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A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It was a whirlwind day. Huge LNG rally in Salem, media interviews, songs and prayers, dozens of old friends, and a celebration. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. came to help us out on May 26, so we packed in a full day. See articles on our LNG rally and Vancouver celebration on pages 8–9 and 3, respectively. I took the car seats out of my minivan, picked up Mr. Kennedy and friends in Portland, and we hit the road.

After 600 people from across Oregon rallied to ask Governor Kate Brown to protect Oregon from LNG, I had the opportunity to sit down with the Governor. Mr. Kennedy, Waterkeeper’s Lesley Adams, and I each expressed the environmental and climate damage LNG would cause. Governor Brown has a strong history of progressive values as a non-profit lawyer, Senator, and Secretary of State. She has not taken a position on LNG, but pledged to engage in a fair and open process. Six hundred people on the Capitol steps is a powerful demonstration of statewide opposition to LNG. I’m hopeful that, with your continued encouragement, the Governor and state agencies will do everything in their power to reject Oregon LNG on the Columbia and Jordan Cove LNG in Coos Bay.

RIVERKEEPER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Brett VandenHeuvel
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. headlined an inspiring evening on May 26, 2015, after our LNG rally, to celebrate Columbia Riverkeeper’s 15th Anniversary and speak out against dirty fossil fuel terminals. Fifteen years ago, Mr. Kennedy convinced two local groups to merge and create one organization dedicated to protecting the great river of the west: Columbia Riverkeeper.

We invited Mr. Kennedy to Vancouver because Tesoro proposes the largest oil-by-rail terminal in North America here in our backyard, and he gave a fiery speech opposing the oil project: “This oil terminal will make the oil companies billionaires while impoverishing the people of your community. Oil trains threaten our air, our water, and our democracy. You can’t let them build this terminal.”

Reverend Kathleen Patton from St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Longview eloquently discussed the need to stand up to protect our planet. She also noted Riverkeeper’s role in working with communities: “Time and again Riverkeeper has ferretted out the truth and told it. And having equipped us with the truth, they’ve helped us to gather our wits and our energies to fight, building a movement and giving voice to what I’ve come to see as a formerly silent majority.”

Riverkeeper’s Director, Brett VandenHeuvel, told the crowd of supporters, elected officials, and allies: “If ever there is a time to stand up for the Columbia River, this is it. If ever there is a need for a strong watchdog organization, this is it.”

“Oil trains threaten our air, our water, and our democracy. You can’t let them build this terminal.”

– Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

Celebrate Riverkeeper’s 15th Anniversary in Portland, Oregon, this fall.

(Details and venue coming soon.)
There is never a dull moment on the Columbia! Here are some highlights.

Earth Day PDX
Riverkeeper held an Earth Day cleanup at the Smith & Bybee Wetlands in Portland, organized by volunteer Courtney Rae. The group of 15 volunteers picked up 25 bags of garbage and removed several hundred pounds of blackberry. Thank you New Seasons Market & KIND for the snacks.

Earth Day Hood River
We spent Earth Day restoring the natural beauty of the Hood & Columbia rivers by collecting over 45 bags of trash! Youth volunteers from Bethel & Riverside Community Church helped clean up the Columbia along with students from the Hood River High School, members of Columbia Gorge Climate Action Network, and Hood River Boy Scouts. A big thank you to Freshies Bagels and Juice & KIND for donating snacks.

Oil Trains in Vancouver
In April we co-hosted a forum about the threat of oil trains. Speakers included representatives from the City of Vancouver, Sightline Institute, Gramor Development, ILWU Local 4, Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Riverkeeper. Over 350 people packed the Kiggins Theatre in Vancouver to learn about fighting oil-by-rail terminals.

Thank you Spirit Mountain!
Riverkeeper received a $25,000 grant from the Spirit Mountain Community Fund, which will allow us to expand program work to reduce toxic pollution and ensure state officials hear from the people most impacted by pollution.

