May 15, 2014

Planning Department
Coos County Courthouse
250 N. Baxter
Coquille, Oregon 97423

RE: Alternative segment alignment for the PCGP
File # HBCU-13-06

Coos County Planning Department,

Let it first be said “We wish this letter to be acknowledged as, “Raising Issue” with the “Alternative segment alignment for the PCGP.

That being said, we are not particularly opposed to the “Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline” in itself. We are merely stepping forward in an effort to protect our personal and financial interests, which by proxy will include, and perhaps benefit environmental concerns. All of which will be substantially impacted by the use of Daniels Creek road, and the Blue Ridge turnoff road, as access to the Blue Ridge Alternate Route.

Considerable investment has been made in our land and our home. We own thirty acres, 26 S 12-14, tax lot 1100, located directly across from the Blue Ridge turn off. We chose this specific location for its lush forest, solitude and seclusion.

Even at this stage of the proposal we have been impacted. Should we want to sell our property we would be subject to “Full Disclosure” to a buyer, given the nature of this proposed pipeline project. Should we want to keep our home until after the completion of the pipeline, and then sell, we would have to stumble upon the unlikely scenario of either an apathetic or an uninformed buyer. Neither of which are very likely with respect to larger real estate transactions. To dig in and keep our home, given the elevated location almost directly across from the proposed access on Blue Ridge turnoff, the commercial use would create a vortex of noise, dust and confusion at our front door.

At this time perhaps a dozen vehicles pass our home in a day. The majority of those are neighbors going to and from their workplaces. There is precious little environmental impact around us from things such as noise, exhaust, litter, vandalism or road kills.

We want to keep our quality of life as it is, as we envisioned it would be when we purchased our property, as we believed it would be when we built our home. Someone else should not have the power to take that away. Turning Daniels Creek Road into a business route will substantially alter that quality of life. It will irreparably damage the very essence of country living. Where we, at this time can breathe clean air, listen to birdsong and live off the grid.

Let’s next address the very real issue of fire protection. In this area we have “NO” fire department that will save our homes. Coos Fire Protective Services has made it abundantly clear not only to the residents of this area but, also to the homeowners insurance companies when they are contacted, that they are “NOT” responsible to provide protection to the homes in this district, only the trees. The cost of homeowners insurance is already exorbitant in this area because of this fact. In the summer there are daily fire restrictions that are imposed starting around June 30th until deemed safe to burn or use chainsaws or other equipment that could accidentally cause a spark and ignite the forest and our homes. Will Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline, LP be exempt from these rules? Will they be allowed to run heavy equipment, chainsaws and various other pieces of machinery during the fire season? I shutter to even think what our homeowners insurance costs will be. If we can even obtain insurance under these circumstances.

In addition, using this proposed alternate route over Blue Ridge would clear thousands of trees and destroy

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millions of potential board feet of merchantable timber. The impact on the forest land would be catastrophic to their inhabitants such as the birds, the animals, the insects and to the vegetation. The small tributaries would be disturbed and rerouted with possible repercussions of erosion and landslides. To keep these areas cleared the bio-hazard introduced to our eco-system would be toxic. The environmental impact in our area in relation to run off ground waters, streams and eventually Daniels Creek itself would be pure poison.

Furthermore, heavy use of the Blue Ridge turn off will damage Daniels Creek. As we are all very well aware, Daniels Creek is a “hands off” natural spawning habitat for the salmon. Every year hundreds of salmon fight their way up Daniels Creek to lay their eggs. Daniels Creek is a natural spawning ground that plays an important roll in the Coos River Salmon Fishery. We must at all cost work to preserve our Coos river systems eco-balance and its every important salmon run.

Daniels Creek Road itself would not be able to sustain a commercial traffic load. It is a poorly constructed, inadequately maintained road with light weight antiquated structures bridging the creek in many spots. There are many areas prone to landslides during the rainy season and ice during the colder temperatures. There are dangerous blind curves that become one lane in several places with no way to navigate to safety in the event of an emergency. The increased travel would jeopardize the safety of all those who travel this country road, the landowners who travel the roads daily as well as their children, and pets.

Perhaps, before those of you who will ultimately cast the deciding vote, should take a lazy Sunday drive on Daniels Creek Road. We invite you to experience the remaining undisturbed forest lands, the solitude and the seclusion. Maybe then you can at least partially understand what we are in jeopardy of loosing.

Now, in a different direction. The original direction, I believe, chosen for the pipeline. We are certainly sympathetic to Mr. Messerle’s concerns about the impact on his cow pasture, and the prospect of not having control of how his land is used. It is with all “due” respect, that we find our concerns equally as justifiable. Loosing control of ones own land, how it is bought, how it is sold, how it is used is indeed a major concern of all land owners.

The mere fact that any of us here on Daniels Creek, or in the great State of Oregon, or in the United States of America, should have to worry about control of ones own private property being taken away, or the fate that could befall it, in respect to having that which we have worked for, that which we have earned, that which is in our own names taken away because we were out voted, or taken away under the unconstitutional title of “eminent domain”, based on the whim of a large corporation, or political figure is not only unconscionable, it is Un-American.

It is with this written, and our heartfelt hope, and the hope of so very many others who live on Daniels Creek that the route chosen, will be based on its merits and not on the political connections gathered along the way or the every popular “friends with benefits” agenda. Don’t let the route be bought and paid for by those with the deepest pockets.

Sincerely,

David A. Schmidt
Kathi L. Windsor
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Coos Bay, Oregon 97420