

PG&E's Push for Imported Fossil Fuels



PG&E and Williams Pipeline are partners in a proposed pipeline project that will import liquefied natural gas (LNG) into Northern California. The LNG would be imported from foreign countries to a Canadian controlled import terminal in Coos Bay, Oregon. LNG is natural gas that is super-cooled until it turns into a liquid. Once liquefied, LNG may be transported overseas in specially built tankers, enabling the global trade in natural gas. Currently, there are no LNG import terminals on the West Coast of the U.S.

The project will include an LNG import terminal that will be built on a sandy spit in Coos Bay, on the Southern Oregon Coast. The terminal will link to a new 230 mile gas pipeline, the Pacific Connector, that will move the imported natural gas across the Southern Cascades, and will connect to an existing natural gas pipeline near the Oregon/California border. If built, the Jordan Cove LNG project will increase PG&E's greenhouse gas emissions, endanger 17,000 residents of North Bend, Oregon, thousands of homes, businesses and schools, destroy salmon and spotted owl habitat, and create a new, unnecessary dependence on a foreign fossil fuel.

The project will increase PG&E's greenhouse gas emissions

PG&E uses very little coal for electricity, and is highly dependent on natural gas from Canada and the U.S. Because LNG must go through an energy intensive process, and then get shipped thousands of miles overseas, it emits up to 25 percent more greenhouse gas emissions than domestic natural gas. Imported LNG will displace domestic natural gas, not coal, and it's estimated this project will be responsible for about the same amount of greenhouse gases as 5 million cars. PG&E is far behind on meeting the 20 percent renewable energy mandate required by state law by 2010. The Jordan Cove LNG project will cost hundreds of millions of dollars, money that could instead be invested in ramped up energy efficiency programs and renewable energy that will reduce our dependence on dirty energy sources.

LNG exports environmental problems and human rights violations.

LNG will come from some of the world's most pristine, and unprotected, ecosystems. For instance, the largest LNG export facility in the world will open on Sakhalin Island, Russia next year. This project has put at risk the critically endangered Western Gray Whale, has destroyed robust salmon habitat, and has undermined the subsistence lifestyles of the indigenous populations. In West Papua, Indonesia, an LNG project has exacerbated a conflict between the West Papuan people and the Indonesian military. And Iran is often threatened with military action by the U.S., due in large part to their fossil fuel reserves. LNG means further dependence on foreign fossil fuel at a time when most agree that the U.S. should pursue energy independence.



The East Fork Coquille River, near a proposed pipeline crossing.

The project will endanger wildlife habitat

The 230 mile long Pacific Connector will create a clear-cut corridor that will be as wide as an 8-lane freeway its entire length. It will destroy thousands of acres of Southern Oregon habitat that is still recovering from decades of runaway logging. It will cross over 100 streams and rivers, putting at risk already endangered salmon such as the Oregon Coast coho. It will raze 420 acres of forestland needed by the endangered Northern Spotted Owl and marbled murrelet.

This project will endanger thousands of Southern Oregon residents

LNG is highly volatile, and if LNG leaks and vaporizes, it can easily ignite. Studies and modeling have shown that an LNG-produced vapor cloud from a tanker spill of 3 million gallons could travel up to 3 miles. Jordan Cove ships will carry up to 39 million gallons of LNG. If these vapors were to ignite, the fire that would occur would incinerate everything in its path and cause many secondary fires. If a pool fire was to develop from a LNG spill, people up to a mile away would have only 30 seconds to flee before receiving 2nd degree burns. A 2004 LNG accident in Algeria killed nearly 30 people and shattered windows 5 miles away from the facility. Within a 3 mile radius of the Jordan Cove LNG facility is a commercial airport, as well as 17,000 residents and thousands of homes, businesses and schools. The project will be located

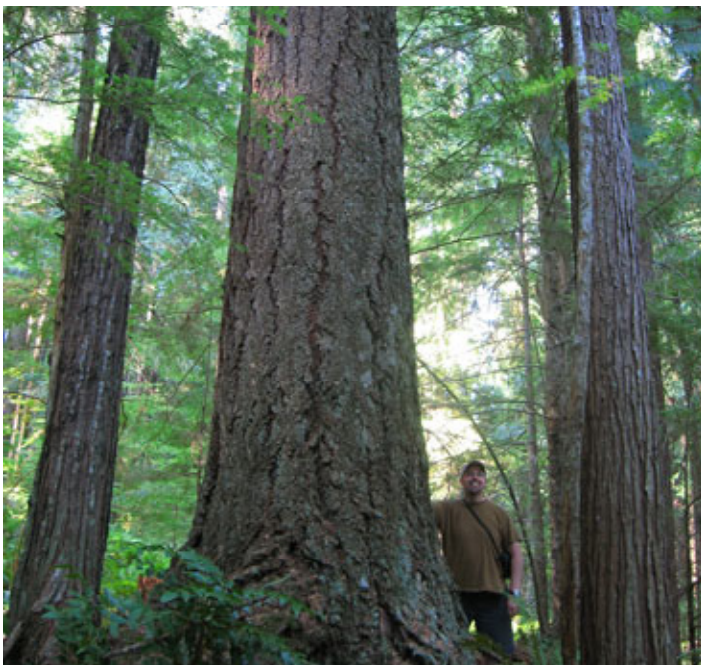


The Pacific Connector threatens critical habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl.

in a red tsunami zone, in an area known for intense storms, and in an area near the Cascadia subduction zone that seismologists say has the potential for a 9.0 earthquake. Airplanes will fly near the LNG storage tanks throughout the day.

LNG is unreliable and costly

The Jordan Cove project has no committed LNG supply contracts. Russia is home to some of the world's largest natural gas fields, and has been known to withhold natural gas deliveries to Europe when they need it most in order to extract higher payments. Iran and the rest of the Middle East also host some of the world's largest gas fields, and dependence on LNG from that region will exacerbate the same international tensions we currently see with our dependence on oil. Currently, the world price for LNG is about 3 times more than the cost for North American natural gas. With LNG, California will be competing for supplies with countries such as Japan and Korea that have few options besides LNG, and are willing to pay top dollar for it.



The Pacific Connector will cross many people's private property. It is likely these trees will be razed to make room for the pipeline.



Oregonian community members protesting the LNG project on the steps of the capital in Salem, OR.

The project is unnecessary

Due to aggressive efficiency measures, California's natural gas usage has decreased despite double-digit growth in population. The California Energy Commission and the state's utilities expect demand to remain flat up to 2030, though other analyses demonstrate a 10 to 20 percent drop in natural gas usage with the acceleration of the state's renewable laws and further efficiency measures. As California develops a cleaner energy grid, there is an abundant supply of domestic natural gas located in Canada and the Rocky Mountains. Meanwhile, the one LNG terminal on the West Coast in Mexico is becoming a "white elephant," going largely unused.

Oregonians don't want it

Oregon's communities and political establishment are against this project. Governor Ted Kulongoski has raised concerns that the project is not needed in Oregon. Secretary of State Bill Bradbury has said that LNG is a "giant step in the wrong direction" for Oregon, which is trying to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. Both U.S. Senators and the Attorney General either oppose or have voiced concern over the project. And this project has exacerbated the age-old mistrust of Californians, as many Oregonians view this as another example of California trampling on their land.

What you can do

To find out how you can help persuade PG&E to drop their LNG plans, please contact Rory Cox, California Program Director, at 415.399.8850 x302, or rcox@pacifenvironment.org.

To learn more, go to www.RaceForCleanEnergy.org.