



NEXT Renewable Diesel Plant Proposal

JAMES MELTON <jimmelton33@gmail.com>

Sun 1/16/2022 4:56 PM

To: Jacyn Normine <Jacyn.Normine@columbiacountyor.gov>; ePermits - Planning <planning@columbiacountyor.gov>

Dear Columbia County Board of Commissioners,

I moved to Clatskanie this summer to get away from the big city and industry in Salem. I spent 57 years living in Salem watching farmland disappear, being replaced by industries coming and going. All it created was extra traffic, air pollution, and inconvenience to people in the area.

I moved here because I wanted to live in a small community for the quiet and the natural resources of the area. The impact of the proposed NEXT renewable diesel plant, as I've seen in the past, will not only not benefit me, but it will directly harm my quality of life. For four decades, I have fished on the majestic Columbia River. I have also been an avid hunter in the area. I have always questioned the damage created by existing industry on and near the river and how it impacts my fishing and hunting opportunities. This massive NEXT project will undoubtedly do an incredible amount of increased damage, with its dependence on the combustion of fracked gas, in particular.

Where I live will be one of the roads where all of the construction will go by and likely continuing regular traffic from the raw materials for the renewable diesel. It goes right by our city park, playgrounds, swimming pool, and residential areas where children, the elderly, and other vulnerable members of our community spend their time. There will also be dangerous impacts to our already failing roads and levees. The likely increase in train traffic is another substantial concern.

Promises from NEXT about the benefits for our community do not ring true. Many of the good paying jobs they are promising will likely go to people from outside the area. And as we've seen from the NEXT history in other communities (the Transmissis Columbia Plateau failure and the cleanup site in Odessa, WA), this company's promises aren't worth the paper they're printed on.

Far more valuable than NEXT's empty promises is protecting the rich agricultural land in the proposed NEXT site and mitigation site, protecting the recreational opportunities that have made this area a draw for generations, and protecting our way of life in the small communities surrounding the proposed NEXT site. Say no to this disastrous proposal.

Sincerely,

James Melton