

People in Pasco should be believers in the danger of moving coal by trains. On July 3, 2012 31 cars of a coal train derailed spilling coal in Mesa, WA, which Google tells us is only 26 miles north of Pasco. In addition to cutting towns and cities in two for many hours a day, these coal trains will leave a black trail of coal dust all the way to Longview.

Another consideration: After the coal gets to Longview it will be put into open piles and then will be loaded onto ocean going ships and sent off to Asia. I went up the Columbia in an 18 foot pleasure boat from Chinook, near the river's mouth, through Bonneville dam to Cascade locks. I saw that the trip up and down the ship channel is a tricky business and River Pilots earn their big salaries. An accident would be a catastrophe. The lower Columbia is home to both sport and commercial fisheries that don't need more ship traffic or the possibility of polluted waters. The ships must cross the bar, held by many to be the most dangerous to cross in the world. They call the area The Graveyard of the Pacific.

Finally, this question should be asked: Are Ambre Energy (now Lighthouse Resources, Inc) and Arch Coal (which filed for bankruptcy in January 2016) sufficiently solvent to pay, for example, for a major cleanup operation?

Norm Osterman  
1032 Pomona  
Walla Walla, WA 99362