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NEXT Renewable Fuels' Proposed Oregon Plant Passes Hurdle

NEXT Renewable Fuels has received unanimous approval from the Columbia County Board of Commissioners regarding construction of a renewable diesel plant in Oregon, the company said Wednesday.

The Port Westward facility is to have an initial capacity of more than 37,500 b/d before full capacity is reached at 50,000 b/d.

Use of the facility will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7 million tons each year, according to the company, and "significantly reduce toxic emissions from vehicles that disproportionately impact high-density urban environments."

NEXT is still seeking permits from the Oregon Department of State Lands and the Army Corps of Engineers for required wetlands mitigation work and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality for air emissions. It said Wednesday that it "continues advancing through state and federal public permitting processes."

The company is targeting late 2024 for operational startup.

The renewable diesel is a second-generation advanced biofuel made from 100% renewable feedstocks including used cooking oil, animal tallow and selected virgin seed and vegetable oils.

The fuels produced are to be shipped "up and down the West Coast and create an emissions savings equivalent to removing more than 1 million automobiles from the road" annually, the company says.

NEXT previously announced that Shell had signed a long-term deal to buy fuel from the plant, and that 100% of the outtake was contracted with four "super-major" oil companies. The other three remain anonymous.

The company also previously said that it had signed a long-term agreement under which BP Products North America would supply it with about 2 million metric tons of feedstock annually.

The site is to have rail capability, but the project is to focus on the port.

--Reporting by Michael Schneider, mschneider@opisnet.com; Editing by Jordan Godwin, jgodwin@opisnet.com