

**From:** [Dirk Vermeeren](#)  
**To:** [PDS Planning Commission](#)  
**Cc:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Pro Environment and Pro Business  
**Date:** Friday, September 13, 2019 2:19:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [Whatcom County Council Planning 09.12.2019.pdf](#)

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Planning Commission Members,

Thank you for your diligence and listening to both sides in conducting last night's Cherry Point Amendments hearing.

I am following up on my testimonial last night; I was speaker #150. You will note I am in support of the current proposed amendments and have attached last night's comments.

I have been an outdoorsman and pro environment since 1970 before it became popular. I have also been employed in the oil industry for 33 years of my career until retiring in 2014. I spent my first 3 years in all three departments (Engineering, Operations Shift Supervisor & Maintenance) of a 120,000bpd refinery in NJ. The remainder of my career included 3 years as Environmental Manager, finally ending up in Downstream International Business Strategy & Investments in the Middle East. I now find myself having a balanced view regarding how local communities must co exist with local business development decisions; especially decisions concerning heavy industry such as oil refineries. For your reference I have included a link to my page....

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While I listened to all of the speakers ahead of me I heard one predominant repeating message that I tried to address in my testimony but is worth repeating. The oil industry suggested that you engage in a dialogue with their professionals and allow them to revise/modify the proposed amendments, supposedly to facilitate their safety and environmental focused project approval permitting process. While I can see the value of engaging all stakeholders in this process, if you decide to follow this suggestion I would caution you to include members from the entire community, specifically solicit a professional(s) with a background in the oil/hydrocarbon industry. You need to be knowledgeable on both sides of the subject matter and not have the industry write the compliance regulations for you.

Lastly, the proposed \$100Million insurance requirement does not provide adequate cover for modern day spill cleanup costs, especially not in the event of a Cascade Fault.

Whatcom County in cooperation with WA state and the Fed. govt. has conducted multiple drills which indicate we are not prepared for this event when it occurs. In my opinion Cherry Point industries create the biggest risk to our local community and local eco system. A Cascadia earthquake will damage facilities and create a spill that will have long term affects on other industries we rely on, aside from the Cherry Point industries themselves,; i.e. marine fisheries, etc.

I ask that you appropriately develop/require an EIS for such an event and create a spill cleanup/contingency requirement. The industry should have to include this insurance as a 'cost of business' in their financial model. The taxpayer should not have to bail out a bankrupt refinery while their shareholder reap the financial gains.

Regards,  
Dirk Vermeeren

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