

For Immediate Release

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Washington Council Agrees to Take a Broad Look at Impact of Proposed Vancouver Oil Terminal

Vancouver, WA – Today, in a packed hearing room, the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) agreed with tens of thousands of citizens that the State of Washington should do a broad review of the proposed Tesoro/Savage oil terminal in Vancouver. At 360,000 barrels per day, the proposed terminal would dwarf other proposed oil terminals, and the Council approved a request by their staff to proceed with an environmental impact statement (EIS) that would look beyond the immediate terminal site.

During hearings last October, hundreds of people weighed called on EFSEC to consider potential toxic air emissions, oil spills, and public safety risks in Vancouver. The proposed Tesoro/Savage terminal would require at least 4 loaded unit trains per day carrying highly explosive fuel through Vancouver and its waterfront each day.

Brett VandenHeuvel, Executive Director of Columbia Riverkeeper, stated, “Thousands of people asked the Governor and EFSEC to look at the public health, public safety, and spill risks for the Tesoro project. We were encouraged to see that the Council’s deliberation acknowledged these concerns – including the risk of oil trains spilling or exploding near Vancouver and the Columbia River.”

Added VandenHeuvel, “We’ll pay close attention to how this review unfolds, but in the meantime the community is emphatically objecting to dangerous oil trains and a huge oil terminal in the midst of neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and critical salmon habitat.”

Ryan Rittenhouse, Conservation Organizer for Friends of the Columbia Gorge, applauded the Council’s decision to transportation, public safety and environmental impacts beyond Vancouver. According to EFSEC staff, thousands of comments called for an analysis of impacts beyond the Vancouver terminal site, itself.

“For communities like Camas, Washougal, and many others, the Tesoro/Savage project represents a direct threat. The oil trains are volatile, risky, and could hamper the long-term sustainability of Gorge communities. We agree with the Council’s decision to include upstream impacts in their evaluation of the project. We don’t want the Columbia Gorge turned into an oil pipeline on wheels.”

Today’s Council meeting was preceded by over 50 people holding signs and gathering signatures outside to oppose the oil terminal. Participants included local faith, labor, environmental, and neighborhood leaders.

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