

Searsport Liquefied Propane Gas Terminal

Fact Sheet

- DCP Searsport LLC, owned by DCP Midstream Partners, owned by Conoco Philips and Spectra Energy, seeks permits to build the largest Liquefied Propane Gas (LPG) terminal and bulk storage tank on the East Coast on 24 acres next to Long Cove in Searsport, Maine. The Terminal will consist of ship unloading facilities, a mile long pipeline to a 22.7 million gallon LPG bulk storage tank, four truck loading stations, an eight-car train loading station, four ethyl-mercaptan storage tanks, an LPG fuel storage tank, three propane-fired outdoor heaters, a 75-foot tall emergency propane flare that will burn an estimated 500 hours a year, an emergency diesel-fueled generator and fire water pump, a fire water storage tank, administration building, compressor and motor control center buildings, five electric compressors, an electric air fin cooler, four electric loading pumps, and miles of additional above-ground pipes and valves, security fencing, roads and drives.
- The 24-acre Terminal grounds will be permanently clear-cut, and will operate 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The bulk storage tank will be 202-feet wide and 138-feet tall, will tower above everything else in Searsport, and the tank and terminal will be visible for miles along the Midcoast, from Penobscot Bay and Islesboro – particularly at night.
- The Terminal will utilize an existing Sprague Energy pier on Mack Point. A portable marine unloading manifold will connect LPG discharge piping onboard the tanker ships with a mile-long, 16-inch, above ground insulated pipe that will transfer the LPG to the Terminal's bulk storage tank. An insulated 10-inch vapor return line will transfer vapors displaced from the storage tank during filling back to the vessel. Each vessel will be at the dock approximately 36 to 48 hours for unloading.
- The LPG bulk storage tank will be a vertical, insulated, white domed tank 202 feet in diameter and 138 feet tall, and will rise to 198 feet elevation above sea level. Propane will be stored at -44°F to -42°F. There is no emergency backup to the grid-tied electric refrigeration system. The compressors will be located in a metal building 60-feet long, by 40-feet wide, by 50-feet tall. During grid failures, process upsets and emergencies, a control valve will route tank boil-off vapors to a multi-stage 75-foot tall flare that is expected to operate approximately 500 hours per year. In the event of catastrophic failure, additional emergency valves will vent vapors to the atmosphere.
- Although the facility will operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, the permit applications contained no lighting plan.

- Scenic resources within the project viewshed include approximately half of Route One within a mile of the facility, historic Searsport, Mossman Town Park, and most of the town's shoreline, as well as Moose Point State Park, Sears Island and its access road, Cape Jellison, Stockton Harbor, Long Cove, the Turtle Head Preserve and Sprague's Beach on Islesboro, and much of Penobscot Bay and the surrounding shoreline. The facility may be visible at night from as far away as Castine, Blue Hill, Camden State Park and beyond.
- LPG is a regulated Extremely Hazardous Substance (EHS) and presents essentially identical issues of risk, safety and security as Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).
- The energy content of the full 22.7 million gallon tank, confirmed by Dr. Francois Amar, chairman of the chemistry department at the University of Maine in Orono, is just over half a megaton, or at least 33 times the energy released by the atomic bomb that incinerated Hiroshima.
- Because of the inherent risk of catastrophic fire and/or explosion from LPG operations, federal safety and security requirements impose exclusion and safety zones around both traveling and stationary LPG tankers. However, DCP Searsport did not submit a security plan or describe the applicable federal safety and exclusion zones for the Terminal or for the LPG tanker ships that will service the Terminal, with the permit applications.
- Maine's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued permits for this facility on September 9, 2011. Several individuals and Thanks But No Tank filed an appeal of the DEP permits in Maine Superior Court on December 2, 2011. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (The Corps) is presently reviewing the DCP application.
- None of the permit applications yet includes an Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

The potential effects of locating the proposed LPG facility in this location are significant and include reduced scenic character, loss of recreational opportunities, heavy industrialization, incessant air, noise and water pollution, intensive truck traffic and interference with safety and security. Cumulatively, these impacts will have an as yet unknown degree of impact on the ecology, economy and quality of life in the Penobscot Bay region, including Islesboro.

Given the size and scale of this project, a full EIS must be prepared. The DCP Searsport application currently before The Corps must be placed on hold until a full, fair and unbiased review and disclosure of the environmental impacts of the proposed action, including a review of alternatives, needs assessment and an economic impact analysis, is provided to public and government decision makers,

Reasons why an EIS must be required:

- potential impacts to human health and safety,
- unique characteristics of the geographic area, including proximity to historic and cultural resources,
- degree of controversy,
- high degree of risk, including cumulative risk based on the adjacent oil tanks and the GAC facility,
- extensive cumulative impacts from size and scale of industrial development, including shipping, railroad use and trucking, and
- potential adverse impacts to resources of high historic, cultural and economic significance in historic Searsport, and on Sears Island, Islesboro and Penobscot Bay.

Based on these facts, we respectfully request that the Islesboro Board of Selectmen write a letter to the US Army Corps of Engineers imploring them to require a full EIS from DCP Searsport before taking any further action on the DCP permit application.