

STOP THE GRAIN
ELEVATOR!
PROTECT OUR HOME



Stop the Wallace Grain Elevator! Protect This Land.

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Greenfield Louisiana LLC has applied for a permit to construct and operate a grain terminal here in Wallace. **A grain elevator can cause irreparable damage to our bodies and threatens to destroy our homes, our land, and our community.**

The Updates

Since we've alerted the community and the media about the proposed grain elevator, Greenfield has temporarily pulled their permit application. We expect that these permits will be re-submitted, but we are working closely with several grassroots, cultural, and legal organizations who stand in solidarity with our community. We have also shared our story with local and national media who want to amplify our voices and support our fight against Greenfield.

We've also learned that **Christopher Medlock James, an investor based in San Francisco, is behind Greenfield Louisiana LLC.** James targeted our community for development because the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act considers Wallace a "Qualified Opportunity Zone," a place where investors can get tax benefits for investing in economically distressed low-income areas. **James targeted us because he sees us as a poor, Black community that he can make money off of while benefiting from major tax cuts.** This is not the first time Christopher James has threatened our community. **Christopher James developed the Pin Oak Mt. Airy Terminal,** contributing to the **dangerous air pollution** in our community by developing an **oil and gas storage facility** right across the Mississippi River. Just this week, James gained national attention and praise for being a socially conscious "impact investor" that cares about minimizing industry's "negative influence on a community or environment." The hypocrisy of these statements given his actions in Wallace are not lost on us.

Tell Greenfield and St. John Parish Council to STOP THE WALLACE GRAIN ELEVATOR!

Sign the **community's petition** at today's town hall to request a **special meeting** with our elected leaders on the **St. John Parish Council.**

Kyle Egbert is Greenfield's Chief Financial Officer. **Give Kyle a call at (612) 849-3425 or email at kyle@gfh.ag and tell Kyle to stop the Wallace Grain Elevator!**

Cal Williams is Greenfield's Chief Operations Officer. **Give Cal a call at (817) 925-5782 or email at cal@gfh.ag and tell Cal to stop the Wallace Grain Elevator!**



Shared Community Concerns

(1) Existing Pollution in Our Home: Why They Call Us “Louisiana’s Cancer Alley”

Our community is already bearing an overwhelming pollution burden. Within a 5 mile radius of the proposed grain terminal site (where you’re standing right now), **our cancer risk is in the 98th percentile in Louisiana and the 95th-100th percentile in the United States.** This means only 2% of the people in Louisiana, possibly less than 1% of the people in our entire country are exposed to worse air than we are.

Our community is also already exposed to massive volumes of respiratory hazards. We already have a higher risk of respiratory disease from pollution than **81% of Louisiana residents and 90-95% of US citizens.** for the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) Respiratory Hazard Index. The pollution-related cancer risk in our community is more than 3 times the Louisiana average and greatly exceeds EPA’s acceptable limit. **These injustices are part of a larger, statewide pattern of overburdening Black communities with air pollution.**

(2) Added Pollution From Grain Elevators

“What’s wrong with a little grain? Doesn’t sound as bad as a petrochemical plant!”

Grain dust was one of the first known industrial hazards. Texts from the 16th century warn about the dangers of inhaling grain dust.

According to the American Thoracic Society: “Grain dust is complex and contains a mixture of different types of grain, **insect parts, fungi, bacteria, bird and rodent droppings, pesticides, and silica.**” These and other contaminants (for example, rodent body parts) can cause respiratory disease in people who inhale the dust.

Exposure to grain dust is associated with **lung damage, chronic cough, asthma, bronchitis, and farmer’s lung disease.**

The CDC has backed this up since the late 1980s. They’ve found that grain dust consists of “insects, insect parts, and mites,” **“excreta of rodents and birds”** and **“metal fragments, lubricating oils, or paint chips** that may have accumulated with the grain during the harvesting and subsequent processing or storage.”

“What happens when we inhale things like rodent body parts and droppings?”

Tiny particles from grain dust can get **stuck in lungs** and cause **serious respiratory issues**, including fibrosis. It can also irritate the eyes, nose, and throat and exacerbate conditions like asthma.

All that exposure to grain dust can cause **wheezing, chest tightness, coughing,** and symptoms of **chronic respiratory disease.**

Beyond all the harm grain dust can bring to our insides, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has determined that grain handling is a **“high-hazard industry”** because of the probability of **explosions** from grain dust. **These explosions are more common than you may think.** Less than a week ago, two grain elevators exploded in two separate Minnesota towns on the same day. Last month, one exploded in Iowa. Communities from Corpus Christi, Texas to the city of Westwego, right outside New Orleans, have spent decades recovering from the trauma of explosions that killed family members and friends.

“Would the state of Louisiana let this happen to our community? What about the Parish?”

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the state agency created to provide comprehensive environmental protection to Louisiana residents, might not even realize how horribly the grain will pollute our community. **The closest LDEQ monitor for dust (also called particulate matter) is 20 miles from Wallace.**

Despite the overwhelming hazards that a grain terminal would bring, several of our elected officials (including Hotard, Madere, Wright, Schnyder, Becnel, and Malik of our Parish Council) signed letters of support as early as May of 2020 without ever engaging the community. We were not even made aware that Greenfield has applied for a permit to build a grain elevator in our community by our public officials -- Tulane Environmental Law Clinic shared this information with us.

(3) Grain Elevators Threaten Our Community, Our Way of Life, and our Ancestral Heritage

Beyond the dust and pollution described above, grain elevators emit **noxious odors from rotting grain, fungus, and bacteria** -- the smell has been described as **similar to living next to a garbage dump.**

The proposed Greenfield terminal is massive, requiring **1.2 million cubic yards** of excavation and filling and covering over **248 acres.** Greenfield is hoping to erect **36 storage silos** and other structures that are as tall as **300 feet** (taller than a 20-story building).

The terminal includes a barge, rail, and truck systems that will bring added **traffic and noise** to our main road.

Our community is home to several **national historic sites** that could be damaged or ruined by the grain elevator.

Due to the number of plantations in the area, we believe it is highly **probable** that the grounds for the proposed grain terminal contain the **burial sites of many of our enslaved ancestors.**

These sites are not only important to preserve in honor of our lineages, but are also important to the economic success of community members. The histories of Black and Indigenous peoples in this region provide opportunities for funding new businesses, jobs, and programs around historic preservation, heritage tourism, and agritourism to stimulate our local economy.

