

## NEXT Biodiesel Plant

R.E. Pedersen <rpedersen75@gmail.com>

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

Dear Commissioners,



My name is Richard Pedersen. I live in Astoria and I am a community member and frequent patron of the monastery. I strongly urge you to protect the community and this sensitive ecological area from the dangers of the NEXT energy project and reject the application.

The Commission cannot accept NEXT's mitigation plan as adequate, because it conflicts with uses in the area. NEXT's wetland mitigation plan will prevent the Beaver Drainage District from controlling flows of water to a significant number of farms that contribute to the character of the area and that provide valuable contributions to the local and state agricultural economy.

○ Using this site for a biodiesel fuel plant is a poor decision, given that the soils allow for successful agricultural operations and that the area contains ecologically valuable wetlands. Furthermore, we need to look to moving AWAY from petroleum fuel products, in general.

Proposed use is not water-related or water-dependent. The impacts of the project in wetland and riparian areas are unnecessary and significant.

The proposed use will alter the character of the surrounding area in a manner that substantially impairs use of surrounding properties by introducing long, slow-moving trains preventing timely harvest and transport of crops, and industrial processes such as a gas flare that could create air, water, noise, and vibrational pollution in the area.

The potential flaring, leaks/spills, fires, air pollution, water pollution, noise, and vibrations do not complement nearby agricultural operations, ecological functions, and wildlife habitat. Furthermore, these grotesque intrusions would have a devastating impact on the practices of the Zen Community at the monastery, which is a place where practitioners from around the world can study with advanced instructors in the frequent retreats offered.

**Please reject the application from NEXT Energy to protect our local farmers, wildlife, human health, and our Monastery's sacred stillness and natural beauty.**

Sincerely,  
Richard Pedersen  
Astoria, OR