

# **Attachment D**

## **Newspaper Articles**



Record-Journal  
Letters to Editor

Feb 12, 2003

## RF (radio frequency) exposure in Ferndale

EDITOR, Record-Journal:

A lot of citizens of Ferndale may not be aware of RF exposure and interference to their community from an AM radio station. It is owned now by BBC Broadcasting and is located on 1550kHz on the radio dial. It is located at 5538 Imhoff Road. They moved here in 1987 from Bellingham and were only 1,000 watts then with call sign of KNTR. It is

located on county property inside the city of Ferndale. It was sold in 1998 and the call sign changed to KCCE. Its equipment was upgraded to solid state 50,000 watts daytime and 10,000 at night.

This station was sold again last June 2002 and is running Hindu religious programming. The primary use for this station is British Columbia coverage. There is no advantage for this station being in Ferndale. Its new call sign now is KRPI.

I'm sure you are aware of all the interference to users of DSL and regular phone service, computers, church and school PA systems. As Ferndale grows it will become more of a problem. This past week in the local paper was an article about a new Ferndale police station being considered to be built next to City Hall. This radio station will be more of a problem for the city.

This situation needs community and general support to let the city, and the Federal Communication Commission in Washington, D.C., know your concerns in writing. Contact City Hall for correct Washington, D.C., mailing address.

James C. Kaufman  
Ferndale

Bellingham Herald, March 1, 2003

Mar 1 2003

**▼ LETTERS****Stop the interference  
from Ferndale AM station**

Many Ferndale residents may not be aware of radio wave exposure and interference from an AM radio station. It is owned now by BBC broadcasting and is located at 1550 kilohertz on the radio dial. It is located at 5538 Imhoff Road. The station moved here in 1987 from Bellingham and was only 1,000 watts then with call sign KNTR. It is located on county property inside Ferndale city limits. It was sold in 1998 and call sign changed to KCCF. Its equipment was upgraded to 50,000 watts daytime and 10,000 at night.

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I'm sure you are aware of all the interference to users of DSL and regular phone service, computers, church and school public-address systems. As Ferndale grows, it will become more of a problem. Last week in the local paper, there was an article about Ferndale's new police station being considered to be built next to City Hall. This radio station will be more of a problem for the city.

This situation needs community and general support to let the city and the Federal Communication Commission know your concern in writing. Contact City Hall for the correct Washington, D.C. mailing address.

James C. Kaufman  
Ferndale

Bellingham Herald, May 1, 2002

# India's languages to hit county airwaves

## COMMUNICATIONS:

Sale leaves two Christian radio stations serving the area.

BY KARI THORENE SHAW  
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

FERNDALE — Whatcom County soon may become the home of the first radio station in the United States to broadcast in four of the languages of India.

BBC Broadcasting Inc.'s purchase of Ferndale Christian radio station KCCF (1550 AM) becomes final the first week of June. The station then will begin 24-hour broadcasting in four of India's languages to Whatcom and Skagit counties and British Columbia's lower mainland.

"There's a market for it," said Dave Dhillon, vice president of BBC Broadcasting. "There's a growing Indian ethnic community in Whatcom County."

Dhillon's company, which will be based in Ferndale, is a separate company from the British Broadcasting Corp.

## News, talk shows

Dhillon and his partners bought the station at 5538 Imhof Road for \$600,000 and the property and buildings for \$900,000.

He expects to employ 10 people full time when the station starts broadcasting in early June. It will air news, talk shows and music all day long in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati.

*When the station starts broadcasting in early June, it will air news, talk shows and music in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati.*

India has two national languages, English and Hindi, 17 regional languages and hundreds of dialects. The four the station will use for broadcasts are the most commonly spoken here and in the Vancouver, B.C., area.

Although the station is Dhillon's first, he is far from a rookie in Indian language radio. The Surrey, B.C., resident and his partners at BBC have broadcast shows in the Punjabi language from Seattle, Los Angeles

and San Francisco for the past eight years.

They did it by buying FM sideband airtime from established radio stations, which require listeners to have receivers specially tuned to pick up the shows. Dhillon said he reached about a half million listeners nationwide with the sideband shows.

Buying a station, however, meant BBC could run the format 24 hours a day and open it up to everyone.

## Bellingham Herald, May 1, 2002

**Growing community**

Dhillon said Whatcom County was the natural spot for BBC's first station because of its growing Indian community.

According to the census, the Indian American population in the county ballooned by 456 percent between 1990 and 2000. Although the percentage is impressive, the numbers are still small: as many as 980 Indian Americans, from 176 in 1990, but still only about 0.5 percent of the county population. Most live in Bellingham or Lynden.

