

3 June 2026

Columbia County Board of Commissioners
Columbia County Courthouse
230 Strand Street
St. Helens, Oregon 97051

RE: Support for the NW Natural MX3 Mist Storage Expansion Project

Dear Chair and Members of the Board,

My name is Gaith Bedaywi. I am a Project Manager at JH Kelly and have been part of JH Kelly's embedded presence at Northwest Natural's Mist and Miller sites since 2019. I am writing in strong support of the MX3 project and to encourage the Board's approval of the conditional use permit.

When JH Kelly became a resident contractor at the Mist facility six years ago, we made a deliberate commitment to build our team around local craft and local craft leadership. That was not the easiest path. It would have been simpler to pull in a traveling workforce from outside the region the way many contractors operating in Columbia County have done. But it was not the right approach for this client or this community. Over time, we have developed a team that is tight, experienced, and deeply familiar with the Mist facility, its systems, and the Northwest Natural personnel who manage the site. That investment in local people and local relationships is a significant part of why JH Kelly was selected to perform the MX3 project, and it is something I am genuinely proud of.

What I have also come to appreciate over six years working alongside Northwest Natural is the level of investment this company makes in the communities where it operates. That investment goes well beyond the physical infrastructure. It shows up in how they engage with contractors, how they approach safety and environmental stewardship, and how they think about their long-term role in Columbia County. Those values align closely with the way JH Kelly tries to operate, and they are a meaningful part of why this has been such a productive working relationship.

The MX3 project is a logical extension of everything that has been built at this site over the past six years. Our team has most recently been at the center of the GC700 and GC800 capital projects at Mist, and the same people who delivered that work will be the core of the MX3 team. It will bring additional skilled craft employment to Columbia County, and because of the way JH Kelly approaches staffing, a meaningful share of that workforce will come from this region and remain invested in it. The economic activity this project generates, in payroll, lodging, food, and services, will stay local in ways that a nationally-sourced workforce simply does not.

I respectfully urge the Board to support this project. Northwest Natural has been a good partner to this community for a long time, and the MX3 project is a continuation of that commitment.

Sincerely,



Gaith Bedaywi
Project Manager
JH Kelly, LLC

gbedaywi@jhkelly.com | 306.762.7404