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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REFINERY DETAILS EMERGE: PORT OF LONGVIEW MAY VOTE SOON

May 26, 2015 (Longview, WA) – A letter from Riverside Refining LLC to state officials shows, for the first time, a complete picture of the crude oil refinery and crude-by-rail terminal proposed at the Port of Longview. Riverside Refining would bring Bakken crude to Longview by rail, refine 30,000 barrels daily, and send tankers carrying both refined and un-refined petroleum products through the environmentally sensitive Columbia River estuary. Columbia Riverkeeper obtained the letter through a public records request.

This would be the first west coast refinery constructed in over 25 years and the largest new refinery in the continental United States since 1976.

While the Port of Longview has known about the oil refinery proposal for a year, the Port may acknowledge the project publicly for the first time today, and possibly vote to approve the project. Diane Dick, a Longview resident and President of Landowners and Citizens for a Safe Community, is upset by the Port's secrecy and lack of foresight. "Oil trains are exploding nearly once a month and emergency responders and local governments are struggling to get proper training and response equipment," said Dick. "The Port of Longview is ignoring this serious issue and instead choosing to do business with this dangerous industry."

The prospect of a refinery has Longview school teacher Krista Mead worried for the kids in her classroom. "I've lived near an oil refinery," said Mead. "The fumes, noise and health impacts aren't worth it. The toxic fumes from the refinery often prevented people from being outside. I don't want to see Longview's children impacted like that."

Beyond dirtying the air, there's crude-by-rail's poor safety record. "Oil train derailments are a serious risk; five oil trains have exploded this year alone," said local firefighter Glen Hudson. "Oil trains supplying oil to a refinery in Longview makes those fiery images I've seen on the news seem even closer to home. It seems the oil companies should make sure they have provided sufficient coverage in case of accidents, such as depositing in advance into the accounts of all the local fire departments and county enough money to pay for the additional training of local responders, equipment, cleanup and repair costs anticipated for a worst case scenario. In no case should our community have to bear these expenses."

Riverside Refining's letter says it intends to produce biofuel, using imported international feedstocks, as well crude oil. "You don't need an oil refinery to make biofuel," stated Brett VandenHeuvel, Executive Director of Columbia Riverkeeper. "Adding some palm oil or ethanol to the oil doesn't make the refinery or the oil trains any less dangerous."

Residents are skeptical of the biofuel claim. The Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery across the river in Clatskanie, Oregon, went bankrupt and now functions entirely as a crude oil terminal.

There is an ongoing lawsuit against the principal backers of Riverside Refining LLC for a biofuels venture in Odessa, Washington. The lawsuit alleges that some of the Riverside leaders lied on credit applications, under-capitalized their business, and lined their own pockets instead of paying more than \$1.5 million in outstanding debts after their biofuels-related business in Odessa tanked.

The following documents obtained by Columbia Riverkeeper are available here:

- [March 18, 2015 Letter to the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council from Riverside Refining LLC.](#)
- [Complaint in *Wolfkill Feed and Fertilizer v. Transmessis Columbia Plateau, Louis Soumas, Damon Pistulka, Christopher Efrid, et. al.*](#)

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About Columbia Riverkeeper

Columbia Riverkeeper's mission is to protect and restore the water quality of the Columbia River and all life connected to it, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean. Representing over 8,000 members and supporters, Columbia Riverkeeper works to restore a Columbia River where people can safely eat the fish they catch, and where children can swim without fear of toxic exposure. The organization is a member of Waterkeeper Alliance, the world's fastest growing environmental movement, uniting more than 200 Waterkeeper organizations worldwide. For more information go to columbiariverkeeper.org.