The station also broadcasts into British Columbia's lower mainland, where Dhillon estimates 300,000 Indo-Canadians live.

Enough local Indian Americans speak Punjabi to fill the Guru Nanak Gursikh Temple on Pole Road, the county's only Sikh temple, which opened two years ago. Temple administrators guess about 250 families from Whatcom and Skagit counties attend weekly services there. Many speak only Punjabi.

"They are very happy and supportive," Dhillon said, adding that there are no other such stations for the Indian communities here.

**Christian format**

The sale ends KCCF's 31-year presence as a Christian radio station in Whatcom County. It leaves two other

1971  
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**Radio**

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Christian stations in the county: Lynden's KWPZ and Blaine's KARL.

Matt Miller, vice president of Pearl Broadcasting, said KCCF was not as successful as he and his partners had hoped when they bought the station in 1998. Miller formed Pearl to buy KCCF.

"We are making ends meet, but it's not as strong as we would have liked it to be," Miller said.

A local couple had run the station with a Christian format for nearly three decades. Miller wanted to continue the focus on Christian classics, changing its

call letters from KNTR to KCCF, for Keeping the Classics of the Christian Faith.

"We had hopes to do something that would become popular and people would like it," Miller said.

But KCCF has never placed in the top 20 radio stations in the county, falling behind the Cascade Radio Group that owns KGMI, Canadian and Seattle stations.

"In radio, numbers mean everything," Miller said. "Your time is only as good as the number of listeners you have."

Even so, the station had a loyal fan base for its 31 years. They were enough, he said, to support the station's two employees.

But when Dhillon and his partners offered to buy the station,

Miller said he had to look into it.

"We said, well sure, if the price is right. If we were doing really well — as well as we thought we would — we wouldn't have sold it," he said.

Reach Kari Thorene Shaw at kshaw@bellingh.gannett.com or call 715-2290.

## Bellingham Herald

# Radio station buzzes electronics, bugs locals

*Station KRPI up for license renewal in 2006*

**Calvin Bratt**  
Record-Journal reporter

James Kaufman and Sheila Weber are looking for some help to stop radio frequency interference from Ferndale station KRPI.

The pair see an opportunity to make their case this fall, as all radio stations in Washington must get their broadcast licenses renewed by Feb. 1, 2006.

The main issue, they say, is that KRPI's daytime power of 50 kilowatts (50,000 watts) is overwhelming the normal operation of telephones, computers, emergency communication, PA systems, and other radio transmissions in the Ferndale area. Few radio stations beam with such high wattage.

"I feel I am being held hostage by a radio station," said Weber, who moved to Douglas Road, less than a mile from the Imhoff Road station's towers, in April 2004.

For Kaufman, a ham radio operator on Madrona Drive, the battle goes back much farther. Since the mid-1990s, he has made many adjustments on his 55-foot backyard antenna and contacted various radio specialists and politicians to try to find remedies.

"When they (KRPI) are transmitting daytime, they tear everything else up around here," he said. "It sure has tore me up."

Commercially licensed and having worked in state communication systems for 22 years, Kaufman is well versed in radio technology. But he feels he has run up against a brick wall with KRPI and the Federal Communications Commission, which regulates radio stations.

"They may try to sneak their way through" this license renewal process, the first since 1998, he said.

According to the FCC website, filings for license renewal must be made by Oct. 1 and petitions to deny are due by year's end.

Kaufman and Weber, who have gathered their own files of information, say they want to organize a group, which they have tentatively dubbed Residents Against High Powered Radio Interference. They will have a booth at this weekend's Old Settlers Picnic.

The station at 1550 kHz did mostly Christian programming through two owners. BBC Broadcasting Inc. took over in June 2002 and began a format mostly in the Punjabi language reaching an Asian-Indian population in northwest Washington and lower British Columbia.

Weber contends that Asian-Indian persons total barely over 1,000 in Whatcom and Skagit counties, according to the 2000 census.

"It's for Vancouver. It's not serving us, at least," she said. "I

Please see STATION, page 2B

## STATION: Overpowers other signals

Continued from page 1B

am listening to Hindu music on my telephone."

Kaufman has issues with the ownership of BBC Broadcasting. He claims it is 20 percent Canadian and it is supposed to be fully American.

Radio stations have concentrated along the border to do religious programming into Canada, which is stricter on such content.