Adopt-A-River Training
Volunteers practiced using the iNaturalist app to log field observations at Riverkeeper’s Adopt-a-River Training and Restoration Site Tour this May. Both new and seasoned volunteers met at the recently restored Wahkeena Creek to learn about the program, how to monitor and respond to pollution on the Columbia River, and tour a newly restored salmon stream. Last fall, Riverkeeper volunteers planted over 1,000 new trees at the site, and we’re happy to report that those young plants are sporting fresh spring growth.

Share your stories and photos about the Columbia River with us by emailing info@columbiariverkeeper.org.
Aveda Earth Month
Our friends at Aveda raised awareness and funds for clean water throughout April at salons, Experience Centers, and Aveda Institute Portland. An Aveda experiential evening kicked it all off at Holocene in Portland: chakras were balanced, hair styled, and tunes spun! The month closed with the spectacle of Aveda Institute Portland’s Catwalk for Water: Evening for Earth. Aveda students and professionals wowed the 575-person crowd with fabulous hair and makeup, and no one left without learning about Columbia Riverkeeper’s work to promote safe swimming, Hanford nuclear cleanup, or the effects of coal terminals on the river and our communities. Attendees enjoyed beer and wine from Full Sail Brewery and Copa Di Vino. Thank you Aveda for all the fun and your support of clean water.

Community Information Meeting and Stencil Party against Oregon LNG
Columbia Pacific Common Sense & Riverkeeper held a community information meeting about the proposed LNG terminal and pipeline in Warrenton. We discussed upcoming public hearings and how to get involved. In addition, Gorge-based artist & activist Janet Essley hosted a “Stencil Party” to create new signs and t-shirts.

Thank You Mayor Hales
This May, Portland Mayor Charlie Hales told Pembina Pipeline Corporation to pull its proposal for a controversial propane export terminal at the Port of Portland. Without support from City Hall, Pembina should not receive a city code amendment that the project requires. Importantly, Mayor Hales cited YOUR advocacy as a deciding factor in rejecting propane export. Portlanders gathered at City Hall to thank Mayor Hales for standing up for clean air and public safety.

FisherPoets
We had an inspiring weekend in Astoria this February at the FisherPoets Gathering. We spoke about river protection issues at the Pacific Coast Freshwater Health Workshop, and then presented a concert with Fisher Poet Dave Densmore and Singer-Songwriter Alexa Wiley.

Community-led State of the Hanford Site Meetings
When the U.S. Department of Energy announced it would not host a State of the Hanford Site meeting this year, a coalition of public interest groups decided to hold the events anyway. Riverkeeper, Hanford Challenge, Heart of America Northwest, and Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility held listening and informational sessions in Spokane, Vancouver, and Walla Walla. All combined, over 200 concerned citizens came to the meetings to learn about the latest successes and challenges of Hanford cleanup.

Support our work to protect and restore the Columbia River. Make a donation today at: www.columbiariverkeeper.org/donate.
# FIGHTING FOSSIL FUEL on the Columbia River

By Miles Johnson, *Clean Water Attorney*

The Columbia River is threatened with unprecedented fossil fuel export terminals. Coal, oil, and propane companies would send dirty products by trains, and then transfer to ocean-going supertankers. A Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal would receive fracked gas via a large new pipeline. We have the choice to move to clean and renewable energy now: building large, new fossil fuel infrastructure today locks in dirty energy production and consumption for decades.

## COAL

**Millennium Bulk Terminals – Coal, Longview, WA**
- **Capacity:** 44 million tons/year, 62 trains/week
- **Fact:** Millennium would place huge, uncovered coal piles on the banks of the Columbia.
- **Status:** State and federal agencies plan to finish the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this massive coal export facility in 2015.

**Morrow Pacific – Coal, Port of Morrow and Port Westward, OR**
- **Capacity:** 8 million tons/year, 11 trains/week
- **Fact:** Cash-strapped Ambre Energy (the original backer of the coal export project) has folded and sold to a Denver-based private equity company.
- **Status:** Oregon denied the coal dock permit in August 2014 due to unacceptable impacts to the Columbia River. Ambre’s appeal is pending.

## OIL

**Riverside Refining – Oil Refinery, Longview, WA**
- **Capacity:** 30,000 barrels/day oil, 3 trains/week
- **Fact:** Would be first west coast oil refinery in 25 years and the largest refinery in the United States since 1976.
- **Status:** Riverside is negotiating a lease with Port of Longview; needs permits from Washington state.

