

Testimony for Committee on Natural Resources  
Longworth House Office Room 1324  
Wednesday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

My name is Lee Newgent and I am the Executive Secretary for the Washington State Building Trades Council. We represent 70,000 Union Craft Workers in Washington State. Thank you to the Chair and to the committee members for taking testimony regarding the NEPA process.

I will be discussing the Gate Way Project at Cherry Point in Western Washington. Our first issue was the Army Corp of Engineers decision to end the EIS process and to rule in favor of the Lummi Tribes claim of treaty fishing rights at Cherry Point. Cherry Point is currently home to Refineries and other industrial use entities. We do not support the Corps decision to rule for the Lummi Tribe. The Lummi tribe has the burden of proof that the fishing grounds would be impacted by the project. In fact the Corps seemed relieved that they would not have to base a judgement on a completed EIS. The developer has redesigned to terminal to protect wetlands, minimize additional impact to the project footprint. Washington State is fortunate to have one of the last underutilized deep water ports in America.

Cherry Point is reasonably close to the Canadian border. The Building Trades is confident that the issues that may have risen from a completed EIS would be effectively mitigated by the management team of the project. We strongly believe that the United States has stricter guidelines and oversight then the Canadian government would have for the same export materials.

The United States is at an extremely disadvantage when it comes to the EIS process either under SEPA or NEPA. We need to have a timeline for investors. I am working with a number of privately funded developers in Western Washington to build energy export projects. We should establish a timeline so investors have a reasonable expectation of the construction period and the first return on their privately funded enterprise.

The other issue at Cherry Point is the politicizing of the product and not the project. Gateway as proposed is a multi-commodity export facility and coal is only one of the export materials. Due to other national trade agreements there is not enough overhead costs to build the facility without coal. We also believe that coal will be phased out and strongly agree that our country needs a timeline for the elimination of fossil fuels. Our economy at the present time is linked directly to fossil fuels.

Another concern we have is that the Corps position on the IES may be problematic to other industries that may want to expand or locate in Washington State. Boeing is a major part of our Gross Domestic Product and their largest airplane manufacturing factory and is very close to the Cherry Point Gateway project. This same failure to permit the project may be used against other industries.

The community surrounding the proposed terminal has suffered substantial loss of family wage jobs since before the recession. The tax structure has been economically impacted and this has led to less and less resources for the local community. We want to invest in the community, create family wage jobs and allow families to have the ability to remain and work in their own local community.

Thank you for allowing me to speak and I can be contacted for any follow up at



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