KRPI reaches to halfway up Vancouver Island and northeast to Hope, B.C., and south to Marblemount and Port Townsend, he said. Yet the FCC stipulated that the signal must be reduced at one point on its radius so it doesn't interfere with the agency's communication building at Bob Hall and Loomis Trailroads, Kaufman said.

He believes there are problems with the transmitting equipment on the station's towers, and that's why so much extra power is used.

Kaufman and Weber claim that the City of Ferndale and the Ferndale School District pay thousands of dollars to deal with problems caused by KRPI's radio frequency interference, but they don't want to tangle with the powerful federal agency. But in 2002 the City Clerk's Office put out a memo advising city officials how to convey concerns about the radio station to the FCC.

By comparison to KRPI, Bellingham radio station KGMI operates on 5,000 watts and KPUG on 10,000. "There's no need for 50,000 watts in Ferndale," Weber said.

The Record-Journal will cover the responses of station officials and the FCC in an article next week.

# Radio station license renewal is a community issue

## GUEST COMMENTARY

by Sheila Weber

Ferndale residents have a brief period of time to express to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) their problems with interference from radio station KRPL. The station's operating permit is now up for renewal, and the licensing process solicits public input.

A citizens group, Residents Against High-Power Radio Interference, was formed to compile and present these community-wide complaints to the FCC.

The FCC operating license for radio station KRPL is due for renewal in February 2006. The station is located at 5538 Imhof Road, Ferndale. Since 1998, residents of Ferndale and Whatcom County have reported ongoing adverse effects from the operation of this high-power, 50,000-watt station.

These concerns include daily interference with communications systems, radio and telephone reception, and other electronic equipment. In addition, there are serious safety issues regarding the current operation of station facilities. These concerns are outlined in the following paragraphs.

While we recognize KRPL's right to conduct business in the community, we request that the FCC meet these concerns by requiring the station to:

- Reduce its approved power from 50,000 watts to 10,000 watts, which will substantially reduce interference.

- Correct hazardous conditions at the station facilities, which are located in the middle of a residential area, only one-half mile from downtown Ferndale.

- Install proper fences, warning signs, and beacons at the radio towers and station facilities.

- Allow an on-site inspection by an unbiased radio engineer to ensure compliance with all technical and safety regulations.

### Radio interference

We have received numerous citizen complaints of Radio Frequency Interference (RFI), including interference with: amateur radio stations, reception from other local radio stations, local and long-distance telephone reception, even after installation of filters, answering machines, computer systems (networking and Internet dial-up), public address systems at schools, churches, and other organizations, electronic keyboards at Ferndale High School and electric organs, the CD player at a downtown business, walkie/talkie equipment used for business, small business-to-mobile communications equipment.

### Safety

The area around the radio towers is not securely fenced and posted with warning signs. This creates a life-threatening hazard for children, pets, and others who may be walking in the area. Many individuals have expressed concern for the safety of children and grandchildren.

The towers are not equipped with warning beacons, as required by FCC.

Two people have reported RF burns. If conditions are right, RF burns may also occur from touching commonly found items, such as wire fences and plastic-clad metal clotheslines. Other individuals also may have experienced RF burns, but did not know the cause.

RF burns are extremely hazardous, because they go to the bone and must heal from the inside out. Three to four weeks is required for healing. One nearby resident receives a shock whenever he touches his front door.

### Mitigation efforts

The KRPL engineer has responded to individual citizen complaints. The "solution" is requiring each individual home owner, business, organization or government entity to install filters and shielding (at their own expense). Such measures are only minimally effective, at best, and sometimes are totally ineffective.



The City of Ferndale was required to spend approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 to shield city equipment from RFI. In September 1998, City Hall was relocated to a building in close proximity to the broadcast facility. Due to RFI, the computer network was inoperative for up to two months. With the assistance of consultants and a radio engineer, the situation was rectified through shielding, filters, and physical relocation of certain system components.

The Parks Department facility is about one-quarter mile from the station towers. At times the phone system is virtually unusable. The fax will only work sporadically and internet access is impossible.

Planned relocation of the police department will require additional expenditure of thousands of dollars for filters and shielding. Police and emergency vehicle communications may also be affected.

### Technical issues

There are several technical factors relative to the station's high-power antenna. Reduction of power to 10,000 watts will serve to alleviate these problems.

The station is located in close proximity to residences, downtown businesses, and government offices. It is only one-quarter mile from many residents and one mile to downtown.

The configuration of the transmitting phased antenna arrays may result in "gain," which will affect the effective radiated power (ERP). This gain means that an input of 50,000 watts may result in ERP of more than 50,000 watts in the direction that the antenna is radiating.

