

1 MILLENNIUM BULK TERMINALS - LONGVIEW  
2 SEPA DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
3 PUBLIC MEETING - QUIET ROOM

4 \* \* \*

5 JUNE 2, 2016

6 12:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

7 \* \* \*

8 TRAC CENTER

9 6600 Burden Blvd

10 PASCO, WA 99301

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16 Cheryl L. Vorhees, CSR, CCR, RPR  
17 Court Reporter

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 SPEAKER 1: My name is Richard Reuther,  
3 R-E-U-T-H-E-R. I'm a resident of Pasco. I think  
4 that we're discussing the wrong question. Coal is  
5 dying. Dragging coal out of the mountains and  
6 dragging it through every metropolitan statistical  
7 area of Washington and Oregon is not the point.

8 The point is that we need to be looking  
9 for alternative energy sources, instead of  
10 spending \$26 million putting in a new rail line  
11 through Pasco, the railroad would have been better  
12 spending money to find energy sources like solar  
13 perhaps that could power electric trains.

14 If we're creating jobs by dragging coal  
15 around and then the polarized caps melt and all  
16 those people 50 feet and below are washed out,  
17 what have we gained, when we could have done  
18 something different. When we could have done  
19 something smarter.

20 SPEAKER 2: My name is Fred W. George.  
21 I'm a career railroad employee from the 1960s in  
22 both American and labor. I started on the Union  
23 Pacific in 1967, Steel Gang 2701 on dam  
24 reconstruction on the Snake River.

25 I went to law school. From law school I

1 went to the BN management headquarters in St.  
2 Paul, Minnesota.

3 I was appointed a rules examiner safety  
4 supervisor, Chicago Region, which included  
5 Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. I worked on the  
6 Metropolis, Illinois coal project at the tip of  
7 Illinois from train to plant and train to barge.

8 I have previous experience in this  
9 subject, to the subject at hand today. I  
10 transferred to Galesburg, Illinois, and at  
11 Galesburg, Illinois near there, in a town of  
12 McQwin, two weeks prior to when I arrived, five  
13 men were killed in a head-on collision.

14 After I was appointed safety supervisor  
15 in that area, no men were killed after that,  
16 although there were sole injuries. We had serious  
17 safety problems, which is not anywhere close to  
18 the safe operations we have today.

19 My job in the management was to sign the  
20 rules cards. I've trained engine men, proving  
21 that they were competent in the operating code of  
22 rules for safe railroad operations.

23 In 1976 I have returned to Pasco as a  
24 switchmen. I worked with the local officers of  
25 UTU Local 977. I was in the Legislative

1 Department of the United Transportation Union. I  
2 worked with Local 1637, Vancouver, Washington,  
3 along with various NP chairmen and General  
4 Chairman Fitzgerald.

5 I also worked with State Legislature  
6 Director Rider Wrath. These were all regarding  
7 safety, railroad safety. I have appeared in  
8 Federal and Oregon State courts on railroad  
9 operations. I have filed complaints with the FRA.

10 I retired from the BNSF in Pasco in 2006,  
11 and the management was glad to see me go. I am  
12 not a yes man or lackey for the BNSF management.  
13 I think independently about railroad safety.

14 Based on my background and experience, I  
15 give the following testimony: Concerning whether  
16 the BNSF Railroad is in its totality prepared for  
17 increasing trains, crews, and tonnage of the  
18 Millennium customer.

19 In my judgment, I answer the following  
20 questions. Number one, will the track hold the  
21 tonnage? The tracks are the foundation of the  
22 house. Billions have been spent in Washington on  
23 tracks and signal systems? The answer is yes.  
24 The Maintenance and Way Department has done its  
25 job.

1           Number two, are the crews properly  
2 trained for the weight of increasing trains in  
3 motion? This is my primary focus, the training of  
4 crews.

5           I have personally trained many of the  
6 crews from their first employment in Pasco yard.  
7 That was the old days. Modern crews go to school  
8 in Orland Park, Kansas. They are technologically  
9 competent and rules compliant. BNSF crews  
10 trainmen and engineers are properly trained in  
11 correct understanding of the rules. Their also  
12 certified tied by the FRA, the Federal Railroad  
13 Administration. The answer to the question is  
14 yes. They're properly trained. They can't handle  
15 increased trains and tonnage.

16           Also there's a record of coal train  
17 derailments. There's only one of sizable measure  
18 at Meso, Washington. The entire area of Mesa was  
19 related, complete. Coal dust, a surfactant, a  
20 waxy-like substance is sprayed on railroad cars.

