Diana Gordon

I am very concerned about the amount of greenhouse gases that will result if the Kalama methanol refinery is built. The GHG's are a real problem, especially if the methanol is used largely for vehicle fuel instead of for plastic, as we suspect it will be.

The proposed refinery in Kalama will increase Washington's greenhouse gas emissions and make it harder for us to meet our GHG emission goals as set by our legislature in 2008. In addition to the sizable amounts of methane that will result from fracking, the pipelines, and the plant itself, the refinery will also release more than 1,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide every year, among other things. The huge ships transporting the product to Asia will also be responsible for considerable releases of CO2 from fuel combustion.

The problem is that CO2 combines with water to create a mild acid which affects the ability of shellfish to form shells. This acid affects oysters and, even more important, shell-forming marine plankton which is critical in basic marine food chains. These effects start in the higher latitudes and gradually move toward the equator.

Ocean acidification is a huge problem for the economy of our state. It affects one of our major industries, one that earns an estimated $270 million a year for the state coffers, the shellfish industry. People expect outstanding seafood when they visit Washington State or buy oysters from here. More and more we are hearing that oyster farmers are in trouble. Some have already moved to the less acidic waters of Hawaii.

This project will have significant adverse environmental impacts here in Washington State and around the world. Coral reefs, an important support system for fish stocks, and marine food chains will suffer as a result of further ocean acidification.

This terminal is counter to the economic interests of just about everyone except the Chinese and the Canadian oil industry. It will cost Washington and the Pacific Northwest jobs from the fishing industry and affect the ability of the oceans to produce food used around the world.

Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions have been one of the major drivers of climate change so far. This year alone, in real time, we have witnessed drought-driven wildfires with adverse health effects, extraordinary wind events, early hurricanes and floods, etc., and we have had less than 1 degree C of global temperature rise. We are about to add more major food shortages if we do not get a hold on the acidification of the oceans.

We cannot ignore these harmful and unmitigable outcomes if we go ahead with this project. Please deny the Shoreline Permit for this extremely dubious venture.