The antenna is located in a valley, and the radiated power is directed over the hill to the north (Canada). However, much of the signal is absorbed by the residential area on the hillside. This is the source of the problem in Ferndale.

Because of the signal power, Ferndale is inundated directly with 50,000 watts (or an ERP higher than 50,000 watts). Phone lines, power lines, clotheslines, or any metal object will absorb some of the resonated power. If the length of the wire (or other object) is close to the resonant frequency of 1550 kHz or its major harmonics, and the environmental conditions are right, RF burns will occur.

KRPI's target market is a non-English-speaking audience, largely across the border in Canada. The value of its broadcasting to the Ferndale community is nil. Even if the station broadcasts occasional public service announcements in English, there will be few listeners in the United States, because of the language barrier of the regular broadcasting.

We do recognize the station's right to conduct business in our community. As it currently operates, however, KRPI is more of a liability than an asset.

*Sheila Weber is the group organizer. She can be reached at 380-2224.*

Record Journal, November 2, 2005

# County Council hears complaints on radio interference

*FCC will get letter  
during license review*

by Calvin Bratt  
Record-Journal reporter

The Whatcom County Council got an earful about Ferndale radio station KRPI last week, then voted to send a letter to the Federal Communication Commission regarding the station's high level of radio interference.

Ten citizens spoke out Oct. 25 against KRPI's 50,000 watts of daytime power that beam from station towers at 5538 Imhoff Road, just outside Ferndale city limits.

Most other AM radio sta-

tions in Whatcom County are at 10,000 watts or less, although station KVRI of Blaine also is at 50,000 watts.

"The RF (radio frequency) interference from this radio station gets into every conceivable telephone apparatus, whether it be telephone systems, PA systems, fax machines, even people's dial-up internet. We've been fighting this for well over 10 years," said Roger Letig of Ferndale in a typical comment.

A group has formed to present the evidence to the Federal Communications Commission as all Washington radio stations are currently going

Please see STATION, page 2A.

# STATION: Locals hoping license not renewed

Continued from page 1A

through their license renewal process.

According to the FCC website, applications for renewal were due by Oct. 1. Petitions for denial must be submitted by Dec. 31. Decisions on renewal will be made by Feb. 1.

Dave Edmondson of Ferndale likened the situation to "a slow-moving train wreck" that will happen next year, if the FCC allows the station to keep its 50,000 watts for another eight years.

Most programming on KRPI is in the Pujabi language to reach a target audience mostly in Canada. But Edmondson said his protest is not of a different culture. "Radio interference is culture-blind," he said.

Johanna Brunty, who lives within half-mile of KRPI, said its signal affects every channel of her radio and also her phone. The 69-year-old went door to door to collect about 150 signatures, and at the council meeting she relayed some of the comments and stories of interference she heard while on her rounds.

The feeling is that "it's obnoxious, to say the least," Brunty

said, and that the station "has no conscience on how massively they are affecting our community in a negative way. The simple solution is for them to lower their wattage."

Marianne Elgart, a Ferndale City Council member, said the city has received numerous complaints about radio frequency interference from KRPI for a decade, and affected residents again made their case to the city council on Oct. 3.

When City Hall was relocated in 1998 closer to the station, the city had to spend money on filters and shielding and also relocated some computer systems in the building to avoid the radio interference, Elgart said. The city police and parks departments and also Fire District 7 in town have all been

affected, she said.

While the issues can get "very technical," it doesn't take a radio expert or lawyer to see how everyone is being impacted by KRPI's current operation, Elgart said.

Letig, who works for a commercial telephone company, said he has installed filters and tried to get an FCC engineer involved to eliminate the radio interference, with limited success. "It's almost impossible to get rid of all of it. It's still an annoyance, even when it gets down to a very low level," he said.

Some speakers said they were physically "burned" by the high power when they touched antennas or conduction wires.

As of Friday, the letter was still being drafted, a clerk at the County Council office said.

Record-Journal | Wednesday, November 16, 2005

# Residents can voice radio complaints

*FCC asking for input on radio stations during license renewal process*

by Calvin Bratt

Record-Journal reporter

All radio stations in Washington are going through their license renewal process, giving people a chance to voice concerns to the Federal Communications Commission, says the manager of a local five-station group.

Rick Staeb oversees operations of the Cascade Radio Group, which runs AM stations KGMI, KPUG and KBAY and FM stations KISM and KAFE. Taken together, the Bellingham stations are Whatcom County's dominant radio force.

