the government of poor and economically

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distressed counties such as Grant County and the residents of Mattawa.

I strongly urge you to change your preferred alternative to include economic opportunities for Grant County.