**Tesoro Savage – Oil-by-Rail terminal, Vancouver, WA**
- **Capacity:** 360,000 barrels/day, 36 trains/week
- **Fact:** Largest proposed oil-by-rail facility in the North America, 42 percent of the capacity of Keystone XL pipeline.
- **Status:** Washington will prepare draft EIS in 2015; Riverkeeper challenged the Port of Vancouver’s decision to lease public land for oil terminal.

**NuStar Energy – Oil-by-Rail, Vancouver, WA**
- **Capacity:** 22,000 barrels/day, 2 trains/week
- **Fact:** NuStar submitted its application hours before Vancouver city leaders passed a moratorium on oil-by-rail.
- **Status:** Vancouver ruled that NuStar requires a thorough EIS to describe the safety and environmental risks; NuStar sued the city.

**Global Partners – Oil-by-Rail, Port Westward, OR**
- **Capacity:** 120,000 barrels/day, 12 trains/week
- **Fact:** Global Partners began shipping oil in 2012 after purchasing a mothballed ethanol facility, and plans a large expansion.
- **Status:** Riverkeeper, along with the Umatilla Tribes, is asking the federal government to evaluate the risk to the estuary prior to any expansion permits.
**NATURAL GAS**

Oregon LNG – Liquefied Natural Gas, Warrenton, OR  
**Capacity:** 1.3 billion cubic feet/day of fracked gas via pipeline  
**Fact:** Would increase U.S. fracking by exporting huge volume of gas to Asia  
**Status:** Expect a draft EIS this summer, despite the fact that Clatsop County rejected the LNG pipeline in a unanimous vote.

**PROPANE**

Pembina – Propane-by-Rail, Portland, OR  
**Capacity:** 72,000 barrels/day, 7 trains/week  
**Fact:** Mile-long unit trains of dangerous propane would traverse Portland daily.  
**Status:** Portland Mayor Hales asked Pembina to drop its plans, but Pembina is pushing forward.

**Notes:** Information up-to-date as of June 18, 2015. Check columbiariverkeeper.org for current information and detailed fact sheets. “Trains/week” means full trains. Oil train numbers based on 70,000 barrels per train. Capacity means the volume stated by the companies. Many facilities expand once permitted. Trains serving Puget Sound and California facilities also travel down the Columbia River, but are not counted here.
600 Rally to Oppose LNG Export
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Speaks Out Against LNG

By Dan Serres, Conservation Director

Over 600 Oregonians on the steps of Oregon’s Capitol cheered a passionate speech by Waterkeeper Alliance President Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. opposing liquefied natural gas (LNG) export. Flanked by ranchers, climate activists, tribal members, and community leaders from Coos Bay, Medford, Astoria, Vernonia, Portland, and the Willamette Valley, Mr. Kennedy called on the State of Oregon to reject the LNG proposals in Coos Bay and Warrenton.

“Oregon is viewed as a leader in combating climate change, yet the fossil fuel industry is pushing to make Oregon a trafficker of fracked gas to the entire world through these LNG export proposals,” Mr. Kennedy said. “Oregon should stand firm in protecting iconic salmon-bearing rivers like the Rogue and Columbia and in the process reaffirm its goal of reducing climate pollution by rejecting LNG export terminals and pipelines.”

Speakers and rally-goers highlighted how LNG export is a disaster for our climate. An LNG terminal would be the largest greenhouse gas polluter in Oregon after the Boardman coal-fired power plant shuts down. And factoring in methane leakage during fracking and transportation, super-cooling the gas, and shipping it to Asia, LNG packs a huge carbon punch. Former Secretary of State Bill Bradbury stated, “These projects are Oregon’s version of the Keystone XL Pipeline, and we must stop them.”

Through creative art and compelling stories, and with news cameras rolling, people highlighted the many reasons to oppose LNG exports. For instance, Oregon LNG and Jordan Cove LNG could take property from hundreds of Oregon families to build gas export pipelines. As a result, many ranchers, farmers, and foresters oppose LNG. Bill Gow, a proud Republican rancher from Douglas County, stated, “There’s no way these companies are going to put a big scar through the middle of my ranch.” As another Douglas County landowner recounted her grueling fight against an LNG export pipeline, climate activists from Portland, Eugene, Corvallis, and beyond shouted, “We’ve got your back!”

