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Jordan Cove pipeline open houses

All open houses will be held from 4 to 8 p.m.:

March 21: North Bend – The Mill Casino (3201 Tremont St.)

March 22: Canyonville – Seven Feathers Casino (146 Chief Miwaleta Lane)

March 23: Medford – Ramada Inn Conference Center (2250 Biddle Road)

Friday, March 24: Klamath Falls – Oregon Institute of Technology (3201 Campus Drive, Mount Mazama Room)

LNG carriers like the Energy Frontier will export liquefied natural gas from a Coos Bay terminal if the Jordan Cove Pacific Connector Pipeline project is completed.

LNG, from page 8

submitted a letter to the State Historic Preservation Officer on Sept. 21. The letter outlines concerns that the project could affect former village sites and unearth human remains, as well as damage river resources, as the pipe is routed under the Klamath River and Rogue River, “which since time immemorial have been and continue to be important sources of fish for Tribal members.”

“There’s other things we didn’t really talk about in the letter,” said Don Gentry, chairman of The Klamath Tribes. “Maintaining a healthy ecosystem is really something that we see as key. We’re here because the fish were here. We’re here because the system was healthy. I guess that’s just a value we have; that’s inherent in our legends and stories; that’s been kind of passed down to us through the ages. So we see that there’s a need to do things differently than what we’ve had. And we support looking at alternative sources of energy. We’ve actually been looking at solar projects.”

Many opponents are incensed by news that the project is returning despite the unprecedented rejection from FERC last year.

“Southern Oregonians have demonstrated, year after year, that we don’t want this pipeline and export terminal,” said Hannah Sohl, director of Rogue Climate, one of the local organizations opposed to Jordan Cove LNG.

“It’s a never-ending nightmare,” McLoughlin said. “When Veresen can’t meet their time frames, they simply extend those time frames – over and over and over again. The state of Oregon permits this. We can’t compete with their lawyers and their endless checkbook.”

And as Veresen travels to Washington,

D.C., to curry favor with the White House, its opponents in Oregon have begun appealing directly to voters.

“Essentially sustainability is illegal,” said Mary Gedry, of the Coos Commons Protection Council, the group backing the initiative to ban LNG from the county. “You see that with DAPL (Dakota Access Pipeline): It’s criminal to protect water, but it’s perfectly legal to poison it. If we’re not gonna be able to say no to harmful industrial projects, then effectively sustainability is illegal. So our ordinance is designed to legalize sustainability in Coos County, and to refuse to recognize corporations as persons.”

The ordinance would also address one of the most contentious aspects of the Jordan Cove project – the company’s use of eminent domain to seize land for their pipeline.

The backers of LNG exports are not in favor of the proposal.

“In short, we’re against the community bill of rights,” said Michael Hinrichs, a spokesperson for Jordan Cove LNG. “Yes, it would impact Jordan Cove, but it impacts Coos County far beyond that, and I think a majority of residents in Coos County are gonna show just that in May.”

“It’s wildly unconstitutional,” Hinrichs added. “I’m personally of the mind that it would be struck down in the courts afterward.”

Methane and climate change

Climate change has been a major piece of the controversy around LNG.

“Southern Oregon has been seeing these climate effects more than other parts of the state, maybe more so than Portland,” Evans said. Deadly wildfires in Southern Oregon and water shortages in Ashland have forced many people to reckon with the reality of climate change, she said.

“Until we saw it at our door, we didn’t really realize what was happening. That’s when we realized we need to get over this fossil fuel stuff,” Evans said. “I sort of see it as a showdown between the oil and gas industry and everyone else.”

But Jordan Cove’s backers say natural gas is different than other fossil fuels.

“It’s always odd to be out in the community and have it assumed that I’m a right-wing fossil

fuel guy from Texas who loves Trump and works for a company like Exxon-Mobil,” Hinrichs said. “That couldn’t be further from the truth. And I think it catches people off guard when they find out that I’m a card-carrying Democrat, and so is the CEO of Jordan Cove, and that we believe in global warming and are happy to talk about it. The difference between Jordan Cove and Exxon is not even worth discussing because of how different we are.”

Hinrichs argues that gas from Jordan Cove will provide a clean-burning fuel that will displace coal in places like India so that they can avoid the kind of air pollution that’s plagued China. He said the company also has two customers in Japan that will

avoid increased reliance on coal generation thanks to gas they hope to obtain from

Jordan Cove. PHOTO COURTESY OF KAWASAKI KISEN KAISHA LTD.

Burning coal emits more carbon dioxide than natural gas. However, methane, the main component of natural gas, has a much greater global warming potential in the short term. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the warming effect of methane is 86 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 20-year period, and 34 times as strong over a 100-year period.

“Even a tiny, tiny percentage of methane leakage makes its impact much worse than carbon dioxide,” said Ted Gleichman, a policy adviser at the Center for Sustainable Economy.

As a result of short-term problems such as heat waves, rising ocean temperatures and loss of snow pack, some scientists are urging public officials to immediately regulate the most potent short-term drivers of climate change – particularly methane and black carbon.

But since the fracking boom in the mid-2000s, policymakers have mainly assumed that natural gas was a clean investment – a position that’s now coming under serious strain.

“There is no fossil fuel solution to the fossil fuel crisis,” Gleichman said. “We are actually now at a point where it is cost effective to build the just transition. And it’s really imperative that gas is not seen as a ‘bridge’ to that transition. As Mike Brune said a few years ago, it’s not a bridge; it’s a gangplank. Liberal Democrats, many of whom are labor-oriented, many of whom are corporate-oriented, need to understand that their grassroots constituents have left them behind on these issues, and they cannot support a Trump energy program, which is what LNG has become in Oregon. There will be primary fights if people don’t turn.”

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JORDAN COVE LNG SPOKESPERSON