

Longview Terminal

I was born and raised in Tacoma and I remember Asarco. I remember the damage that plant spewed onto our waterfront as I was growing up. And I know how Asarco shifted the cost of cleaning up that catastrophe onto the taxpayers. Millions and millions of taxpayer dollars have been spent on the clean-up and they still aren't done. I don't want to go down that road again.

I don't want that kind of environmental catastrophe again in my home town – or in my state. Maybe we didn't know any better than, but we do now!

- If they have their way, these coal companies and railroads will spread their poison from Montana, along our Columbia River and along our coast via their barges and mile-long coal trains. Each coal train car loses 40 pounds of coal on its journey. That coal dust will spread into the neighborhoods, farms and estuaries affecting the health of our residents, livestock, wild life and our delicate marine habitat.
- The prevailing currents along our coast travel north. In fact, our beaches in Washington are composed of basalt and granite from the Columbia River gorge.
- According to the Longview plan Millions of tons of coal will shipped down the Columbia and then piled in Longview, awaiting shipping and then poured into super-ships. Coal poison will percolate into the water of the river and harbor and then travel north contaminating our precious estuaries and bays on its journey.
- These estuaries are literally the nurseries for the Northern Pacific. Fouling them will affect the entire fisheries industry for our state – salmon, crabs, clams, oysters – all of it.
- In addition, the pollution generated when this coal is burned in Asia – with far fewer of the environmental laws and regulations than we have – will travel back here in a steady stream, dropping from the air into our waters and increasing acidification which is already affecting our shellfish.

I don't want this terminal in Longview to foul our waters. I don't want all the trains spilling that poison through our towns and along our coast line. I don't want the noise and congestion and loss of productivity they will cause.

Yes we will gain a few hundred permanent railroad and longshoreman jobs – but how much will be lost by the rest of us? That's what has to be calculated.

- How many jobs will be lost as we lose our fishing and tourist industries?
- How many jobs will be lost by the traffic congestion as these long trains pass through the intersections in our towns?

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- How many children and residents along the path of those trains will be sickened by the mercury and contaminants from the coal dust and diesel fuel from the trains and ships?
- What will be the total environmental damage done by the stacks of filthy coal at the terminal?
- What will be the damage done to the rail beds by the heavy trains and coal dust?
- What will it cost to clean up the mess this creates -- if it can be cleaned up?
- And who will pay for all this?

All these issues need to be studied. Don't let the coal companies and BNSF reap the profits and shift the cost of their reckless greed onto the rest of us like ASARCO did.