



WILLIAMS NORTHWEST PIPELINE  
4738 JONES ROAD  
SUMAS, WA 98295

March 4, 2010

Whatcom County Planning  
5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226

RE: Pipeline Safety Ordinance

Dear Director Stalheim

Williams Northwest Pipeline owns and operates an extensive natural gas transmission pipeline system which transports significant volumes of natural gas to distributors and industrial customers in the Pacific Northwest. We have been a transmission pipeline operator in Whatcom County for over 50 years. In order to operate and maintain this pipeline system, continual monitoring and surveillance is performed to protect the system and public from potential safety hazards and service interruptions.

Northwest believes the proposed Whatcom County Pipeline Safety & Development ordinance (Docket #ZON2007-00014) will facilitate a formal dialogue and permitting process to engage the community, land developers and other utilities to minimize and prevent unnecessary risk to transmission pipeline facilities. We fully support the intent of the ordinance and applaud your willingness to allow flexibility in the requirements.

Northwest also encourages Whatcom County to expand the ordinance to include all logging activities within 660 feet of transmission pipeline facilities as well. Heavy equipment crossing over pipelines, skidding logs over pipelines, ground-penetrating limbs from falling timber and clear cutting (with the potential to create erosion and geo-hazards) all pose unnecessary risks to transmission pipeline facilities. The ordinance should require that proposed logging activity receive equal consultation with pipeline operators prior to permit issuance.

Northwest appreciates Whatcom County's commitment to pipeline safety and looks forward to the implementation of the ordinance.

Sincerely,

Paul Fincher  
Sumas District Operations Manager