



Costly and Damaging Regulations Proposed for Whatcom County

The Whatcom County Council is pushing to approve regulations for Cherry Point that will likely damage our economy for decades to come. The Planning Commission in its review of Council's proposed regulations spent a year and 10 work sessions working with industry and environmental stakeholders to make many critical recommendations. These recommendations were thoroughly vetted and based on hard fought compromise by all stakeholders. The Council is resisting adoption of these changes. The Council's original proposed regulations for Cherry Point make unprecedented changes to local regulations that would impose far-reaching restrictions on vital business activities and risk the future of thousands of local jobs and millions of tax dollars from Cherry Point refineries.

THE UNPRECEDENTED CHANGES

The Whatcom County Council is proposing the most extensive changes to local regulations in nearly four decades that will single out one, economically vital sector of the county's business community. Overall, these proposed regulations will:

- Lead to harmful economic consequences for the county.
- Result in unintended environmental consequences.

What are we asking of the Whatcom County Council?

The Whatcom County Council should NOT move forward with its proposed regulations. The Council should instead accept the Planning Commission recommendations to the Council's proposed regulations for Cherry Point.

PROPOSED REGULATIONS WILL RESTRICT BUSINESSES CRITICAL TO WHATCOM COUNTY

Cherry Point refineries are the fourth largest on the West Coast, and critical to meeting fuel needs for cars, trucks, and airplanes throughout the Pacific Northwest. But the changes proposed by the County Council will single out this industry with troublesome regulations.



EFFECTIVELY PROHIBIT UPGRADES:

The new regulations would effectively prohibit new operational upgrades often needed to improve efficiency and allow businesses to adapt to shifts in U.S. and global market conditions.



RISING COSTS & NO INVESTMENT:

The proposed regulations could raise costs for transportation of fuels vital to the region's economy and discourage investment that could result in a loss of local jobs and tax revenue.



HURTING COMPETITIVENESS:

With limited ability to adapt and make necessary upgrades, Whatcom businesses will be at a competitive disadvantage to companies outside our county, including foreign fuel suppliers.

BUSINESSES AT CHERRY POINT ARE CENTRAL TO THE COUNTY'S ECONOMY



10,000 jobs

directly and indirectly supported within Whatcom County¹



\$1 million +

paid annually to local charities, like the Boys and Girls Club, the Red Cross and the United Way by businesses at Cherry Point¹



\$10s of millions

invested by businesses at Cherry Point to lower greenhouse gas emissions and improve storm water and wetlands resources²



\$200 million +

paid annually in state and local taxes by businesses at Cherry Point¹



\$10s of millions

invested in local schools, public safety, and other vital county services¹



Thousands of hours

of volunteer time dedicated by Cherry Point employees to local non-profits every year²

MISSING THE MARK: THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The County Council claims one of their goals is to help the environment. But these new regulations miss the mark.



Limit Development of Green Energy: The purposed regulations would also apply to renewable energy projects at Cherry Point and therefore also limit the development of green and renewable energy resources. This includes preventing infrastructure upgrades that would hinder the transition to cleaner, lower emission fuels and increased production efficiency.



Increased Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The proposed regulations would likely increase greenhouse gas emissions, by forcing local energy needs to be met by fuel imported from longer distances and processed by less efficient and innovative facilities. In fact, Cherry Point refineries already invest tens of millions to lower greenhouse gas emissions and improve storm water and wetlands resources.

Sources:

1. Hodges, Hart, Allison Rucker, and James McCafferty. "Employment at Cherry Point: Exploring the Economic Impacts of Cherry Point on Whatcom County," March 2019. pp 12.
2. "Cherry Point's Impact." WBA Policy Center. Whatcom Business Alliance, February 28, 2019.