Carrying signs and colorful three-foot-diameter replica pipelines, the crowd marched from the Capitol to the Department of State Lands. Cheryl Johnson, a retired school librarian from Brownsmead, stated, “We stand in solidarity with our friends in Coos Bay. From the fracking wells to potential spills and frackouts in our salmon-bearing rivers and drinking water sources, we can’t gamble with the type of harm that LNG brings.” Added Johnson, “We need swift, decisive action from Governor Brown to protect Oregonians.”

Community leaders are emerging all over Oregon to oppose LNG export. Activists from Vernonia, a small town in Oregon’s northern Coast Range, used the rally to showcase a newly passed City Council resolution. The resolution calls on state and federal agencies to reject the Oregon LNG pipeline, which threatens the city’s drinking water and the safety of nearby residents. Michael Calhoun and his father Steve helped spearhead the resolution.
"Once we learned what Oregon LNG was all about, we knew it was a bad fit for our community. We have no intention of being steamrolled for a project that will ship fracked gas overseas with no benefit to our town,” said Michael Calhoun.

The rally demonstrated how opposition to LNG export has grown throughout Oregon, both in intensity and geographic scope. While Oregon agencies drag their feet on rejecting LNG proposals, everyday Oregonians fight for their farms, forests, and fishing grounds against wealthy out-of-state energy speculators. In 2015, this dynamic must change, and Governor Brown needs to hear from us all in coming months. Oregonians oppose LNG export for many different reasons, but together we have powerful voices with the common goal of protecting our home.

“LNG terminals and pipelines take us in the opposite direction of where our society needs to go. Building more fossil fuel infrastructure designed to profit from speculation and scarcity threatens our economy, our transition to a sustainable society powered by renewable resources, and degrades our forests, farms, rivers, fisheries, and quality of life. LNG is emblematic of exploitation, speculation, and crony capitalism. We can do better than let the Columbia River and the Pacific Northwest become a colony for fracked gas and oil.”

- Paul Sansone, a Gales Creek nursery owner and former energy executive whose property was targeted for the Oregon LNG pipeline.
Salmon Recipe
Round up from the Columbia River

We’ve been looking forward to fresh salmon all year. Our friends along the Columbia sent their favorite salmon recipes for inspiration this barbecue season.

To select the freshest salmon, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission suggests:

- The fish’s eyes should be clear and bulge a little.
- Whole fish and fillets should have firm and shiny skin. Dull skin may mean the fish is old.
- Fresh whole fish should have bright red gills.
- If the flesh doesn’t spring back when pressed, the fish isn’t fresh.
- There should be no darkening around the edges of the filet, or brown or yellowish discoloration.
- The fish should smell fresh and mild, not fishy or ammonia-like.
- If you are buying bright fall chinook, ask your fish-seller to make a cut near the tail to see the rich red flesh. If it’s pink, it’s either a tule chinook or steelhead.

Grilled Salmon Fillet with Zhoug Sauce
Recipe Courtesy of Chef Ben Stenn of Celilo Restaurant & Bar, Hood River, OR.

Chef Ben Stenn said, “Especially with spring Chinook, the fish is fatty and full flavored, coming from cold water. I want the true flavor to come through.” Chef Stenn gave us a recipe for grilled salmon and a delicious Middle Eastern sauce called Zhoug.

Serve with a salad of fresh greens.

