

Margaret Bone, MD

Dear Department of Ecology People,

As almost everyone agrees, we are already in deep trouble with accelerating climate change. Just with this recent spate of wildfires, researchers at University of Washington and at Stanford estimated 200 excess deaths in Washington due to smoky air last month,

(<https://www.kuow.org/stories/wildfire-smoke-may-have-contributed-to-nearly-200-deaths-in-washington-this-month>), while hurricanes ravage communities, and ice and "permafrost" melt. The first thing to do when you find yourself in a deep hole is to stop digging. Committing ourselves to 40 more years of fossil fuel pollution and risk of catastrophic accidents is tantamount to digging ourselves a deeper grave.

Having listened to one of the hearings, many of the points in my mind have been made, and I want to emphasize a few.

Increasing carbon pollution is deeply racist, as people of color and in general poor communities are sacrificed with shorter lifespans from a whole host of negative health effects.

I still think, even in this Second Supplemental EIS, the methane leakage estimates are too low, and leaking from abandoned wells needs to be considered as well. (e.g. Frackracker Alliance March 29, 2019 by Kyle Ferrar, MPH) This demonstrates the long term leaking from abandoned wells, even from under sidewalks in downtown LA.

The assumption clung to by supporters of the project, no doubt including well-intentioned community members, that this project will contribute less to climate change than the alternatives, specifically coal, as illustrated in one of the graphs in this EIS, is deeply flawed.

We should not assume that China will just use coal if we don't send them natural gas. There is substantial opposition all over the world to the development of coal resources. According to the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide, "local advocates [who] helped halt coal-fired power plants in Egypt, India, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Thailand; shelved proposed coal mines in Brazil, the Philipines and Poland, and shuttered a coal mine in Chile." (ELAW Advocate, Autumn 2020) As you know, the economics of renewable energy sources and storage are improving rapidly, and in many areas is already cheaper than fossil fuels, and China has just announced it will reach peak emissions by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2060. We should be supporting, not subverting that effort.

One of the major arguments made by fossil fuel project proponents is that it is 'better to have fossil fuel production here where we have good environmental laws'. This naive and insulting, similar to initially blaming the 737-Max crashes on 'those poorly trained pilots from other countries'.

This ignores not only the trauma to Indigenous communities subject to destruction of their territories, rape and murder of their populations by workers in man-camps, and the abysmal record of leaks and explosions from transport of natural gas.

As for plastics, they are a menace to our environment, so any amount of olefin is a negative also. To the argument that we need plastics for many of the things we use every day, there is active research on alternatives and I don't believe that research will take 40 years. In the meantime, there is an abundance of plastic that can be reclaimed.

Writing you from a place of deep grief as places I spent a lot of time in as a kid have burned this week, I implore you to reject this shortsighted, dangerous and destructive proposal.

Sincerely,
Margaret W. Bone, MD