

Longview Testimony: Coal Terminal

September 17, 2013

My name is Marion Ward and I am a homeowner in Vancouver. A proposed coal terminal along the banks of the Columbia River would affect thousands of people, the environment and wildlife in this state. I understand this hearing is to determine the scope of an environmental impact statement.

Since the Corps is the only agency with federal jurisdiction, it is essential that the Corps include environmental impacts from mining the coal in Wyoming and Montana, traversing the route for many miles along the Columbia River, the terminal operation, loading it onto ships and finishing the study with the passage of ships crossing the bar in Astoria.

Residents along the route want to know why they will be paying the price in health, safety and environmental degradation for the financial benefit of a few oligarchs. Many communities along the route will see decreasing home values, increases in respiratory ailments, habitat destruction, decreasing safety, and possible derailment of loaded open cars full of coal,

According to the Federal Railroad Administration, Burlington Northern experienced 292 derailments last year. It is not a question of if, but rather when, a train full of open coal cars will derail along the Columbia River.

It is imperative that the scope of the environmental impact statement include all areas that would be affected by this decision. And as a federal agency, I believe you have the

duty to do so. I would like to remind you of one of the components of your mission statement:

“Researches and develops technologies to protect the nation’s environment and enhance quality of life. “

And one of the components of The re-energized Environmental Operating Principles

“Proactively consider environmental consequences of all Corps activities and act accordingly.”

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