

For Immediate Release

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NW Fracked: Watchdog Groups Call on NW Natural to Drop Fracked Gas Pipeline Through Mt Hood National Forest

NW Natural must drop plans to put a fracked gas pipeline through Mt Hood National Forest.

A group of climate and forest watchdog organizations recently discovered that NW Natural is continuing its involvement in a potential plan to build a fracked gas pipeline across Mount Hood National Forest.

Ahead of their shareholder meeting on May 28, NW Natural [filed reports](#) detailing their investments, including a 50% interest in the Trail West Pipeline, which would cut across the south side of Mt Hood National Forest, hanging above the Scenic Clackamas River, clear-cutting old growth forests, blasting cliffs along Fish Creek, and crossing the Pacific Crest Trail.

NW Natural's proposed pipeline would carry fracked gas from the Rockies across the Cascades to the existing Williams Northwest pipeline which could eventually connect to the proposed Kalama methanol refinery on the Columbia River.

"If NW Natural wants to be a part of a clean energy future, they must stop funding this fossil fuel expansion that would log old growth forests, degrade salmon spawning rivers, and cut across some of the most treasured landscapes in Oregon," said **Felice Kelly, a 350 PDX volunteer**.

If the Trail West project sounds familiar, it is because the Trail West pipeline was first proposed by NW Natural in 2007. Then called the Palomar Pipeline, the pipeline was stopped by intense community advocacy. Much of the community resistance was grounded in the beloved landscapes that would be scarred by the pipeline. Since then, the imperative to slow the global climate crisis by not building new fossil fuel infrastructure has grown exponentially more important and urgent.

"Public advocacy and legal pressure stopped this pipeline once before and, while we hope we don't have to fight it again, we're ready to," said **Brenna Bell, staff attorney for Bark**, a forest-defense organization that organized volunteers to hike the pipeline route across Mt Hood National Forest in 2008 and was part of legal action challenging this route and other energy corridors in the west.

Pipeline construction would create a 47-mile clearcut through Mt. Hood National Forest and cross 15 rivers and creeks, including the Wild and Scenic Clackamas River (which is popular for anglers and boaters and is home to migrating salmon and steelhead populations). The pipeline would cut through watersheds that serve as the municipal drinking water supply for nine municipalities and hundreds of thousands of people. Mature forests along the Clackamas River currently keep the river clean and cold, while also providing a major carbon sink, actively fighting climate change as they grow.

“NW Natural’s strategy is a fig leaf for climate-changing fossil fuel pollution,” added **Dan Serres, Co-Director of the Power Past Fracked Gas Coalition**. “NW Natural is still entertaining plans for a massive new fracked gas pipeline to facilitate the short-sighted greenhouse gas pollution of fracked gas,” Serres added. “If NW Natural is committed to being part of the fight against climate disruption, they should demonstrate that commitment by dropping their participation in the Trail West project entirely. Until they do, let’s call this company what it is: NW Fracked.”



“Orange Alert” Banner in Path of Potential Trail West Pipeline. Photo courtesy of BARK.

Supporting Documents:

1. **Trail West Pipeline appears in NW Natural's latest investor presentation from March 2020 ([May 2020 Investor Presentation](#))** - see p. 41

2. NW Natural's latest SEC filings from March 2020 describe Trail West Pipeline as an active project to its investors ([Annual Report](#))

"Currently, there are various interstate pipeline projects proposed, including the Trail West pipeline in which NW Holdings has an interest, that could meet the forecasted demand growth for NW Natural and the region. However, the location of any future pipeline project will likely depend on the location of committed industrial projects. NW Holdings and NW Natural intend to continue to evaluate and closely monitor the currently contemplated projects to determine the best option for our customers. NW Holdings has an equity investment in Trail West Holdings, LLC (TWH), which is developing plans to build the Trail West pipeline. This pipeline would connect TransCanada Pipelines Limited's (TransCanada) Gas Transmission Northwest (GTN) interstate transmission line to NW Natural's natural gas distribution system. If constructed, this pipeline would provide another transportation path for gas purchases from Alberta and the U.S. Rocky Mountains in addition to the one that currently moves gas through the Northwest Pipeline system." (p. 14)