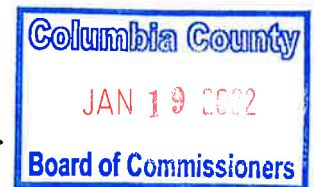


**From:** Maesie Speer <maesiespeer@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 19, 2022 2:27 PM

**To:** Margaret Magruder <Margaret.Magruder@columbiacountyor.gov>; Henry Heimuller <Henry.Heimuller@columbiacountyor.gov>; Casey Garrett <Casey.Garrett@columbiacountyor.gov>

**Subject:** Comment on Port Westward fuel refinery



Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing to share my opposition to the proposed fuel refinery at Port Westward. I live in Multnomah County, but regularly visit Columbia County for recreation and overnight retreats at the Great Vow Zen Buddhist Monastery, which is near the proposed site.

You are fortunate to live in such a beautiful area with incredible natural resources, not only for recreation but also for farming and ranching. These small family farms are the businesses that will sustain us into the future and make life possible for our children and grandchildren to live in the places we hold dear, not hazardous industries and facilities such as NEXT Renewables is proposing. Why would you as public officials destroy generational family businesses in their own communities?

These lands are precious and have developed over thousands of years to become some of the most desirable and productive farmland on the West Coast. Once they are destroyed, they cannot be returned to their current state.

If a diesel facility is built on this floodplain, it is not a question of if a toxic waste release will happen, it is only a question of WHEN. Port Westward faces significant flooding and earthquake risks, and the area's peat soils are prone to liquefaction.

I urge you to take a long-term view of this decision. Do not sell the future of these lands and communities for a short-term gain. Please work with the local farms and residents to create an opportunity for job creation that does not endanger the health and safety of people and the natural world.

Respectfully,  
Maesie Speer