Ingredients:
- Fresh salmon
- Salad greens

Zhoug:
- 1 jalapeno pepper, stemmed and seeded
- 1 small bunch fresh cilantro, leaves only, remove stems
- 1 small bunch fresh parsley (Italian or flat), leaves only, remove stems
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 teaspoon cumin, freshly ground
- 1 teaspoon coriander, freshly ground
- 1 teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt to taste

Directions:
- For Zhoung: In a blender, combine jalapeno, garlic, cumin, coriander, pepper, lemon zest, and olive oil. Puree until smooth. Add cilantro and parsley. Puree just enough to make a smooth sauce. Stir in lemon juice and adjust seasoning with salt.
- Place Zhoug, a small salad, and a healthy serving of Zhoug on each plate and enjoy. It’s simple, delicious, and tastes like summer.
Salmon Cakes
Recipe courtesy of Food Editor Leslie Savage, Revelstoke, BC.
Yields 36 patties

Far upriver in British Columbia, Leslie Savage, food editor of The Revelstoke Current, walks the greenbelt path beside the Columbia, watching the water rise and fall. She shared her salmon cake recipe, noting leftovers freeze well. Leslie is writing a book called “Images of the Sinixt,” about the Sinixt First Nation who once caught salmon along the Columbia, before the Grand Coulee dam blocked fish passage. Today, U.S. tribes and Canadian First Nations are working to restore these lost runs.

Ingredients:
- 3 pounds salmon (cooked & flaked, canned is fine too)
- 4 large russet potatoes
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 1 tablespoon chopped dill
- 1 small bunch (8) green onions, washed and chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon honey, maple syrup or brown rice syrup
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 lemons, juiced
- 2 cups panko crumbs
- 4 eggs, beaten
- Butter and oil for frying the cakes – about 6-8 tablespoons

Directions:
• Cut the salmon into manageable pieces and steam in the oven set to 350°F for 30 minutes. Use a baking rack set inside a rectangular pan, and put 1 inch of water in the bottom. Remove from oven and cool. Remove all the skin, fat and bones from the salmon and flake into small pieces. Add the juice of two lemons and the salt.
• Peel and cut potatoes into eight pieces, place in large pot of boiling water and cook for about 15 minutes, until very tender. Drain and mash. Place cream, herbs, onions, chili powder, tomato paste and honey into food processor. Blend until onions and herbs are very finely chopped.
• In a large bowl combine potatoes and cream mixture with salmon and blend well with the back of a large wooden spoon.
• Shape salmon cakes by scooping up a wad of salmon dough the size of a large egg, then carefully make a ball and flatten it. Round the edges. Put cakes on waxed paper on a cookie sheet and store in the fridge until cook time.
• Heat butter and oil in a large shallow pan.
• Dip each cake in the egg, then coat with panko crumbs and put into the frying pan. Don’t overcrowd. Cook in batches and keep them warm in the oven.

Bon Appetit!

Top Picks: Columbia River Beaches
By Lorri Epstein, Water Quality Director

Warm weather and sunshine have us thinking about cooling off in the river! We’ve compiled our favorite lower river beaches in different categories. We know there are many more great beaches upriver (Brett raves about the clear water of the headwaters at Columbia Lake). Before hitting the river, make sure the water is safe to swim! Use Columbia Riverkeeper’s Swim Guide mobile app to get directions, alerts, and up-to-the-minute water quality updates on Columbia River recreation sites. Download the Swim Guide app for iPhone/iPad & Android here: http://columbiariverkeeper.org/water-quality/swim-guide/

• Best Beach for Kids: Willow Grove in Longview, WA, has a sandy beach, paved walking paths, picnic areas, restrooms, playgrounds, and even a life jacket loaner program, making it our top pick for the littles.
• Best Beach to Learn to Windsurf: Beginner surfers flock to the Inner Hook in Hood River, OR, for its calm protected waters.
• Best People Watching: On a hot summer day you’ll find great entertainment watching flocks of fellow swimmers enjoying the Sandy River at Lewis and Clark State Park near the confluence with the Columbia.
• Best Beach for a Cookout: With a long sandy beach, picnic tables and shelters, playground equipment, and nine grills available just 10 minutes from Vancouver, WA, Frenchman’s Bar is the spot we want to fire up the charcoal.
• Best Clothing-Optional Beach: If you like enjoying the river au natural, Collins Beach on Sauvie Island is our top pick for you!
• Best for Camping: If summertime to you means sleeping under the stars while the river floats by, camping is free at Celilo Park.

Protect Yourself:
• Rinse off after swimming and avoid entering the river with open cuts or wounds.
• Swim at least 500ft upstream of pipes discharging into the river.
• Be aware of industrial discharges in your area and avoid toxic hotspots.
• Before swimming, check Swim Guide for current E.coli levels at popular recreation sites.
• Report hazardous waste and illegal dumping.

