

COAL -- an industry that no longer benefits but harms us.

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It is not rational or fair to increase the damage to our Gorge communities by increasing the number of coal trains passing through. I live in Stevenson, Washington, in the heart of the scenic Columbia River Gorge, which attracts many visitors. ^{Tourism is now the basis of our economy} The train tracks cut through the town, and there are already too many trains coming through. To increase the number of coal trains would have many adverse effects here: coal dust pollution, ^{which has adverse health effects} noise, inaccessibility between sections of the town, including delays in emergency services when needed, a negative impact on tourism, and more. Increasing the number of coal trains traversing through the Gorge would damage an area of rare natural beauty that needs to be preserved, as well as the quality of life of local residents. The only benefit would be more profit for the coal companies – at our expense. That is not a fair or moral or ethical outcome. The cost to the Gorge communities is too high. It already costs. ^{us}

Coal (and all fossil fuels) now needs to stay in the ground, and more pressure placed on developing green energy sources providing many jobs, which would offset loss of jobs in the coal industry – which must now be phased out.

There is no need to build coal export terminals. We need to focus on reducing carbon emissions into our atmosphere and work hard toward mitigating climate change which is already evidencing adverse effects for all (hotter summers, more and larger forest fires, glacier melt, ocean warming and rise in sea level, etc.)

Coal is no longer a good option for meeting our energy needs. Our communities must not be sacrificed for coal industry profits. Our communities and the health of the environment are a higher value. *No action alternative is best choice*

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