

Comments on LC 79 - Northwest Natural Integrated Resource Plan
May 31, 2023

Chair Decker and members of the Commission,

My name is S [REDACTED] C [REDACTED], and I work for the Oregon Just Transition Alliance, and testified at the Future of Gas public hearing last year. I mostly spoke on behalf of Forest Grove community member, D [REDACTED] D [REDACTED], sharing her concerns about “natural” methane gas expansion.

I live in St. Johns, North Portland, close to the Willamette River, where the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub is located, as well as the Cascadia Earthquake Subduction Zone. I am concerned about the seismic stability of the CEI Hub and the risk of Northwest Natural’s planned investments in this area. I urge the PUC to **not** acknowledge the cold box investment in particular, or at least to defer consideration until after more research and mitigation efforts.

I am scared that when the earthquake hits, my house and the waterfront in Cathedral Park will be devastated. I am also scared for low-income, elderly, disabled, and BIPOC communities experiencing the worst of the health impacts in their homes, living near and working on pipelines, having hydrogen pumped into their homes without their consent, and continued to be lied to by Northwest Natural in their kids’ classrooms, and in the mail we receive with our bills. I have been a Northwest Natural customer for the past decade, and have seen my utility bills continue to increase, while the quality of my service has not. Every time I cook, I turn on the fan and open the window, and hope that I’m not inhaling too many toxic fumes.

We are facing multiple, compounding crises due to fossil fuel extraction in our health and lives, our environment, and our atmosphere. I want my future child to have safe and healthy places to sleep, eat, live, and play. It is not in the best interest of communities or stockholders’ wallets or their kids’ lives to continue investing in this dangerous fossil fuel. I’m worried that both mine and others’ utility bills will continue to rise, due to “natural” methane gas expansion and new pipelines. Finally, I am concerned about the unrealistic and misleading claims gas companies have been making about the availability and benefits of false solutions like so-called “renewable” “natural” gas and hydrogen. For all these reasons, I ask you to not acknowledge the Forest Grove uprate project. If NW Natural wants this project, its shareholders should pay for it.

I urge you to listen to your staff's great research and recommendation, and do NOT allow Northwest Natural to spend our dollars on RNG. They know their business model is at risk, and will do everything they can to continue earning money.

It is critical that the PUC follow through with the IRP guidance that is discussed in the final Future of Gas report and be extra skeptical of RNG investments and continued growth of the gas system. **I urge you to prioritize ratepayers, most-impacted community members, energy advocates, and PUC staff, not the people who are profiting off of potential expansion in fossil fuel extraction. Please do what's right.**

Will the Commission please support the PUC Staff and Synapse's analysis, as well as that of ratepayer, frontline community members, climate, and energy justice advocates?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

S [redacted] C [redacted]

Oregon Green New Deal Policy Organizer, Oregon Just Transition Alliance
North Portland, OR