

Regarding a Proposal By Williams Northwest Pipeline to Expand and Build New Segments of Pipeline Through Washington

Dear Governor Bob Ferguson, Senator Maria Cantwell, and Senator Patty Murray:

The undersigned groups, organizations, and individuals stand united in opposing a new major fossil fuel expansion in Washington, with system-wide impacts in Oregon and Idaho, where Williams Northwest-owned pipelines cross state lines and are connected to Washington pipeline corridors. Two early stage methane gas pipeline proposals in Washington would impact rural people along pipeline routes and influence gas flows in connected pipeline corridors in Washington, Idaho and Oregon where increased methane gas would be a cause for concern. Developments like these potentially require eminent domain where easements would be added or expanded, and often harm resources vital to Tribes, farmers, and residents of the places throughout the region where the gas would pass through and be used.

Williams' proposed expansion would involve hundreds of miles of new pipeline segments in Washington and compound health, safety, and climate-altering impacts that have sparked region-wide opposition to other major gas pipeline projects. Williams' new proposed pipelines are unacceptable and would derail Washington's clean energy and climate progress by bringing more methane gas—a potent and flammable greenhouse gas—through the region.

We demand that community voices be given weight in decisions about these projects. For years, residents of areas impacted by gas pipelines have raised concerns about health harms, safety risks, and natural resource damage from new pipelines, or increased throughputs in existing pipelines. These burdens disproportionately fall on frontline communities, particularly Tribal communities, communities of color, people experiencing housing insecurity, workers whose jobs require outdoor labor, and people with sensitive health conditions. Too often their voices have been ignored, and their input not sought.

Williams' proposed expansions would compound growing disparities between those who benefit from methane gas expansion and those who feel its impacts. The Northwest Pipeline system, owned by Williams Companies, carries methane gas from Western Canada and the Rocky Mountains through Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Williams [has its eye on](#) serving gas to power-hungry data centers, and wants to seize the opportunity to move more gas into the region. Williams is actively working to [influence](#) Washington's decisions on these gas projects, *even before communities impacted by them are aware that they are occurring*. This is why we raise our voices, recognizing that many more people beyond this letter's reach are impacted.

The addition of two new pipelines will increase the entire region's pipeline safety risks, climate-altering and health-harming pollution, and impacts to Tribes, local landowners, water resources, and frontline communities that depend on them. We, the undersigned, oppose this expansion and demand a fair public process for vetting its impacts and implementation.

As energy demand from data centers skyrockets, Washington faces a choice: maintain the progress required by climate and energy laws, or cave to fossil fuel interests. In the case of the GTN Xpress project involving the Gas Transmission Northwest (GTN) pipeline system, Washington's then-Attorney General Bob Ferguson, now Governor Ferguson, [was clear](#) that the push for more gas infrastructure projects will harm the climate, air quality, and our progress towards 100% clean energy, building on the knowledge developed by Tribes and people in the Columbia River Basin. Additionally, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell raised serious concerns and urged the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to deny the GTN Xpress project because of the impact on Washington residents.

Data centers and the power plants that serve them demand huge quantities of water in addition to methane gas while driving up costs, a driver for both TC Energy and Williams to expand gas pipelines. Due to the leadership of community members in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and their elected leaders' efforts, a [FERC Commissioner dissented and voted against GTN Xpress, and noted uneven cost impacts for Northwest communities facing gas expansion](#). Similar issues arise with Williams' plans.

To understand these intertwining concerns, we uplift the Energy Vision put forth by the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), which has taught our organizations to look carefully into the details of projects like these before believing claims about their potential impact to fish, clean water, clean air, and other resources on which our communities depend to live and thrive. CRITFC wrote:

The Northwest is at a critical crossroads, facing challenges to the health of the planet and the future of iconic fish and wildlife. These challenges are especially important to tribal resources that have sustained tribal people since time immemorial. One path leads to affordable, carbon-free energy that harmonizes with the ecosystem. This future would prioritize energy efficiency, renewable resources, new storage technologies, reductions in peak loads, and other strategies that are compatible with the needs of fish and wildlife. These efforts would reduce the impacts of renewable resource projects and transmission lines on tribal resources and save consumers money. The other path creates conflicts between renewable resources and tribal resources and results in higher costs for consumers. Choosing the first path will require the courage to act, common-ground solutions, and a commitment of resources to accomplish the hard work ahead. It will also require the humility to periodically evaluate and adjust course based on new information and understanding.

Furthermore, issues raised by Pipeline Safety Trust and frontline communities have identified [very real, specific safety](#) gaps and concerns in pipelines that currently exist, unsolved safety problems which could be compounded by adding more gas to these corridors.

Washington and Oregon elected officials did the right thing by opposing the GTN Xpress gas expansion. Now, it's time to stand strong against Williams' pipe dreams, too. It's not too late to stop these dirty, dangerous projects. River communities, public health advocates, and

environmental justice champions have been clear: New methane gas is not welcome in the Pacific Northwest.

Thank you for considering our concerns,

Juan Monje, Community Organizer, Columbia Riverkeeper

Dineen Crowe, Campaign Director, 350PDX

Peter Fargo, Coalition Coordinator, Stop NW Gas Expansion Coalition

James Moschella, Climate and Health Program Manager, Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility

Lee First, Twin Harbors Waterkeeper

Jeff Hammarlund, Co-chair, Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN) Climate, Energy and Environment Team

Rev. Richenda Fairhurst, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) Member of the Board, and Chair, EMO Creation Justice Committee and Oregon Interfaith Power and Light.

Valerie Costa, Co-Director, Oil and Gas Action Network

Caitlin Krenn, Climate & Clean Energy Director, Washington Conservation Action

Patricia Arnold, Executive Director, Friends of the White Salmon River

Ben Avery, State Director, Sierra Club WA State Chapter

Deb McGee and Patty Hine, 350 Eugene

Selden Prentice, 350 Seattle, Policy Action Team Co-lead

Amazon Employees for Climate Justice

Shelley Brock, President - Board of Directors, Citizens Allied for Integrity and Accountability

Emily Johnston, Data Center Team, Troublemakers

Amy Thomas MBA, Executive Director, 350 Deschutes

Samantha Hernandez, Healthy Climate Program Director, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

Renee Tkach, Conservation Director, Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Helena Birecki, Interim Chair, Climate Reality, Portland Chapter

Olympia Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA)

Alan R.P. Journet Ph.D. Cofacilitator, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

Phil Carver, Co-coordinator, 350 Salem Oregon

Jenifer Schramm, Co-lead, Divest Oregon

Allie Rosenbluth, US Program Co-Manager, Oil Change International