



NEXT Energy application

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

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.

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. Why locate this facility in a sensitive riparian area?

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If this project were to fail (like the biodiesel plant in Odessa), where will the accountability be to prevent it becoming another fossil fuels export facility, like what happened when the Global Partners terminal failed to make biofuel profitable and quickly turned into a crude oil train terminal in 2013-14?

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Why should we trust that NEXT will "try" to use recycled organic materials and limit vegetable oils "as much as possible" especially considering 100% of their feedstocks are supplied by the fossil fuel mammoth BP, who holds one of the worst environmental records in the industry?

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, communities, and the natural world.

Respectfully,
Maesie Speer