

2016 JN 02

Washington State Dept. of Ecology  
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Coal Train Meeting in Pasco, WA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, let me say I'm more concerned about "Oil Trains" running down the Columbia River, than about "Coal Trains". On that subject, I remember about 5 years ago some 13 BNSF coal cars dumped over in Mesa, WA and it took less than a week to clean up the accident and repair the tracks. I worry that if 13 oil tank cars tipped off the track at say Rock Creek, where the tracks are about 50 feet from the Columbia River edge, it would be a serious Exxon Valdesse situation. How long would it take to clean it up?

About "Coal Trains". I'm not terribly concerned about a little coal dust from trains passing down river. In my opinion, most of the dust would have blown off the cars before they left Montana. With the added coating in Pasco, the load would be pretty clean all the way to Vancouver. I think the dust problem will be far worse on the return of the empty coal cars going up river. There will be more wet dust in the cars which will only begin to dry and blow off after the cars pass out of the wet west side of the mountain an into the dry and hot east side. Will the cars be washed off before the return east? If so a big settling pond will be needed. Maybe the settled coal dust will amount to enough to be colleted and sold as fuel?

My other concern is, I keep hearing "16, mile long trains a day". Is that full trains going down river, or is that another 16, empty trains heading east? That would be 32 trains a day. Good grief! Maybe we are talking about 8 trains each way?

What about the Union Pacific coal trains on the Oregon side of the river, carrying Utah coal.

Finally, I guess I worry more about the global warming and planet air pollution from burning that coal in Asia. Besides, I wonder who said it was alright for our generation to use up all the oil and coal in America, leaving "nothing" for our grand and great grand children and future generation of humanity. Maybe, they will have a better need for it than burning it up.

Sincerely yours,

  
James R. Dillman, Architect Emeritus,

2523 Granada Court, Richland, WA 99354, 509-375-0322, cyndillman @ hotmail.com