



COLUMBIA RIVERKEEPER
407 Portway Ave., Suite 301
Hood River, OR 97031
phone 541.387.3030
www.columbiariverkeeper.org

FAQ Governor Inslee's Opposition to NW Innovation Works' Kalama Methanol Refinery

What happened?

On May 8, 2019, Governor Inslee announced his opposition to Northwest Innovation Works' proposed methanol refinery in Kalama, Washington.

What is a methanol refinery?

The Kalama methanol refinery would turn huge amounts of fracked gas (called "natural" gas by the fossil fuel industry) into methanol, which would be shipped to China to be burned as fuel or made into plastic.

Why does Governor Inslee oppose the fracked gas-to-methanol refinery?

Governor Inslee cited the "significant methane leakage associated with gas production" and explained that the methanol refinery's climate impacts are out of step with Washington's goals for swiftly addressing climate change. "I cannot in good conscience support . . . a methanol production facility in Kalama," stated Governor Inslee.

Isn't fracked gas a "bridge fuel" to a cleaner future?

No. Because of the methane released during fracking and distribution, fracked gas is extremely harmful to our climate. And we don't have time to shift from one fossil fuel to another. "The age of consequences is upon us," explained Governor Inslee. "The accelerating threat of climate change and the emerging science on the damaging impacts of natural gas production and distribution mean we must focus our full efforts on developing clean, renewable and fossil-fuel free energy sources."

What comes next?

If Northwest Innovation Works chooses to move forward without Governor Inslee's support, the company would need approval from the Washington Department of Ecology and permits from local and federal agencies. While Governor Inslee is not directly involved with the Department of Ecology's decision, the Governor noted that "it's time for us to modernize and update the ways we weigh the costs and benefits of all fossil fuels, including natural gas." The Department of Ecology has already [raised serious questions](#) about the methanol refinery's climate impacts.

Sign up for [action alerts](#) and follow Columbia Riverkeeper on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram for updates on public engagement opportunities.

Written: May 10, 2019