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Green River says yes to refinery

By **PATSY STODDARD**
Editor



The old Nampa oil refinery. The new oil refinery to be built in Green River will look similar to this one.

Ed Neibauer of High Desert Refining, a subsidiary of P & M Petroleum, was at the recent Green River City Council requesting to purchase 73.8 acres from the city on which to build a refining plant. Neibauer owns 70 wells in the Uintah Basin which produce black wax crude, and is looking into opening 70 more. He was notified in January that the refineries in Salt Lake City will no longer be able to refine his product. He sent a letter of intent to Green River City stating his desire to build a refinery in Green River.

Neibauer stated that many other crude producing companies are in the same position as he is. Their production has been seriously curtailed with no refinery. He has proposed to build a refinery in Green River and requires about 300 acres of land for this project.

With the help of Mike McCandless, Emery County's economic development director, Neibauer has located and arranged for a lease on a parcel of School and Institutional Trust Lands, and to

purchase several adjoining parcels of private land, and he now needs to purchase property from Green River City.

The site, 1.5 to 2 miles east of the town of Green River will accommodate the construction of the refinery. The oil, after pumping, is heated to 160 degrees for trucking to the refinery site. At the refinery, the black wax crude will be processed into oil.

Once land is acquired, the permitting process can begin. The permits from the state will take approximately six months, and will be followed by the 18 month construction period. So, it will be at the very least, two years before the refinery will open.

"A facility like this has not been built in the United States for more than 30 years," said Neibauer. "The US is in trouble due to the lack of refineries here. Green River is the perfect place for a facility like this. It has rail service and our site has access to the necessary utilities."

Neibauer went on to say that he has worked diligently to ensure the facility is as far as possible from town, yet enables them to be close enough to the things they need. He added that the facility will be state of the art and virtually no odors will come from the plant. The industry has spent billions of dollars in the past 20 years to meet and exceed air quality standards.

When asked about the number of trucks coming into the plant, he stated that around 100 trucks will be coming daily. The finished product will be hauled in rail cars.

This facility, when in operation, will employ approximately 80 people. Neibauer stated that only about 25 percent of those workers will not come from the local area. He said all the laborers, maintenance and office staff will come from the Green River area. Only the chemical engineers and upper management will be brought in to work at the facility.

The Green River City Council voted unanimously to write a letter inviting High Desert Petroleum to build a refinery in Green River. The stipulations of this invitation are: the permitting process be complete in one year; substantial construction be completed in two years; and the plant be operating in three years. Another stipulation is that the road which is to be built into the plant meet Utah State specifications. High Desert Refining will also be offered incentives from the State of Utah.

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