

I'm Donna Murphy, from Portland, and a retired Portland Public School teacher. I'm responding to the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Millennium/Arch Coal terminal in Longview, Washington.

I'll focus on the issue of coal dust slipping off the proposed uncovered rail cars shipping 44 million tons of coal a year through Idaho, Washington, and Oregon.

Many organisms would be affected by a total of 120 tons of coal dust each day falling on plants, animals, and sea creatures along the route and out to sea — with Longview tidal currents that could be as much as 56 miles.

Coal dust effects on living matter is well-documented. It smothers plant and animal life all along its perilous way. It lessens organism's ability to photosynthesize by cutting off sunlight. It smothers and asphyxiates breathing in animals and humans, and scrapes away protective layers from fish and plants. I think of it as Black Lung Disease, which killed my grandfather, except this time it's not only in humans.

Surfactants applied to lessen the problem of coal dust actually enable coal pollutants to more easily spread. Coal that was once safe inside the earth now is let loose in the air, on plants and the soil, and into our precious waterways, making lethal contact with our already endangered small supplies of once plentiful sea life like crab and oysters and salmon. We lose jobs and vital ecosystems.

2 - After hearing from the DEIS Statement that this project has significant and unavoidable impacts, I kept wondering, "Why are we all even talking about this?" But I know — it's for the benefit of a very few, in this case the bankrupt Arch Coal. Your agency is the front line of our defense against that interest of profit wanting to use our precious earth as a commodity to be bought, sold, and destroyed. I am asking you to please hold the line, to protect our earth, and to say no to this coal proposal.

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