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June 3, 2026

Columbia County Commissioners:
Margaret Magruder
Kellie Jo Smith
Casey Garrett

Dear Commissioners:

As a reporter and editor who covered Columbia County over the course of five decades, and as a long-time advocate for economic development, I am writing in support of NW Natural's conditional use permit to build well pads and related processing equipment for three new storage wells at the Mist gas fields.

As you know, NW Natural is one of Columbia County's major property tax payers. This largest investment in the company's history will significantly increase the valuation, bringing needed revenues to the county and other special districts which provide essential public services.

The new storage wells will enable NW Natural to continue to reliably and affordably provide the energy needed in our region, including to Portland General Electric's generating facilities at Port Westward, another major property tax payer and employer. The project will employ construction workers during the development stage, and operation of the facility will provide long-term family wage jobs, many of which will be filled by local community members. Businesses in the county will benefit as suppliers for the construction project and on-going operations.

Approval of NW Natural's conditional use permit is essential to this important project which will bring benefits to the county, its industries, and its citizens. I urge you to approve.

Thank you for your hard work in behalf of the citizens of Columbia County.

Sincerely,



Deborah Hazen

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