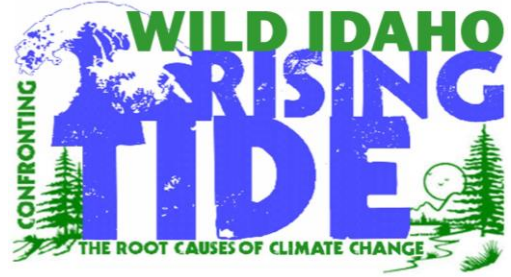


Wild Idaho Rising Tide
P.O. Box 9817, Moscow, Idaho 83843
Phone: 208-301-8039
Email: wild.idaho.rising.tide@gmail.com
Website: WildIdahoRisingTide.org



**Comments on the Alta Mesa Idaho Application for a Conditional Use Permit
for Expansion of Its Natural Gas Processing Facilities on Highway 30
near New Plymouth, Idaho**

Payette County Planning and Zoning Commissioners,

On behalf of concerned Idaho citizens, potentially impacted residents near oil and gas facilities, and over 3200 members, friends, and allies of Wild Idaho Rising Tide, or "WIRT," I offer these verbal comments for the public record, as opposition to the Alta Mesa Idaho application to the Payette County Planning and Zoning Commission for a conditional use permit for expansion of its natural gas processing facilities on Highway 30 near New Plymouth, Idaho.

Doubling the area, facilities, and production capacity at this dehydration, compression, and refrigeration plant, with additional storage tanks, refrigeration equipment, a condensate stabilizer, and a flare stack, would exacerbate predictable, negative impacts on air, water, sound, and soil quality and on nearby, subsequently impeded agricultural businesses. The processes undertaken at this facility involve manipulation of dangerous, highly volatile natural gas and liquid condensate that impose health and safety hazards on residences and businesses over many surrounding miles. Payette County citizens rejected these effects and risks when Alta Mesa Idaho first applied for a permit for these toxic, potentially tragic, industrial facilities and activities. If the company's second proposed site for a mini-refinery and rail spur to load bomb trains on the Dick Fisher property on East Idaho Street requires industrial zoning, why does this processing plant expansion not?

Neighbors in the immediate vicinity and people who choose to live in the country would suffer constant air, noise, and visual pollution, increased traffic, compromised health of self, family, and friends, and reduced home, business, and land property values, not to mention the possibility of personal and property incineration within a half-mile. Not only are the public safety ramifications enormous, citizens would relinquish land for growing food in exchange for out-of-state-and-country companies transporting, exporting, and combusting Idaho gas resources. Many of the specifics of Alta Mesa Idaho's plans, beyond filed drawings, pictures, and vague assurances, are missing or postponed. But most egregious of its proposals is the construction and implementation of a flare stack.

Flaring and venting represent wasteful methods by which profit-driven energy corporations access more lucrative and marketable condensate "wet gas" and/or oil, and emit plenty of health-

wrecking, climate-altering gases. Senseless burning off of dry natural gas, as a byproduct of liquid hydrocarbon production, forgoes the high industry cost of building crucial infrastructure, like processing plants and pipelines, but wastes private and public oil and gas resources. As scientific studies note, flaring and venting impose severe degradation of human health, livelihood, and climate, as they release a variety of poisonous chemicals up to 22 miles from flare stacks. Released nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and carcinogens like dioxin can aggravate asthma, chronic bronchitis, and other adverse respiratory and skin conditions, especially among at-risk populations, and thus increase illness, mortality, and health care costs. Higher concentrations of airborne pollutants and the tremendous heat of flaring and venting coat the adjacent land with soot, acidify soils and rainwater, damage vegetation, decrease crop and tree flowering and fruiting and agricultural yield, and corrode metal roofs. Such socio-economic problems could lead to injunctions arising from civil lawsuits against the county and corporations, demanding flaring and venting bans.

As guardians of the county lands and minerals and subsequent public health, the Payette County Planning and Zoning Commission should not arbitrarily again allow any flaring or venting, through this conditional use permit amendment, especially in the Treasure Valley that is prone to some of the most severe and increasing incidences of atmospheric temperature inversions in the intermountain West, especially during winter months. This amended conditional use permit should explicitly ban the practice of non-emergency gas release by flaring or venting during regular operations at all processing facilities. Many states have enacted such bans on flaring of cheaper dry gas and have thus conserved that resource.

Considering all of these and other possible significant impacts of Alta Mesa Idaho's application for an amended conditional use permit on the environment, natural resources, public infrastructure, and associated health, social, and economic conditions, we strongly recommend that the Payette County Planning and Zoning Commission responsibly address the concerns and issues raised in these comments and delay and/or deny approval of this application based on further review and analysis.

/s/ Helen Yost, MSEE
Wild Idaho Rising Tide
P.O. Box 9817, Moscow, Idaho 83843
wild.idaho.rising.tide@gmail.com
WildIdahoRisingTide.org
Facebook.com/WildIdaho.RisingTide
Twitter.com/WildIdahoRT
208-301-8039