

Will King County power past coal?

COAL COMPANIES, seeing little future growth domestically, have a new plan: strip mine coal in Montana and Wyoming, transport it on long coal trains through King County to a massive coal export terminal north of Bellingham at Cherry Point. They plan to haul up to 48 metric tons of coal each year. There are several other coal terminals proposed in Washington and Oregon.

WHO'S BEHIND THE PLAN?

Out of state companies, including the world's largest coal company Peabody and investors like Goldman Sachs. SSA Marine would manage the port.

CONGESTION FROM COAL TRAIN TRAFFIC

Communities in and along rail lines, including Seattle, Shoreline, Tukwila, Renton, Kent and Auburn **could see 18 or more coal trains** rolling through town *every day*. This would add more than 3,000 noisy mile-long loaded coal trains traveling through King County rail system *every year*.

A single slow-moving coal train can obstruct a rail crossing by six minutes or more. Adding 18 trains to the local area's rail system would mean blocking some crossings by two hours per day.

Increased traffic delays at busy rail crossings would clog commuter traffic and could slow response times for emergency responders.

WATERFRONTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS CUT OFF BY COAL TRAINS

Added coal train traffic along the King County rail line would limit access to neighborhoods, schools, business corridors and ferry terminals close to the train tracks. This could drive away investors for

new residential, retail and commercial developments in waterfront and rail-adjacent communities in King County.

HEALTH IMPACTS FOR KING COUNTY

Coal Train Emissions: Diesel exhaust is associated with asthma, cardiopulmonary disease and increased incidences of cancer. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad studies estimate up to 500 pounds of coal can be lost in the form of dust from each rail car en route. The wide ranging health dangers of coal dust include exposure to toxic heavy metals like mercury and increased rates of asthma, especially in children. Coal dust would pollute our clean air and water.

Toxic fish: Mercury and other pollutants from coal-burning power plants travel from Asia to the West Coast of North America where they've been shown to poison our

(cont)



Communities in and along rail lines could see 18 or more coal trains rolling through town every day.

PHOTO CREDIT: PAUL K. ANDERSON



The wide ranging health dangers of coal dust include exposure to toxic heavy metals like mercury and increased rates of asthma, especially in children.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SIERRA CLUB

air, water, fish and food supply.

IMPACTS TO PUGET SOUND

Exporting coal promotes deeper global fossil fuel dependence. It delays the urgently needed transition to cleaner alternatives. It makes climate disruption inevitable, including extreme flooding and ocean acidification, impacting our shorelines and the Sound.

Constructing the proposed Cherry Point terminal would destroy and degrade 162 acres of wetlands while allowing coal dust to blow directly on herring spawning grounds. Herring are a primary food source for Chinook salmon, themselves the primary food source of Southern Resident orcas.

The companies would ship the coal on massive cargo ships. Every year close to 500 some of the world's biggest cargo ships would navigate our waterways and the already-crowded Straits of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound. This would mean ongoing threats to local communities, fishing grounds, wetlands, waterways and wildlife. Just one accident would be devastating. This would mean ongoing threats to wetlands, waterways and wildlife from potential ship

collisions, threatening salmon, orcas and our Sound.

BAD FOR THE ECONOMY

Major public ports, such as the Ports of Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, and Portland have rejected coal export as inconsistent with their economic development strategies. The proposed sites have potential for hundreds of jobs in light industrial and smart-tech growth instead of being mired in a single-commodity, unpredictable dirty export trade. Increased coal train traffic would lower property values along the rail lines and in communities impacted by congested traffic. It would also make it more difficult for ports and shippers to get higher value goods to market along the rail lines.

King County has a big stake in the proposed coal terminals, and we need to make our voices heard.

COUNTY CONTACTS:

- **Robin Everett**
Sierra Club
206.378.0114 x308
robin.everett@sierraclub.org
- **Joelle Robinson**
Climate Solutions
206.443.9570 x29
joelle@climatesolutions.org

“The concern expressed by mayors and governors and the leaders of community, medical and faith groups cuts across any debate about the potential boost to local employment and economies.

They believe there are too many unknown details about the extent of the port-development plans, along with the eventual scale of the coal deliveries through cities and towns, and the potential local and global hazards to human health and the environment.”

**— SEATTLE TIMES EDITORIAL
OCTOBER 2, 2012**

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1

Call Senators Cantwell and Murray and tell them they need to demand the Army Corps conduct a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) at Ambre Energy's Port of Morrow proposal on the Columbia River - the only project without an EIS - because it would impact WA communities. Congressional Switchboard: 202-224-3121.

2

Call WA State Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark at 360-902-1004 and tell him “please don't use Washington's public waters for coal export.”

3

Call Gov. Inslee at 360-902-4111 and tell him it is more important than ever that he protect our communities. Governor Inslee must ensure his state agencies conduct the broadest possible review of the cumulative impacts of all the coal export proposals.

POWER PAST COAL

communities against coal export

powerpastcoal.org | facebook.com/powerpastcoal