

Inslee announces opposition to two gas projects in Washington (May 8, 2019)

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Washington Governor - Jay Inslee

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Story

Gov. Jay Inslee today signed [a bill](#) banning hydraulic fracking for oil and natural gas within Washington state. Immediately following the signing, Inslee spoke with the media to discuss how the emerging science emphasizing the urgency of climate change and the environmental impacts of natural gas make clear the state's efforts and future investments in energy infrastructure should focus on clean, renewable sources rather than fossil fuels.

The governor said such thinking should apply to current proposals to construct significant, long-term new natural gas infrastructure in Washington state.

"We've always leaned on science to guide our efforts on climate change and the science is increasingly clear. The accelerating threat of climate change and the emerging science on the damaging impacts of natural gas production and distribution mean we must focus our full efforts on developing clean, renewable and fossil-fuel free energy sources. Being committed now to 100 percent clean electricity and signing a bill prohibiting fracking in Washington state, we want to be consistent to that spirit of progress.

"I cannot in good conscience support continued construction of a liquefied natural gas plant in Tacoma or a methanol production facility in Kalama. In the early days of both projects, I said they could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions as we transition to cleaner energy sources, but I am no longer convinced that locking in these multidecadal infrastructure projects are sufficient to accomplishing what's necessary. Science is continuing to emerge regarding the dwindling window for action and the significant methane leakage associated with gas production, and we don't have the luxury of a 50-year transition phase. The impacts of climate change are already coming to bear and scientists are saying that unless we reduce emissions by half over the next decade, we will reach an irreversible tipping point. There are emerging technologies that could make renewable gas a viable source of energy.

"I want to be clear that my stance on these projects does not change our state's regulatory process. As is the case with any project, our state agencies will comply with state and federal laws to ensure a rigorous and objective review of projects. Decisions on permit applications must also be made in accordance with state and federal law.

"But it's time for us to modernize and update the ways we weigh the costs and benefits of all fossil fuels, including natural gas. I'll be working with agency directors in the coming weeks to discuss the way forward.

"The age of consequences is upon us. We have to act based on clear science. Washington is embracing a clean energy future and the clean, healthy, sustainable jobs and benefits that come with it. We should be confident in our ability to build our clean energy economy while sustaining record economic growth and record numbers of good-paying construction and building jobs."

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