

RCW 80.40.040 Eminent domain—Application to *oil and gas conservation committee prerequisite to eminent domain—Procedure. Any natural gas company desiring to exercise the right of eminent domain to condemn any property or interest in property for the underground storage of natural gas shall first make application to the *oil and gas conservation committee for an order approving the proposed project. Notice of such application shall be given by the committee to the utilities and transportation commission, to the director of ecology, to the commissioner of public lands, and to all other persons known to have an interest in the property to be condemned. Said notice shall be given in the manner provided by RCW 8.20.020 as amended. The committee shall publish notice of said application at least once each week for three successive weeks in some newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties where the proposed underground storage project is located. If no written requests for hearing on the application are received by the committee within forty-five days from the date of service of notice of the application and publication thereof, the committee may proceed without hearing and issue its order. If a hearing is requested, a public hearing on the application will be held within the county or one of the counties where the proposed underground storage project is located. Any order approving the proposed underground storage project shall contain findings that (1) the underground storage of natural gas in the lands or property sought to be condemned is in the public interest and welfare; (2) the underground reservoir is reasonably practicable, and the applicant has complied with all applicable oil and gas conservation laws of the state of Washington; (3) the underground reservoir sought to be condemned is nonproductive of economically recoverable valuable minerals or materials, or of oil or gas in commercial quantities under either primary or secondary recovery methods, and nonproductive of fresh water in commercial quantities with feasible and reasonable pumping lift; (4) the natural gas company has acquired the right by grant, lease or other agreement to store natural gas under at least sixty-five percent of the area of the surface of the land under which such proposed underground storage reservoir extends; (5) the natural gas company carries public liability insurance or has deposited collateral in amounts satisfactory to the committee or has furnished a financial statement showing assets in a satisfactory amount, to secure payment of any liability resulting from any occurrence arising out of or caused by the operation or use of any underground reservoir or facilities incidental thereto; (6) the underground storage project will not injure, pollute, or contaminate any usable freshwater resources; (7) the underground storage project will not injure, interfere with, or endanger any mineral resources or the development or extraction thereof. The order of the committee may be reviewed in the manner provided by chapter 34.05 RCW: PROVIDED, That if an appeal is not commenced within thirty days of the date of the order of the committee, the same shall be final and conclusive. [1988 c 127 s 35; 1963 c 201 s 5.]

***Reviser's note:** The duties of the oil and gas conservation committee were transferred to the department of natural resources by 1994 sp.s. c 9, effective July 1, 1994.