

To the State of Washington Department of Ecology,

On behalf of the thousands of construction craft Laborers of Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 737, I am writing to express support for the Goldendale Energy Storage Project. The energy investment firm behind this proposed project, Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, has committed to a project labor agreement (PLA) covering the construction of this project. This commitment is significant, and merits praise: PLAs show the commitment of businesses to supporting workers, their families, and their communities by ensuring the payment of good wages, supporting crucial benefits like healthcare and retirement programs, and creating opportunities for on-the-job apprenticeship programs. PLAs are critical in building an economy and society that supports the working class.

Additionally, this project will be an important piece of infrastructure in meeting state and regional clean energy goals. Pump storage projects are a well-established technology that works particularly well with other forms of renewable energy, such as wind and solar. Pump storage facilities allow the storage of energy during lower demand periods, and the “release” of energy during high demand periods. This feature complements the variable nature of the broader renewable energy infrastructure being built in our region. Renewable energy facilities can vary in their output at given points in time depending on local conditions. Indeed, one of the biggest challenges facing the renewable energy transition is the problem of storage; pump storage is a tried-and-true method of solving the storage challenge.

The environmental impact statement for this project identified some issues, particularly around tribal rights in the project area. LIUNA Local 737 encourages the Department of Ecology and other relevant state agencies to move expediently towards a reasonable solution that limits negative impact on our tribal sisters and brothers, while also ensuring that this project is able to be constructed and completed. If the project does not proceed to construction and completion, we will have lost a chance to strengthen our renewable energy infrastructure, and we will further lose the opportunity to strengthen this infrastructure under a PLA that supports workers, their families, and their communities.

LIUNA Local 737 looks forward to being a partner in ensuring this project proceeds in a way that benefits all parties.

Sincerely,

Zack Culver  
Business Manager  
Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 737