

MEDIA RELEASE

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TEXADA RESIDENTS REJECT GAS PLANT

TEXADA ISLAND – Texada Island residents have soundly rejected a proposal by Westpac LNG Corporation to build an LNG (liquefied natural gas) unloading facility and Gas fired generation station on the northwest tip of Texada Island. Texada Action Now (TAN), a local community association formed to help combat the proposal, has collected the signatures of 84% of the adult population of Texada Island on a petition opposing the LNG plant. “The known risks that come with the tankers and the LNG project are not acceptable to Texada Islanders”, says TAN Chair Chuck Childress “We consider Texada an affordable paradise and want to keep it that way. This project is not wanted, not needed and certainly not green.”

Westpac is proposing a 1200 megawatt generating station plus an LNG regasification plant. The greenhouse gases emitted by a 1200 megawatt (MW) generating station with 600MW running all the time and 600MW running 50% of the time would be 2.7 million tonnes per year. “An automobile produces about 5.5 tonnes a year, so simple math tells us the Texada generating plant would produce the same greenhouse gases as 490,000 cars. What good is there in trying to get a few thousand cars off the roads by building rapid transit or carpooling if we’re going to allow a plant equal to almost half a million cars to be built just up the Straight” says Childress. TAN director Rob McWilliam adds “This is not just a Texada problem; it’s a problem for the whole Georgia Basin and indeed the whole planet.”

TAN had wanted a referendum held on the issue, but the idea was rejected by the Powell River Regional District which said it based its decision on a legal opinion. “We needed a way to clearly show how Texada felt, the petition was not our first choice”, states petition director Leslie Goresky, “The 84% is not 84% of those that were approached to sign, it is 84% of the overall adult population. If someone wasn’t home we had to put them with the 16%. That means our support is probably much higher.”

The LNG would be shipped to Texada from around the globe by huge 950 ft long tankers. The LNG in the tankers is kept at minus 161 degrees Celsius. “An accident involving one of these tankers could result in an almost unimaginable catastrophe”, adds Childress, noting that the Canadian Government is currently trying to prevent similar tankers from operating in the Bay of Fundy by citing environmental and safety concerns.

“BC is a net exporter of natural gas, and most Texada residents think it is absurd to be considering importing and burning a fossil fuel to generate electricity when the provincial government is setting targets to reduce greenhouse gases. This is going totally in the wrong direction. The locating of heavily polluting industry on any of the Gulf Islands would be criminal” says Childress.

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