



Wisdom of the Elders

Committed to Native American cultural sustainability, multimedia education and race reconciliation

April 5, 2015

Portland Planning and Development Commission
Delivered by email to: psc@portlandoregon.gov

Re: Zoning Code Amendment for Hazardous Substances in the Environmental Overlay Zone

Dear Planning Commission:

I am writing on behalf of Wisdom of the Elders, Inc., the Native American 501(c)(3) nonprofit located in Portland since 1993. We would like to express concern regarding the proposal by the City of Portland to change environmental regulations along the Columbia River that would allow for a new terminal to export volatile liquefied fossil fuels. This would increase dirty fossil fuel production while discouraging renewable energy projects. It would also intensify climate disruptions to our sovereign tribal nations.

As part of the Salmon Nation, Wisdom recognizes that salmon and the health of the river are of paramount importance to Native Americans in our region. Wisdom supports the findings of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and share CRITFC's concerns about development that environmentally degrades this fragile section of the Columbia River ecosystem and undermines salmon.

A great percentage of Portland's Native American population (the ninth largest urban Native population in the country) lives in the city's north and northeast neighborhoods, which places them at an unacceptable risk from Pembina's potential blast zone.

The impacts to Indigenous Peoples extend far beyond our region. The terminal is proposed by the Pembina Corp., a Canadian oil company with heavy investments in the Alberta tar sands. Its extraction process produces toxic waste that has gravely harmed the health of indigenous communities and the region's watersheds. We have seen recent explosions in other regions in the news and don't want our green community to be witness to a local tragedy such as this.

Wisdom's recent production of documentary films and public radio programs share the Native perspective on our environment and changing climate. We've witnessed the havoc that climate disruptions are wreaking on Alaska Native lands, communities and peoples. Future films we are planning will focus on Native peoples from Portland's metro area and the Oregon coast. We view Portland as an exemplary model city, remembering that our city was selected and honored as the site of World Environment Day by the United Nations in 2013. We want to document these positive attributes of our bellwether city in our upcoming film and radio productions.

Dogidinh ("thank you" in Deg Hit'an Dine),

Rose High Bear

Rose High Bear, Executive Director

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