

DEQ Public Comment Period on Oregon LNG Project Ends Jan. 17th

By Scott Laird and Brett Costley

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has initiated a 60-day comment period for a 401 Water Quality Certification for the proposed Oregon Liquefied Natural Gas (OLNG) pipeline project which is planned to pass near Vernonia. The comment period began on November 18, 2014 and ends on January 17, 2015.

The proposed project includes a bidirectional liquefied natural gas terminal located in Warrenton, OR along with an eighty-six-mile natural gas pipeline which will travel through Clatsop, Tillamook, and Columbia counties, crossing the Columbia River near Deer Island and continuing into Washington State.

According to Jennifer Purcell of DEQ NW Region and the North Coast Regional Solutions Team, DEQ will post a public notice for informational meetings to be held in late January, 2015, in Astoria and Vernonia, although no in-

formation on a date and location is currently available. Purcell said there is a possibility that the comment period, which will most likely end before the informational meeting is held, may be extended.

The DEQ process could end up being moot as the Oregon Court of Appeals, on December 17, upheld the process by which Clatsop County commissioners rejected a land-use application for construction of the pipeline and terminal. The County Commission initially approved the pipeline, but new Commissioners reversed that decision. The Commissioners rejection was appealed by project supporters but has now been upheld by the Court of Appeals, putting the future of the project in jeopardy.

Nehalem River watershed.

According to Purcell there will be multiple opportunities for the public to provide comments to DEQ throughout

in question. Public hearings and testimony received informs permitting and becomes part of the permanent record," said Purcell.

Natural gas will be transported to and from the Warrenton Terminal via a thirty-six inch diameter pipeline. The Pipeline will interconnect with the interstate transmission system of Northwest Pipeline GP near Woodland, Washington. According to the OLNG website, the pipeline is primarily intended to transport natural gas from Canada and will be compressed to liquid natural gas in Warrenton and then exported to Asia. It can, with demand, flow in the opposite direction, but



this is not the expected use.

The route of the pipeline shows it crossing the Nehalem River north of Highway 26 on Route 103.

The pipeline would also cross Cedar Creek (a tributary to the Nehalem River) about 1 mile west (upstream) of the Vernonia Airport. Data on this stream crossing notes it would be a "Cut and Cover" (trench through stream) with high landslide risk and lists Coho as endangered fish.

The route also shows the pipeline crossing Rock Creek between Flack and Burn Roads and crossing the Nehalem River and Highway 47 North of Pittsburg.

An electrically driven gas compressor station would be constructed at milepost 80.8 of the pipeline, 1.2 miles

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Alumni Sports Initiative Update

As of December 15, 2014 the Vernonia Alumni Sports Initiative has raised over \$75,000 through contributions by 165 alumni. A year-end appeal, mailed on November 24, has generated \$16,440 thus far. One year ago the Sports Initiative had reached the \$50,000 level with 130 alumni contributing. When combined with the Gary Davis Memorial (\$4,000), the Class of 73 Give Back Bash (\$10,000), the local match for the OSAA grant for the football practice field (\$10,000), the Sports Initiative is just shy of \$100,000 being contributed for athletic facilities during the past two years.

DEQ is currently reviewing applications for air and water quality permits associated with the proposed facility and pipeline and will specifically evaluate the project under Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act to determine whether proposed activities will comply with Oregon water quality standards. The application's scope potentially affects waterways and wetlands in Clatsop, Tillamook, and Columbia counties.

About forty-four miles of the proposed pipeline is in the

the permitting process. "For permit applications associated with this proposed facility, DEQ has hosted or plans to host informal public information meetings," said Purcell in an email response to questions about DEQ's project review process. "These meetings are typically held at the beginning of the permitting process to further explain the process and discuss at a high-level what DEQ is evaluating specific to the permit(s) in question. Public information meetings also provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions related to the permit(s) in question and the associated process."

Purcell says that after permits are drafted, there will be another opportunity for the public to comment. "DEQ will hold formal public hearings to solicit comments specific to the permit(s)

Three Scouts Complete Projects and Apply for Rank of Eagle Scout

Three local Boy Scouts have all completed projects and been recommended for the rank of Eagle Scout.

Bradley Ely, Jacob Eyrrick, and Jeffrey Goodman are all awaiting notification from the Boy Scouts of America National Organization that they have been accepted as Eagle Scouts.

All three have completed projects which benefit the Vernonia community.

Brad Ely constructed and repaired interpretive signs around Vernonia Lake and along the Webb Way Linear Trail. Many of the signs had been installed as part of a previous Eagle Scout Project. Ely raised funds, purchased supplies, and organized work crews to repair and re-install several signs



Jacob Eyrrick and Nicholas Welch of the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce.

and also develop and install several new ones. There are now eighteen interpretive signs installed.

Jacob Eyrrick led a committee which designed and published a visitors guide to Vernonia for travelers using the Linear Trail. The brochure was created to help hikers, bikers and other trail users find

emergency services while using the trail close to Vernonia. Eyrrick received support for printing of the brochure from the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce and has installed boxes to hold the brochure at the Anderson Park and Vernonia Lake trail heads.

Jeff Goodman converted the basement of the Grace Family Fellowship Church into a usable space by organizing a work party to spread gravel for drainage, protect the building furnace and create storage space. Goodman completed the work last spring.

All three scouts are expected to hear about the status of their Eagle rank by the end of January.

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