Motion to Intervene

Coos County Land Use Appeal Hearing, August 20, 2013
Jordan Cove’s South Dunes Power Plant and Gas Liquefaction facility
By Jonathan M. Hanson, resident of Coos Bay, Oregon

This hearing is a fraudulent attempt by the County Commissioners and Planning Department to fast-track approval of the proposed power plant in contempt of public due process as well as federal law. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearly states that when a programmatic environmental impact statement is required for a project involving multiple components, no action shall be taken until the EIS is completed and a record of decision made by the appropriate federal agency (1506.1 (c)).

The proposed power plant is one of three components of the Jordan Cove Energy Project, which includes a liquefied natural gas export facility on the North Spit, a 234 mile pipeline to transport LNG from Malin, Oregon to the terminal, and the 420 megawatt power plant to provide the energy required for operation of the terminal itself. Thus by federal law and FERC rules, no action may be taken on any portion of the project until the programmatic EIS is completed. It should be noted that the EIS is nowhere near completion yet; in fact, FERC and the Army Corps of Engineers have just required the applicant to submit numerous supplemental materials for consideration.

I would like to also remind the Hearing Officer that Section 1506.1 (a) of NEPA prohibits ANY action on a project that would limit consideration of alternatives prior to completion of the EIS. Accordingly, any decision to approve this portion of the Jordan Cove project would be in contempt of NEPA. NEPA’s requirement to consider alternatives is not only to assure the least environmentally damaging option in a given area, but also to determine if a proposed project should even be built at all. In other words, does this project make sense for Coos Bay, Oregon?

Despite the jingoistic assurances of Boost Southwest Oregon, an unregistered organization which appears to be a tool of the developer, there are major environmental, economic, and public safety issues involved with the Jordan Cove Project. Does it really make sense to build an LNG plant on a sand spit in an
earthquake subduction zone that is also an estuary full of marine life? Does it make sense to risk possible explosion and fireball in the event of a collision or natural disaster that could kill and injure thousands of residents? Does it make sense to bring in 3400 workers for a few months to construct a facility which will eventually DECREASE the work force in Coos Bay and the surrounding area? Does it make sense for the community to take on all the risks and costs of this proposed project while foreign investors reap the rewards? Any rational person can arrive at the answer to these questions.

Many players in the community have acted in contempt of NEPA either deliberately or out of ignorance. The Coos Bay Area Chamber of Commerce organized Boost Southwest Oregon in a private meeting closed to some of its members. Boost Southwest Oregon has duped over 45 organizations into signing a fraudulent resolution which is full of half-truths and misinformation. The City of North Bend, City of Coos Bay, and International Port of Coos Bay have all participated in the fraud by signing this resolution. All of these acts are in contempt of NEPA.

It is time to stop this illegal and ill-conceived fraud in contempt of the public interest and due process. I urge the Hearing Officer to order this sham to CEASE AND DESIST NOW by denying the County’s application. There is clearly no other rational decision to make.

From: Jonathan Hanson, Olive Barber Road, Coos Bay Resident