

## NEXT Energy Port Westward proposal

Primus Prostremus <skeely.2012@gmail.com>

Wed 1/26/2022 11:32 AM

To: Jacyn Normine <Jacyn.Normine@columbiacountyor.gov>



My name is Mark Keely, from Kalama Washington, just upriver from the site in question. Port Westward is a critical bend in the Columbia River for Tribes, farmers, salmon, and the entire Columbia River system. It is home to local farmers, private residents, and a monastery. Ecologically valuable wetlands and agricultural operations comprise the surrounding region. The proposed diesel fuel plant does not compliment the character and development of this rural area in any way. I've lived along the Columbia River for over 25 years. It is where I recreate and connect with nature. No new industrial plants should be built here. The risk of air, water, and soil pollution is too great. We have an obligation to protect that which we love for future generations.

Please never consider Port Westward a place for any industry that can threaten this prime farmland. Once damaged, it can never be replaced. Your stewardship should be to protect this land because of all it offers for everyone, and not for the few unproven companies like NEXT Energy who disregard it. NEXT has a history of leaving communities with environmental contamination (eg. Odessa superfund site). Don't let Claskanie become the "next" Odessa! Do the right thing, support small local farmers, and allow them to grow even more local produce. The rail spur alone would slowly poison the properties it passes completely through and runs adjacent to and be a festering scab on the landscape it inhabits. I urge you to reject Next Energy's proposed refinery and rail spur.

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