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Survey answers

Name (required):
Shoreline

City of Residence (required):
Shoreline

Neighborhood:

Ballinger
Briarcrest
Echo Lake
Highlands
Highland Terrace
Hillwood
Innis Arden
Meridian Park
North City
Parkwood
Richmond Beach
Richmond Highlands
Ridgecrest
Westminster Triangle
Don't know
Not applicable

Email:
suzannepardee@w-link.net

Agenda Date (required):
1/14/2013

Agenda Item:
Coal Train/ Cherry Point Terminal

Comments:

Dear Shoreline City Council Members:

I urge the Shoreline City Council to pass a resolution firmly opposing the proposed Coal Train and Cherry Point Terminal, and I urge the Council to demand that the lead agencies responsible for the EIS Scoping Process conduct a thorough review of all impacts, from start to finish. This means that all the known and potential environmental, social, and economic consequences of coal mining, coal transportation, and consumption should be thoroughly evaluated in the EIS Scoping Process. Concerns include, but are not limited to the following topics:

- Most of the coal mining will be done on public lands in Montana and Wyoming, yet private corporations will reap the lion's share of the profits. The public has already been shortchanged billions of dollars from coal taken from public lands in these states, and the leases for future extraction promise the public a mere pittance.
- The ecosystems on public lands provide half the watersheds for America's municipal water supplies, and coal mining and coal dust is known to release a wide variety of toxins into the environment, including lead, arsenic, and mercury. Toxic exposure is known to increase rates of cancer, birth defects and infertility, and it increases rates of neurological damage such as decreased intelligence, increased learning disabilities, and increased violent behavior. Do we really want to create a whole new host of health and social problems, and further stress the public systems that must deal with them?
- What is the impact of coal mining to ecosystems, both in terms of habitat loss, and from toxic exposure? Do we really want to further degrade ecosystems that are reeling from global warming, acid rain, and wholesale elimination through conversion to development?
- Mining activities often cause landslides, threatening communities that live downhill. How many homes and lives will be lost, and who will pay for the damage that can be repaired?
- Coal mining damages economic activity in other industries, especially in fishing, tourism, and real estate sectors. Why should these jobs merit less consideration than coal train jobs?
- The coal trains would pass through the farmland of several western states. What will be the health effects to farm animals and crops that are exposed to toxic coal train dust and diesel train fuel, and the concurrent health effects to humans that ingest this contaminated food? What will be the economic effect on farmers who find their livestock dead, or their crops, milk, and meat too toxic to sell?
- The coal train project would bring approximately 18 trains of coal through Puget Sound each day, each train about 1 ½ miles long, and taking ¼ hour to pass. What will this do to traffic in a region that already suffers from gridlock much of the time? What is the impact of halting traffic for 15 minutes, every 1 – 1 ½ hours? What desperate things will people do to get to work on time? What road rage will we see, when Seattle area traffic routinely comes to a standstill throughout the day? How many lives will be lost when ambulances cannot make it to the hospital in time? How much more air pollution will we have in our region due to idling cars? How much wasted lives and productivity will the region face from waiting and gridlock?
- The coal trains would intersect the Seattle and Edmonds ferry terminals right at their loading and off-loading areas. Will our region's ferries every run on time again, if they must cease loading and unloading for 15 minutes, every 1 – 1 ½ hours?
- Amtrak leases Burlington Northern rail lines. Amtrak service is routinely delayed to allow current freight train traffic to pass, and is often delayed for landslides, freight train derailments, and fatal accidents at crossings. Will the delays caused by 18 coal trains per day kill passenger rail service all together, as the delays caused to Amtrak become untenable?
- I know a train worker well. His union ostensibly endorses the coal train project, yet he and the

rest of the union membership were never asked their opinion. He opposes the project, not only for the overall negative impacts to the society and environment, but because he will personally be exposed to more toxins, and because the coal train traffic will severely impede all other rail traffic, and because it will further degenerate rail beds throughout the West that already need replacement, causing more derailments and injuries.

- What will be the health and environmental impacts of the toxic coal dust and increased diesel fumes throughout the Puget Sound rail corridor? Why should residents of Shoreline, Seattle, or Edmonds suffer from increased rates of asthma, cancer, neurological and reproductive damage?
- What will happen to real estate values and the economic viability of our region, once coal trains rumble incessantly through our communities? Families and entrepreneurs often chose to live in Puget Sound because of the natural beauty and relatively clean environment. Will we see businesses and individuals with money flee the region, seeking the next Emerald City?
- Construction of the Cherry Point Terminal will directly convert 350 acres of relatively undeveloped land into industrial use. What will be the environmental impact of this construction to the Threatened and Endangered Species of the area, both aquatic and terrestrial? What will be the hydrologic impacts of further converting wetlands into ports?
- What will be the impact on fisheries and shellfish, as marine life is poisoned by coal train dust, and diesel that enters the water from ships directly, and from trains indirectly? Why should the fishing industry suffer for coal production and transportation?
- What will be the economic, environmental, and social cost of coal train derailments, and coal ship accidents? Who will pay the cost? Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca are already busy with ship traffic, and that traffic would only increase substantially with coal train exports. It's questionable whether Washington State is prepared for major marine accidents, and it's likely that the public would pay the cost of disaster preparation and clean-up.
- Once coal is loaded on ships to Asia, it will need to cross thousands of miles of the Pacific Ocean. What will be the environment impact of toxic coal dust and diesel exhaust into the marine ecosystems that are already suffering from global warming, acidification, and species depletion? Will our beloved salmon become more toxic or fewer in number? What will be the economic and environmental cost of coal ship accidents on the high seas?
- Just as Washington State will suffer severe impacts from coal train transportation, what will be the environmental, economic, and social impacts from building terminals and transporting coal in Asian communities? What will be the direct health impacts to Asian communities that burn American coal? Is it moral to export coal that we consider too dirty to burn ourselves? Cancer is already the leading cause of death in China. Will cancer be Washington's #1 export?
- Burning coal. It's scarcely imaginable that in this day and age when the effects of global warming and climate change are so clearly felt, that humans would ever consider such a monstrous project. Extreme weather events, whether it be drought that plagued 2/3 of American counties this year, Hurricane Katrina and Sandy, or the 50 degree below zero temperatures that Russia is now experiencing, humans are paying the costs of fossil fuel addiction. Will we spend money and ingenuity creating a clean green future with renewable energy jobs, or will we further hasten our rendezvous with climate catastrophe?

Please request that the EIS scoping process evaluates all these concerns. Please join with the cities of Seattle and Edmonds in rejecting the Coal Train/ Cherry Point Terminal, and send an official resolution of opposition by January 21, 2013 for inclusion in the scoping comments.

Thank you,
Suzanne Pardee, MPA

Position:
Support
Oppose
Neutral