Do you have thoughts on best Columbia River beaches? Share on our Facebook page (facebook.com/ColumbiaRiverkeeper).

Photo by Paloma Ayala.
Member Spotlight: Andi Hummel

By Acasia Berry, Development Director

Columbia Riverkeeper is so much more than a staff and board: we are an assemblage of people who care deeply about the river and communities along it. Each issue of River Currents introduces one of these river protectors.

Andi Hummel is the Manager of Student Development at the Aveda Institute Portland and Aveda Institute Vancouver. She looks out for the Columbia River—and 450 lucky students.

For the past four years, Hummel has orchestrated the Institutes’ efforts to raise $25,000 per year to protect the Columbia River. That is a tremendous accomplishment, but she does not stop there. She wants to inspire each student to take action. “I believe in the goodness of people … I have faith that once facts become apparent and communicated that people have an emotional incentive to come together as advocates for a cause.” At this year’s Catwalk for Clean Water, she ensured that hundreds of people discovered the Swim Guide app, learned about the impacts of coal terminals, and heard how Riverkeeper is pushing for more thorough cleanup of the Hanford nuclear site.

When asked why people should stand up for clean water, Hummel said: “Because if you don’t, who will? The Columbia River is home to us and to an ecosystem of life. We are a river culture.”

As to Riverkeeper’s role, Hummel continued: “A river cannot defend itself. The Columbia Riverkeepers can and do. History has shown us the consequence of turning a blind eye to environmental and social injustices. It’s not a pretty picture.”

Make the Columbia River Part of your Legacy

The Columbia is the lifeblood of the Pacific Northwest and one of our planet’s most important and iconic ecosystems. Riverkeeper works to restore a Columbia River where people can eat the fish they catch and children can swim without risking toxic exposure. Please consider making a clean and healthy Columbia part of your personal legacy by including Riverkeeper in your estate plans.

Columbia Riverkeeper formed in 2000, at the urging of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Since then, we have grown into a professional team of scientists, lawyers, and community organizers while maintaining our activist roots. We test water quality, promote safe swimming and fishing, and stop illegal pollution. We also build effective coalitions and partner with a wide range of river users. Our members are dedicated river advocates and our staff has decades of collective experience protecting the Columbia. We don’t just preach to the choir; we get results.

“Columbia Riverkeeper has earned the trust of tribes working to restore strong salmon runs and reduce harmful toxic pollution. Time and again, Riverkeeper stands out as one of the most effective voices for river protection.”

– Paul Lumley, Executive Director, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

By including Riverkeeper in your estate plans, you can ensure that the important work of protecting and restoring the Columbia River continues. Consider a gift to Riverkeeper in your will or living trust, or make Riverkeeper a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement account, gift annuity, or charitable trust. If you have already included Riverkeeper in your estate plans, please let us know!

For more information, or to discuss your plans, please contact our Development Director, Acasia Berry, at 541.399.9119 or acasia@columbiariverkeeper.org.
Before I kayaked 19 miles of the Columbia River’s Hanford Reach, I imagined Hanford as a massive, broken industrial complex surrounded by desert wasteland. I couldn’t have been more wrong.

While reactors cocooned in concrete dot the landscape and power-lines cut across the sky, the wildlife caught my attention most. White pelicans flying close to the river’s surface, tall grasses and wildflowers, mule deer swimming the river to rest and forage on different islands, white cliffs contrasted by the bluest sky, and raptors riding thermals overhead—this was unexpected.

Because of the secrecy surrounding WWII and Cold War efforts to create plutonium for nuclear weapons, Hanford’s landscape has remained largely undisturbed for over 70 years. This unintended preservation safeguards one of the last large expanses of mature, undisturbed sagebrush and bunchgrass in the Columbia Basin. Likewise, the need for cold, flowing water to cool nuclear reactors preserved the Hanford Reach as the last free-flowing stretch of the Columbia above the Bonneville dam. In 2000, President Clinton recognized Hanford’s “accidental nature” by permanently protecting 304 square miles surrounding the Hanford nuclear site as the “Hanford Reach National Monument.”

