



Jordan Cove Approval Disappointing but Predictable

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This morning it was announced that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has approved the Pacific Connector Pipeline and Jordan Cove Export Terminal. The delayed decision came after the commission voted in February to give further consideration to concerns of Oregon state regulators. FERC routinely approves permits for harmful and non-sustainable gas and oil pipeline applications because regulatory agencies are designed to issue rather than deny permits.

Today's decision on Jordan Cove should come as no real surprise being that the denial of FERC permits in 2016 came not because of environmental concerns but for market reasons that would then justify the use of eminent domain for seizing private property to construct the pipeline. FERC's permit approval means that they believe any environmental impacts can be mitigated, that the market has a ripeness, and that a project of this nature is of national concern. The Jordan Cove pipeline and terminal proposal has been in existence and organized against for the last 15 years, with nearly all the organizing being done so within the existing rules and regulations.

The Oregon Community Rights Network (ORCRN) is in complete agreement that the pipeline and terminal should not be constructed. It said so much in a local initiative effort put forward by the local community rights chapter Coos Commons Protection Council in 2017 which, if the law had been adopted by Coos County voters, would have banned the pipeline and terminal as well as ushered a shift towards sustainable energy initiatives on the basis of environmental, social, and economic health.

The pipeline and terminal corporate applicant Pembina took that assertion of local self-determination and the reigning in of corporate friendly laws via that community rights initiative seriously enough to spend an unprecedented amount for a county election matter - nearly \$1 million - to defeat the vote. The reason why they

found the threat credible came from the Independent Petroleum Association of New Mexico in 2014 who sounded the alarm on a grassroots political movement [community rights] when attacking Mora County, New Mexico for having banned all hydro-carbon extraction. They wrote in their industry newsletter that, “This issue is the beginning of a social movement that is greater than just the oil and gas industry, it is a potential game changer for all of corporate America.”

The current assessment by environmental organizations in Oregon coming out of today’s permit approval by FERC is that the pipeline will not receive state approval so therefore the pipeline and terminal will not be constructed. Despite certain state permits being denied to date, there is no guarantee that this will be the outcome.

The permit approval by FERC will be seen as the handy work of the current administration of President Trump yet it really stems from a legal and economic system that is predisposed to approve projects of this kind. The ORCRN believes that continuing to work within this very system versus changing it fundamentally is a serious miscalculation.

A Pennsylvania judge recently upheld a local law protecting Grant Township from fracking waste injection wells agreeing that local governing authority is necessary to protect the community’s constitutional rights in the face of harmful state oil and gas policies. The state of Oregon and the planet itself is at a precipice due to fossil fuel induced global warming therefore new thinking and actions are imperative.

“We really never could, but more so than ever, we just flat out can’t trust existing laws to deliver what people and nature demand, especially regarding climate change,” said Mary Geddry, board member of the ORCRN and co-founder of Coos Commons Protection Council. “Whatever the outrage and anger that may be aimed at FERC for approving the pipeline should not be channeled into the same old legal appeals and letter writing campaigns but into a real revolt that seeks to put a government in place whereby these nightmare proposals never even see the light of day in the first place.”

Appeals to FERC’s decision must be submitted within 30 days.

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