



Union officials attended a "grand opening" of the Cascade Grain ethanol plant at Port Westward near Clatskanie. From left to right are John Candiotti of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16; Jamie Maygra of Iron Workers Local 29; Dave Bell of Laborers Local 296; Tim Carrier of Painters District Council 5; John Mohlis, executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council; Boe Ellis of Operating Engineers Local 701; and Herman Stonebraker of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290.

Union-built Cascade Grain ethanol plant up and running

CLATSKANIE, Oregon — The union-built and union-operated Cascade Grain ethanol plant at Port Westward Energy Park is in full production as of June 6.

The \$192 million all-union plant broke ground (under a project labor agreement) July 20, 2006 and was completed last month. More than 400 construction workers logged over 800,000 hours building the facility — the largest ethanol plant on the West Coast and one of the 10 largest in the United States.

The project included 250,000 cubic

yards of excavation; 2,000 tons of structural steel and iron; 18,000 cubic yards of concrete; 112,000 lineal feet of pipe; 140,000 lineal feet of cable; and over 550 miscellaneous pumps, heat exchangers, compressors, and blowers, reported general contractor JH Kelly.

"This project represents work performed by local building trades employees," said John Mohlis, executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbia-Pacific Building Trades Council. "This construction injected more than \$100 million into the local economy, and

that money stayed right here in Oregon and Southwest Washington."

In addition to wages, the project labor agreement ensured that all construction workers received health insurance benefits, an employer-paid pension, and safety training. Fifteen percent of the workforce was apprentices. Only five injuries were recorded.

"Labor productivity and harmony on this project were excellent," noted Clancy Kelly, senior project manager for JH Kelly.

The ethanol plant was designed by Delta T and was constructed by JH

Kelly LLC Ethanol, under a joint venture with The Industrial Company, Berggruen Holdings Inc. of New York owns the facility.

Cascade Grain will produce 113.4 million gallons of corn-based dry mill fuel grade ethanol a year. Forty million bushels of corn will come to Port Westward from the Midwest via rail cars. Ethanol is an alternative fuel that is considered a sustainable resource, and its production warrants special tax incentives granted through a bill passed in 2005 by the Oregon Legislature.

The plant will employ 50 people — new members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555.

According to a report in the Clatskanie Chief, all of the full-time employees are from Clatskanie, Rainier, Svensen, and Longview. "The only jobs that have been imported (from outside the area) are mine and the production supervisor," said Ken

McFarland, Cascade Grain Products operation manager. "All the rest are local and are very talented. I'm tickled to death with the quality of people we've gotten. The people here are head and shoulders above my experience in the Midwest."

Another \$27.4 million worth of infrastructure related to Port Westward is currently under construction or being planned. Plans are also in the works to build a carbon dioxide plant next to Cascade Grain, and a coal gasification power plant. CO2 is a gas by-product of the ethanol-producing process and is used in carbonated beverages. The operation would create about 30 full-time jobs. The gasification power plant would employ 100 full-time workers and has an estimated construction cost of \$1.7 billion.

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