

Joe Gardener

My name is Joe Gardener. I'm a Cowlitz County Commissioner. And I'd just like to read a statement that we'll be submitting also as a written comment. But on behalf of the Board of Commissioners of Cowlitz County.

Cowlitz County is dependent on the continued health and success of the three public ports that operate within our borders. The Port of Longview plays an extremely important role in our community and the Port's ability to continue to grow and develop has a direct impact on the County's overall economic health. Recently, Cowlitz County's efforts at responsible, sustainable growth have been hampered by policy decisions made far outside our control.

We are asking the Department of Ecology select the remedial action alternative presented by the Port of Longview, respecting their local decision making. We believe that the alternative proposed by the Port of Longview is:

1. beneficial to the public by facility redevelopment of this vital piece of public property and reduce the long-term costs to the Port,
2. protective of human health and the environment, and
3. the preferred alternative for remediation of this site that the department of ecology should select.

The Port of Longview has offered to pay additional expenses related to the offsite disposal of the contaminated waste without raising International Paper's costs for site remediation. We urge you to work with the Port to move forward with this important project, selecting the Port of Longview's remedial action alternative. Thank you.