



1024 SW Main Street, #524 * Portland, OR 97205 * 503-245-7858 * mary@plangreen.net

Coal Trains Testimony – Oct. 9, 2013

My name is Mary Vogel. I have an Oregon certified WBE called PlanGreen. I consult with NW communities about how to make their communities more sustainable and resilient in order to both mitigate against and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The results of my work and that of colleagues in the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Cascadia Green Building Council is to make communities far more livable. We promote strategies for making them more compact, walkable and convenient to services.

I suspect that the proposed coal trains would negate many of the best practices we recommend, such as clustering future industrial employment centers close to rail, putting residential and retail within easy walking distance of those employment centers and even clustering residential growth around the community's core--if it happens to be close to rail that serves the coal trains as it is in Camas, WA. The draft EIS must evaluate impact on the air quality and health of our current communities and also on potential future employment centers that wish to employ the latest sustainability standards by locating adjacent to rail.

In the planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture professions—and all other professions associated with the built environment—there is a huge push to meet and exceed sustainability standards such as LEED for buildings, LEED for Neighborhood Development and the Living Building Challenge—and we in the PNW are in the forefront of those standards.

We are already leading America's transition from the outdated dirty energy and suburban sprawl of the past, to 21st century clean energy solutions and 20-minute neighborhoods. The proposed coal trains through our communities will negate our work and send the wrong message to our communities and the world. Let's make the Pacific Northwest coal-free and protect our heritage as a clean, green environment.