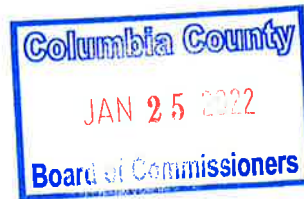


Dear Columbia County Commissioners,

Say "NO" to NEXT.



"A Society grows great when old men plant trees under which they know they shall never sit."

My Name is Tracy Prescott-MacGregor and with my husband Scott we own a small farm very near the proposed diesel refinery.

Time I have been told, is money.

Imagine the thousands of years of periodic flooding of the Columbia River it has taken nature to lay down the rich soils we farmers now enjoy here in the dike lands of Port Westward. We cannot reproduce the global conditions that have created these soils and we certainly, don't have the thousands of years it would take give our comparably brief lives.

We've been told over and over again by climate scientists that our use of combustible fuels is shortening the era of human livability on our planet. The time frame shrinks and the conditions continue to deteriorate at an exponential rate.

Though the river no longer floods the area the water collects in the rainy season in the surrounding areas filling up in the rainy season like a great bathtub creating habitat for innumerable species of wildlife. This network of drainages, slough, ditches and wetlands connect our farms like arteries and veins in a body. The water cycles seasonally through during the rainy season and pulses daily due to the rising and falling of the tides much like a heart pumps blood through the body. Poison injected at any one point quickly spreads the rest of the surrounding areas. What nature took thousands of years to create could be ruined forever.

This land is our insurance against a catastrophic event like the big earthquake we know is coming. Much of your local farmers market food is grown out here. I've read that 10 % of the blueberries grown in Oregon come from here, Mint and organic beef who graze on some of the most rich grassland in North America.

Why are we once again frittering away our valuable time?

By permitting NEXT to build this facility we are literally giving away our time to a doomed "Transitional" fuel. This form of exploitation is borrowing against our future. By following through with NEXT's proposal we are cashing out on a perceived value for this land, these waterways, and these soils at the expense of our very own grandchildren. Can we see beyond the shiny promises of money for needed services and schools. Where are those promises in Odessa Washington? A fine was paid but what can be said for the promises that have been clearly left unfulfilled leaving Odessa community reeling from the effects of the poor business practices with undeliverable pie in the sky so called money making ventures.

Longview has turned them down. Kalama has turned them down. These speculators know better and so do we.

It pains me to be wasting our precious time defending this land from dirty fuel production projects. I'd rather be planting trees.