

9-25-2013

Good evening. My name is Carol Bryan and thank you for giving me this opportunity to share how increased coal shipments affect Peaceful Valley, my Spokane neighborhood 4 blocks, as the crow flies, from the train tracks.

First, diesel emissions and coal dust from trains affect the air and dirt we daily see, filter, and breathe in our neighborhood. I have a friend who literally had to move away from Spokane because of air quality. After moving, his health improved and medications were reduced. When I started teaching school 40 years ago, it was unusual for me to have a student in class who had asthma. Now, it is normal to have two or three kids in every class who have inhalers on file with the school nurse. We must consider and Reduce, NOT INCREASE, EACH contributing source of air pollution.

Second, I grew up in Montana loving trains. I only live in Spokane because my dad sent me off to College on the train. But now..... passenger service has been discontinued, is very expensive, and the trains ^{sh}ake the beds and houses in my neighborhood ~~shake~~. Yesterday, I went to the car wash and for 20 minutes I was bombarded with the noise of three freight trains passing by. During the night, if I can't sleep, I sometimes walk out on my porch and I hear trains clunking away. Sometimes I hear them in my bedroom. It is no surprise that I have neighbors who come to ME asking for the "NO Coal TRAINS" signs that dot our neighborhood.

Third, Peaceful Valley is bordered on the north by the Spokane River. Partly because of documented mercury from coal burning in China, it is a health hazard to eat fish from ^{our} ~~the~~ River. We also know that diesel fuel has leaked into the Spokane River from the upriver railroad refueling station.

Fourth, we are bordered on the west by Latah Creek. We want to protect our creek. Many of us remember a derailment when grain cars fell off an overpass and landed on I-90, a few hundred yards from Latah Creek before it flows into the Spokane River. My friends have seen coal dust blowing over Latah Creek and have picked up chunks of coal out of the creek. Coal dust increases the chances of devastating ^{ating} ~~ing~~ derailments.

These so called "little neighborhood problems" are accumulating and resulting in the increasing destruction of our neighborhood and our planet's earth, air, water, and quality of life. Who will look out for us and look at the big picture if not you?

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