



January 26, 2022

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

Re: NEXT Renewable Fuels Oregon, LLC Application DR 21-03; V 21-05 and CU 21-04

Dear Chair Heimuller, Commissioner Magruder, and Commissioner Garrett:

As the owner and operator of Port Westward, the Port of Columbia County would like to address an issue raised at the NEXT project hearing on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. During this hearing it was argued that NEXT's project proposed to convert land intended for agricultural uses to industrial uses. In fact, the NEXT plant will be situated on land intended to be used for industrial activities that can take advantage of the port's unique deep-water marine terminal.

The mission of the Port of Columbia County is to be a leading, innovative port focused on economic opportunities which benefit Columbia County's future generations. This mission includes the following:

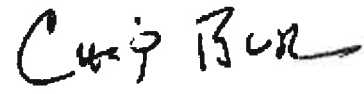
- Foster local opportunities to create and sustain jobs;
- Diversify regional economy;
- Provide improved financial return;
- Use maritime, aviation, industrial, recreational sites, and Port resources to support local and international commerce; and
- Maintain environmental assets in the Port District.


We encourage County leadership to continue to recognize Port Westward for the enviable resource that a deep-water marine terminal represents to the County and its future.


Sincerely,


Nancy Ward
President


Chris Iverson
Vice President


Chip Bubl
2nd Vice President


Robert Keyser
Secretary


Brian Fawcett
Treasurer


Sean Clark
Executive Director