



Yunker takes a moment
to look at Mary Susan, the
fishing boat his father built.

DEFENDING heritage

Much of the land that the Jordan Cove LNG Pipeline is set to cut through has been occupied and cherished by various indigenous communities for generations. Tribes as far south as California say the construction would harm the populations of Chinook steelhead and salmon, significantly threatening a mainstay in their economies.

The project has renewed concerns over the use of eminent domain and construction impacts on ancestral tribal territory, fragile salmon habitat and forestland. Pacific Northwest tribes have been vocal and actively involved, setting the stage for future battles if the pipeline is ultimately approved.

“If the pipeline gets put here, our entire way of life will be interrupted,” says Tom Yunker, a registered member and former council member of the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Yunker, a native of Charleston, Oregon, a town less than 10 miles from Coos Bay, says that at first the pipeline seemed safe enough for him to back it. It appeared in its

original plan—15 years ago—to simply provide the energy the town needed. It also might revitalize the local economy.

Yunker changed his mind, however, when he learned that Pembina would be taking the profits and the natural gas would be sent to markets in Asia.

Despite the current stance of many of the members, the Coquille Tribe initially supported the 2009 application for the pipeline but later declared the Tribe’s official stance as “neutral.” They went on to serve as a “cooperating agency” to the federal authorities working on the project.

“The tribe should have a stand. They aren’t very consistent with being vocal on anything,” Yunker says. “We’ve lived here long enough to have our opinion heard.”

Yunker’s focus on the environment plays an important role as he has kinship ties that span across generations.

“My family grew up here,” he says. “My brother got his Indian name here. I hope to be buried here; I don’t want to leave this area. I’m really happy with my life here.”

A PIECE MADE IN protest

Retired biologist Larry Mangan and his wife Sylvia live on a scenic property at the north edge of Haynes Inlet. The Inlet is an alternative intersection to the proposed pipeline and LNG terminal routes.

“This place is a dream come true—our heaven on earth,” Mangan says. “When we purchased the property, we envisioned that we could restore parts of it to how it was.”

Mangan’s work in restoring his property has been manifested in collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of Coos and Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.

Mangan’s land, a salt marsh, is also home to a recent installation of protest art called the Haynes Inlet Portal. Created by Erin Moore, an associate professor and director of the School of Architecture and Environment at the University of Oregon, the portal is one of three installations done along the surveyed pipeline route.

The portal serves as an example of just how imposing the project would be and actually mimics the size of a section of the pipeline—only it’s made of biodegradable materials.

Moore and a group of her graduate students who helped build the portal often visit the site on the Mangans’ land to see how it’s changed over time.

“I wanted to make something rather than just writing or presenting,” says Moore, “and advance dialogue about environmental issues in tangible spaces.”

In the evening, leftover driftwood from the high tide and animal tracks reveal how the portal isn’t just an art piece; rather it’s become part of the local ecosystem. “These [installations] give insight to those places, and provide a lens for biodiversity and environmental change,” says Moore.

The prospect of having what Larry Mangan calls a “potentially explosive” pipeline built within 500 feet of their home is 180 degrees from everything he believes in. He says that having the pipeline built would be an absolute nightmare, likening the prospect to “living with a disease on your property.”

“We literally wouldn’t be able to sleep at night. We’d have to move,” says Mangan.



Inspired by author Aldo Leopold’s book “The Sand County Almanac,” Larry Mangan constructed an outlook where visitors can see the changing landscape.