To Coos County Planning Department

Request for LNG route adjustment in Coos Bay.

June 28, 2014

We are very concerned about the route of the pipeline through Haynes Inlet and the West side of Coos Bay. During one of the meetings in 2010 at our oyster plant, I mentioned the fact that the line was running diagonally through Silverpoint 1 oyster bed. One of the men said that could be “fixed.” I also pointed out that the route going through under the Highway 101 bridge would be very detrimental to our oyster business for several reasons:

We need access to the three oyster beds: Silverpoint 1, 7 and 8 depending on the different tide levels, at various times of the day or night. The harvest crew goes out with the boats at low tide. The large barge is taken out at high tide to bring in the full nets. The channel between Silverpoint 1 and 3 is narrow. We couldn’t fill orders if big equipment is being used to dig the trench for the line preventing us from going through.

Also, we need access to all three beds, at all times. Silverpoint 1 may be affected by mud or fines in the water which might prevent us from harvesting the oysters according to Dept. of Agriculture regulations. We are also storing our “re-beds” on S1 for more grow out time. We bring them in as they are ready. Another problem would be the new seed placed around S1 and, potentially could be affected by the fines suspended in the water.

However, according to the documentary we were shown some time ago, when a pipeline is constructed in the water, mud and sand are suspended in the water, especially on windy days. It could drift over our one, two and three year old oysters in the bay. Oysters are filter feeders. They seine out the tiny plankton from the seawater to feed on. Mud, sand or fines could clog the gills of countless oysters. I would hate to have a repeat of the New Carissa oil spill effect. It took 4 years and 9 months before we were paid for the damage!

Another worry is the 50 foot Right of Way! Would that apply in the bay as well? Any kind of hole or ditch in the mudflats takes years before the ground above it solidifies. One example is at the foot of the boat ramp next to us. A five foot diameter hole left by someone, was like quicksand, and one couldn’t walk across it for several years!

Exhibit: 1
Date: 7/11/14
The line between Silverpoint 1 and 3 could cause problems when accessing the oyster beds, especially at night. Usually the boats are parked in shallow water close to the area to be harvested. I would hate for our guys to get stuck there. And the channel is very narrow!

At that long ago meeting my husband, Max, and I tried to explain that the proposed line running through the bridge was too destructive to our business. Studying the maps it seemed more logical and doable to swing away from our oyster plant from Haynes Inlet and continue straight west through North of Horsefall Beach Road, and tunnel under Hwy. 101 through North Slough. There is nothing planted due to poor water quality and super muddy ground conditions. There could even be a half mile saved in total distance to offset some of the additional cost! Considering the line is starting in Canada to come to Coos Bay crossing many highways, roads and other obstacles, this should be a possible solution without destroying our oyster business!!!

We do not like the idea of having a pipe line a few hundred feet from our oyster plant, but it would not impact our daily commute to and from the oyster beds. While it will not eliminate totally the threat of fines invading our oyster beds (at outgoing tide all the water is rushing through the bridge - and then over the oyster beds) we are hoping for the best outcome.

Over the years we have enjoyed excellent cooperation from the County. Nikki Whitty, Gordon Ross and John Griffith were most helpful at various times. I do not believe that anyone, on purpose, would intend to cause us problems. Therefore, I am requesting that the proposed line be changed to go through the North Slough rather than endangering, potentially, all the oyster beds from an invasion of mud, silt and fines!

Thank you!

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Clausen Oysters