

PRESS RELEASE

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Oregon Land Use Board Issues Decision in Oregon LNG Pipeline Appeal

Salem, OR — Today the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) issued a decision to remand a Clatsop County vote to reject a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on the Columbia River, the Oregon LNG project. LUBA declined to rule on the majority of Oregon LNG legal arguments. Instead, the LUBA issued a narrow ruling, finding that one county commissioner was biased against LNG. Under Oregon land use law, if one commissioner is biased the decision is automatically sent back to the county for a new vote without the biased official. The Commissioners will likely vote again within the next few months. Similar to their previous vote, the County Commissioners can again vote to deny the pipeline application.

In October 2013, Clatsop County voted unanimously to reject Oregon LNG's controversial gas pipeline because it threatens public safety and endangered salmon habitat. Oregon LNG sued the County, arguing that three county commissioners were biased against LNG projects and the County's decision violated local law. LUBA ruled that two of the Commissioners were not biased.

In October 2013, the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted 5 to 0, rejecting the controversial pipeline application. Oregon LNG proposes exporting North American natural gas overseas through a proposed LNG terminal in Warrenton, Oregon. In its decision denying the pipeline, Clatsop County Commissioners cited safety, private property rights, and natural resource concerns in their decision to reject Oregon LNG's proposed pipeline.

The proposed Oregon LNG pipeline would cut through public forests, private tree farms, and local agricultural lands to feed gas to a huge export terminal in Warrenton, Oregon. The project would cross dozens of salmon-bearing streams and require over 1 million cubic yards of dredging in endangered salmon habitat. With a capacity to export up to 1.25 billion cubic feet of gas per day, the terminal could export roughly twice Oregon's total gas consumption per day to overseas markets.

Proposals to export LNG require permits from multiple local, state, and federal agencies. Neither Oregon LNG nor Jordan Cove LNG, proposed in Coos Bay, Oregon, have the necessary approvals to proceed at this time, and both face stiff opposition from local activists, private landowners, and businesses concerned about increased energy prices.

In today's decision, LUBA also rejected Oregon LNG's argument that the County did not have the right to reconsider an earlier vote approving the LNG pipeline. Oregon LNG also argued that it had the right to address a map presented in a powerpoint by the County's land use staff. The Land Board agreed that that Oregon Pipeline could submit evidence rebutting the staff's conclusions related to the map, which covers a small segment of the proposed 41-mile long pipeline.