Unfortunately, Hanford’s toxic legacy continues to threaten fish and wildlife in the Hanford Reach. My realization that Hanford is a beautifully preserved landscape vital to the ecology of the Columbia Basin only makes Hanford cleanup seem more urgent. Will we have the wisdom to support a cleanup that swiftly and permanently removes the threat of nuclear and chemical waste looming over one of Washington’s most valuable, untrammeled desert landscapes?

Now a sanctuary for several species of threatened and endangered animals and plants, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) manages the Monument’s lands. According to FWS, the Hanford Reach National Monument is home to 43 species of fish, including threatened and endangered salmon and trout; 42 mammal species; 258 bird species; 4 amphibian species; 11 reptile species; and over 1,500 invertebrate species. This is the most productive spawning ground for the threatened Chinook salmon on the main stem Columbia.

The uplands provide vital habitat for birds like the brewer’s sparrow, sage sparrow, and sage thrasher that require mature, intact areas of sagebrush for hunting, foraging, and nesting. The Monument also supports several species of eagles, hawks, and owls. Even large mammals like bobcats, badgers, porcupines, and elk, flourish in this uniquely preserved landscape.

For more on the Hanford Reach National Monument, visit the FWS website http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Hanford_Reach/.
Listen to Your Elders Kids

By Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Community Organizer

Testifying at government hearings probably isn’t your favorite thing in the world. But there’s no doubt it makes a difference. During public hearings, people are usually allowed three or (if we’re lucky) four minutes to share facts, stories, and alternatives to a project or proposal. Public testimony can reframe the debate surrounding a controversial issue or highlight critical facts that decision-makers may overlook. For example, in 2013 over 200,000 people submitted comments on the proposed coal export terminal in Longview. People started paying attention, and Longview became a focal point in the coal export debate. Here’s a more recent example: when Pembina’s controversial propane export plan arrived in Portland, local students delivered testimony to the Planning and Sustainability Commission that was so powerful the commissioners quoted it during heated deliberations. The students’ testimony touched many of the commissioners and the audience, giving us energy and inspiration to move past the Planning and Sustainability Commission’s disappointing vote. Portlanders continue to work to protect our water from propane.

Here’s what brave, intelligent students from Sunnyside Environmental School told the City of Portland about Pembina and propane export:

Sam Oeding, age 13.
“It is your responsibility to make decisions that will have a huge impact on many people, especially young people like me that will be faced by an unstable climate.”
Overview of the Issue: Pembina, the largest pipeline company in the Alberta tar sands mining industry, wants to export propane to Asia from the Port of Portland’s Terminal 6 on the Columbia. Pembina’s proposal comes as the City of Portland works to establish itself as a leader in climate policy and sustainability.

Pembina would create: more mile-long unit trains of explosive propane cutting through our communities; dangerous, pressurized propane storage tanks endangering workers and neighborhoods; and propane supertankers on the Columbia River with the possibility of large “security zones” that restrict other ships and recreational boats.

Part of the terminal would be located on an area of Columbia River shoreline that is zoned for Environmental Conservation. Because dirty propane export is not compatible with environmental conservation, Pembina had to ask Portland for an exception to the City’s rules.

In response to Pembina, Portlanders banded together to create a strong coalition highlighting the community and climate risks of propane export. And the City listened! Portland’s mayor withdrew his support for the terminal and asked Pembina to withdraw its application. The final public hearing on Pembina’s project was canceled and should not be rescheduled; this leaves Pembina without the zoning amendment it needs to operate on the Columbia River within Portland city limits.

Truman Cowan, age 14.
“Getting clean energy should leave land clean when producing it and the air clean afterward. Pembina wants to ship 37,000 barrels of propane to Portland everyday. That’s a lot of propane that will soon be shipped to Asia.”

Lucinda Drake, age 14.
“Every year the winters get a littler shorter, the summers get a little hotter and glaciers shrink a little more because of global warming.”

Noah Brown, age 13.
“Pembina comes in and everyone forgets what is important because all the people who make decisions start seeing dollar signs and forget what really matters in the world: a future for young people with a clean environment.”