Waterside: Big on risk, low on benefits

In September 2015, Waterside Energy LLC finally came clean about their dirty and dangerous scheme for Longview: an oil refinery and a Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) terminal. Waterside wants to build an oil refinery on the banks of the Columbia River, which would bring three oil trains a week to Longview. And, Waterside’s new plans include a terminal to export Canadian propane to Asian markets. Waterside held secret talks with the Port of Longview for over a year before disclosing its plans, hiding in the background as the Port unanimously rejected Haven Energy, another LPG proposal, after fierce opposition from the community and ILWU Local 21.

Waterside wants to build an oil refinery and bring three dangerous oil trains a week to Longview.

- In the past two years, 10 oil trains have derailed and exploded in North America. The blast zone for oil trains is one mile. i
- Waterside’s refinery would be less than one mile from homes and businesses – putting tens of thousands in the blast zone.
- Waterside plans a biofuels facility next to their oil refinery but company leaders have a murky history with biofuels.ii
- Accidents and explosions at oil refineries have killed 64 workers in the past decade.iii
- An oil trans-loading terminal proposed in Vancouver is opposed by the ILWU Local 4, over 100 local businesses, the firefighters union, the city council and the largest waterfront developer in town. The project is years behind schedule.

Costly oil spills are a reality if we let them build here.

- Even with the best available technology, only 10-15% of oil spills in water are ever “cleaned up.” iv
- The rail industry claims that 99.9% of rail hazmat shipments arrive at their destination safely. v

Waterside Energy LLC has a record of failure.

- The principals are former businesses partners in a failed biofuels venture in Eastern, Washington called TransMessis. Without warning, TransMessis employees were laid off and the plant was shuttered.vi
- There is an ongoing lawsuit against the backers of Waterside. While operating TransMessis, the lawsuit alleges that they lied on credit applications and lined their own pockets instead of paying more than $1.6 million in outstanding debts.vii

Despite an LPG rejection earlier this year, Waterside is trying to bring it back.

- A flammable vapor cloud of propane could extend for miles in all directions if a rupture occurred at the terminal.viii
- LPG export would bring in 29 highly pressurized unit trains of propane per month – that’s 58 unit trains round trip!
- These security zones extend up to 500 yards while LPG ships are moored and 1000 feet or more when moving.ix

Turn Over And Take Action!

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There are five economic development organizations in Cowlitz County — they’re asleep at the wheel and driving us towards a dirty and dangerous future. Now is the time to welcome good jobs to Longview from businesses that are safe, reputable and honest! Waterside doesn’t match these community values.

- Leave a message for the Port of Longview commissioners: 360-425-3305.
- Attend a Port of Longview Commissioner’s meeting! Testify against Waterside’s proposals or just listen. Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 9:30 AM. Three minutes of public testimony is allowed.
- Submit to letters@tdn.com. Word limit: 175. Use this fact sheet for talking points!
- More info: contact Jasmine@ColumbiaRiverkeeper.org or 503-929-5950

We want good, safe jobs in Cowlitz County! Let’s welcome reputable, honest, clean jobs to our region and move past dirty and dangerous Waterside Energy.