21           Soda ash trains which run heavy on the  
22 Union Pacific release more dust than any coal dust  
23 from the coal train.

24           My conclusion is that BNSF is ready,  
25 track, train and engine crews. In totality they

1 are prepared for increasing tonnage and increasing  
2 trains, both loaded and empty. They will put  
3 safety in action.

4           Distributive power. I would like to  
5 speak a little bit about distributive power, or DP  
6 power. In the old days locomotives pulled these  
7 trains from the head end, as everybody knows.  
8 Occasionally, in mountain territory, a separate  
9 crew with helper engines would go to the rear of  
10 the train and would push.

11           Now the railroad has distributive power.  
12 Distributive power means there's locomotive space  
13 within the train. They can be on the head end,  
14 they can be two-thirds of the way back, or they  
15 can be on the rear, or any combination fitting the  
16 power manager or the distribution of tonnage  
17 within the train. This is important. This is  
18 called track train dynamics.

19           These are modern trains now that  
20 distribute the locomotive pulling and pushing  
21 power inside the framework of the train to even it  
22 out. So they're not surges of physical forces  
23 inside the train which cause derailments by  
24 literally pushing the cars off the track.

25           This is a very interesting development

1 that's been made routine now in the railroad  
2 world. They'd had trouble with this before with  
3 slave units, radio controls with slave units, but  
4 now they've got it down to a real science now, and  
5 they're able to space locomotive power on the head  
6 end under the control of the engineer, and then  
7 other locomotives, mostly in these trains, coal  
8 trains, would be on the rear end where they would  
9 have like two locomotives on the front and two  
10 locomotives on the rear. And that they would  
11 total would be under control of the locomotive  
12 engineer in the lead unit. And this reduces the  
13 physical forces inside the train, making it less  
14 likely that you'll have a derailment by simply  
15 pushing the cars off the track by locomotive  
16 power.

17 SPEAKER 3: My name is Ilene Larimor  
18 (phonetic). I live in Hermiston. I am with the  
19 Lower Umatilla Groundwater Management area,  
20 Umatilla County Weed Board, and then I'm Executive  
21 Director of the Tour of Knowledge.

22 For over 70 years residents of West  
23 Umatilla County and most of Morrow Country have  
24 been under stress and very concerned for their  
25 health and safety. That's because the Umatilla

1 Army Depot which was 14 miles west of the  
2 Hermiston, Hinkle, which is seven miles south of  
3 Hermiston, the Boardman Bombing Range to the west  
4 is about 40 minutes, and the most contaminated  
5 site in the Northern Hemisphere, Hanford, just 30  
6 miles away.

7 We were never given the opportunity to  
8 speak out against these facilities. When the  
9 depot closed CSEP Emergency Management System left  
10 with them.

11 Umatilla County has been so dependent on  
12 CSEP they only had a part-time emergency manager.

13 Last month the County Commissioners voted  
14 to make the position full time, and they hired a  
15 young man to fill that position. So we have a new  
16 position and a new person. Umatilla County is not  
17 prepared to handle a major emergency at this time.

18 Three of the four threats of health and  
19 safety still remain. The prevailing wind blows up  
20 the Gorge from the west. Toxins, many incidents  
21 at Longview or along the railroad tracks will  
22 impact us up to Pasco. That's a concern.

23 Residents of West Umatilla County and  
24 Morrow County don't want to end up being  
25 collateral damage. Enough is enough. We don't

1 need another threat to our health and safety.

2 (Session concluded at 9:00 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 I, Cheryl L. Vorhees, Certified Shorthand  
3 Reporter for Oregon and Washington, certify that,  
4 at the time and place set forth in the caption  
5 hereof, I reported in stenotype all testimony  
6 adduced and other oral proceedings had in the  
7 foregoing matter, that thereafter my notes were  
8 reduced to typewriting under my direction; and the  
9 foregoing transcript, Page 1 to 9, both inclusive,  
10 constitutes a full, true, and correct record of  
11 such testimony adduced and oral proceedings had  
12 and of the whole thereof.

13 Witness my hand and seal at Portland, Oregon,  
14 this 14th day of June, 2016.

15  
16 

17  
18 Cheryl L. Vorhees  
19 Certified Shorthand Reporter  
20 CSR No. 08-0409  
21 Exp. 09-30-2016

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23  
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**\$26** 2:10

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**1** 2:2  
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**1976** 3:23

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**2**


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**3** 7:17  
**30** 8:5

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**40** 8:4

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**50** 2:16

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**9**


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