

Final Decision on Tacoma LNG Air Permit

First, I want to thank everyone who weighed in during the comment period and also recognize the depth of feelings on this issue. Approval of a permit application is not an endorsement of a project. It is a determination that the application meets standards set by applicable laws and regulations as of when the application was submitted to the agency.

In this case, after a careful and lengthy review, we determined that the NOC permit meets those standards and we are required to issue the permit. The final permit includes conditions which require demonstration of compliance with emission limits set through this review.

In the comments we received, we heard a lot about climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. Parts of that were debated by the applicant and the opponents. While the Agency agrees that addressing climate change is an urgent issue, as a regulatory agency, that urgency does not allow us to ignore our obligations to follow the law in making this particular determination.

Within that authority, we imposed conditions on the permit designed to address greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, we required the source of natural gas to be from Canada to keep the operations consistent with the completed analysis.

There are many other issues around this proposal that we are not authorized to pass judgement on. Water quality impacts or offsite safety issues are just two examples.

Last, under our longstanding regulations, this NOC application decision has always been and is a staff level decision. The Agency's Board of Directors had no role in it. They also have no role in any appeal or dispute over it and they cannot change this decision.

The Board that does hear those appeals is the Washington State Pollution Control Hearings Board in Olympia.

Craig Kenworthy
Executive Director