Licenses are up for renewal on Feb. 1 for eight more years. Petitions in opposition are due to the FCC by Jan. 1.

Staeb said stations must run on-air notice of the license renewal period, which began Oct. 1, and make their application file available for anyone who wants to look at it.

So far, it's gone okay, Staeb said, as he's used to hearing from people about the five stations.

"I talk to listeners all the time about everything -- our programming, the commercials we run, you name it," he said.

Staeb had received an email from someone recently wondering how the station could serve the public interest by being "so conservative," but the FCC doesn't much tamper with programming unless it gets "indecent" ala Howard Stern, he said.

Stations are allowed to find their own balance of what will succeed economically in a market, Staeb said. The FCC is also concerned about the power and kiloHertz frequency of stations, to avoid interference on the airwaves, he said.

Of the AM stations, KPUG is run at 10,000 watts, KGMI at 5,000 and KBAY at just 1,000, Staeb said. FM stations operate on a different frequency band and often run at 100,000 watts, as do KAFE and KISM.

Stations of five or fewer employees have less paperwork to contend with, he said.

Although most stations cut their power at night -- because atmospheric conditions allow a transmission to carry farther anyway -- the FCC wants some stations to have strong power for national security reasons. KGO of San Francisco and KIRO of Seattle would be examples.

Staeb, who lives in Ferndale, said he guesses that the FCC allowed radio station KRPI there 50,000 watts of daytime power in order to do "a very directional signal" into Canada.

He experienced radio interference from KRPI himself years ago before installing a filter on his phone.

He thinks the FCC could look at a station's transmission readings and determine if it is operating in compliance with its allowed power specifications.

He also said that the regulators in both the United States and Canada are supposed to consider the radio impacts one country has on the other.

November 29, 2005

**THE BELLINGHAM HERALD**  
www.bellinghamherald.com

**MEDIA**

## **Group wants KRPI radio's wattage reduced**

**Ferndale station's manager says it complies with FCC rules**

**DAVE GALLAGHER**  
**THE BELLINGHAM HERALD**

A group of Ferndale residents is planning to file a formal complaint to the FCC about a radio station they say has been interfering with their quality of life.

The group is known as Residents Against High-Power Radio Interference, and their complaints are focused on KRPI 1550 AM in Ferndale. The radio station broadcasts mostly East Indian music and talk programming in Punjabi, broadcasting 50,000 watts during the day and 10,000 watts at night.

Though the station has been broadcasting at 50,000 watts for years, the complaint comes now because its license is up for renewal. That process gives the public an opportunity to request changes to the Federal Communications Commission. The radio station's current license will expire on Feb. 1.

"We have a very large group of people who are unhappy there is a radio station producing 50,000 watts in our community," said Sheila Weber, one of the organizers. "Not only does the radio interference impact nearby phones and radios, but school public address systems, and we think a host of health issues."

The group will be submitting petitions with more than 1,000 signatures, citizen complaints and evidence of problems as well as letters from the Ferndale City Council and the Whatcom County Council to the FCC on Thursday. In the complaint they will ask that the radio station reduce its power to 10,000 watts during the day.

Officials at KRPI say they need the 50,000 watts during the day to reach their target audience in eastern Whatcom County and the lower British Columbia mainland. Andy Struiksma, station manager, said it would be a huge blow to their operations to have a reduction during the day.

"We basically operate under the shadow of the Bellingham radio stations, and if we were forced to reduce our power we wouldn't be able to reach our main audience," Struiksma said.

It is common for people to have some interference in devices such as

telephones and radios, Struiksma said, but there are filters available to fix the problem.

"If people would come to us, we are quite willing to help them find a solution to the interference," Struiksma said. "This year we've had fewer than 25 complaints, and we try our best to find the source of the problem and offer suggestions on fixing it."

"We're fully in compliance with FCC rules, and we want to be a good neighbor within this community," Struiksma said. "We are also attempting to get more local content on our station. We have two hours a week devoted to programming for Ferndale residents and we're trying to add more."

The Ferndale group countered Struiksma's statements by saying the filters usually don't work and the language barrier prevents the station from being much of a draw for Ferndale residents.

"Even if the station broadcasts occasional public service announcements or other programs in English, there will be few listeners in the United States," said the group in a draft statement to the FCC. "We do recognize KRPI's right to conduct business in Ferndale, however the negative effects of the 50,000-watt signal power make it more of a liability than an asset."

**THE BELLINGHAM HERALD**

[www.bellinghamherald.com](http://www.bellinghamherald.com)

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