

Increased Shipping Traffic from The Proposed Millennium Bulk Terminal at Longview and other Proposed Fossil Fuel Export Facilities on the Columbia River ***Requires the Analysis of Cumulative Impacts!***

As a 34-year resident of Orcas Island, and a long-time sailor in the waters this additional shipping would overwhelmingly affect, I am submitting the following comments:

So many of us in the San Juan Archipelago have for decades sacrificed endless time and money, trying to give our Salmon and Orca whales a chance to recover, so it was a shocking blow to find out what could be in store for our vulnerable waters and islands.

The Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW), also known as the Orca Whale, is San Juan County's icon. Our tourism-driven economy is dependent on these charismatic marine mammals. The birth rates of the SRKWs are strongly correlated with the abundance of Chinook salmon. The new tracking information shows that abundant runs of Columbia and Snake River Chinook salmon are important to the long-term survival of the SRKW.
http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/research/divisions/cb/ecosystem/marinemammal/satellite_tagging/blog.cfm

Among many other dangers, even just one (perfectly predictable) major accident in these treacherous waters would totally wipe out our main economic engine: TOURISM, thus *destroying multiples of the few permanent jobs which could possibly be created by these proposed coal facilities.* They can not credibly be compared to those achievable in our growing "green economy": jobs that can help us to at least slow the rapid rise in average temperatures, through providing increased energy efficiency by retro-fitting our existing homes, schools, businesses, and transportation, as well as many more jobs that expand solar and wind power generation. Yet our DC Politicians see fit to bestow multiples of huge, *ongoing* subsidies on the Fossil Fuel Industry, *thus making these destructive fuels seem "cheaper",* than those they barely (*and unreliably*) grant to Solar Energy and other forms of "Green" solutions, which we so desperately need in order to leave a somewhat livable world to our children.

We are wisely using ever less coal in the United States, so various vested interests are trying to recapture market share for this *tax-supported, deadly* commodity, by planning to ship open coal trains across half the country and along our fragile coast, for export to Asia *at sub-market rates.* By now the destructive aspects of transporting and using this resource are very well known and widely documented, so we have no excuse to encourage other Nations to continue burning it. Not only will it come back to us on the winds, *but it is unconscionable to knowingly contribute to ill health for other human beings.* For the sake of the whole world China should be encouraged to use sustainable power sources instead of this dirty fuel, which *needs to stay in the ground until some day in the future, when we might be able to honestly talk of "Clean Coal" - using that word now is a shameless euphemism.*

China is already choking on the kind of air pollution I experienced in the 1950s, while living in Los Angeles, or perhaps much worse. That the politicians in China are facing ever louder protests from their citizens about these intolerable conditions, will help to make these proposed facilities obsolete by the time they would be ready to ship their deadly cargo. Consider also that China has vast coal reserves as well, and that once their infrastructure is built out to allow them to be coal-independent, we will be stuck with the tremendous damages wreaked here in the meantime, and with useless facilities uglifying our coast. Even Goldman Sachs is not enthused about these investments.

Why should we acquiesce to the destruction of our Native and other fisheries and that of our precious environment, to aid a few Captains of Industry in their feckless pursuits? The relentless pressure to export coal from the Pacific Northwest is clearly driven by the desire for corporate profits in the mining, rail, port, and shipping industries. That mining coal, *and burning it,* destroys land and water resources at the site *and beyond,* by releasing mercury and other toxic metals into our global atmosphere, thus making climate change and its

consequent sea level rise, ocean acidification and ocean warming so much worse, *is quite obviously of no concern to these special interests!*

We have just witnessed a storm of record-breaking intensity: the tragic Typhoon that swept across the Philippines on November 8, 2013, killing thousands, while making even more of that Nation's citizens homeless *and hopeless*. Other low-lying Island Nations are already seeing their lands swallowed up by warming, and therefore *expanding*, seas. The comments below clearly describe the risks associated with the increased shipping traffic that would result from expansion of the export of coal *and other fossil fuels* from Columbia River Ports:

The increased shipping traffic from the proposed Millennium Bulk Terminal and other proposed projects will increase the risk of shipping accidents and fuel spills along the Columbia River and during transits of the notorious Columbia river bar. Although the annual number of oil tanker spills fell about three-fold world-wide between 1992 and 2011, the number of fuel spills for allusions, collisions, and groundings of tankers and bulk cargo carriers in restricted and inland waters *did not decrease* during this period. These data indicate that improvements in the shipping industry and the efforts of the International Maritime Organization and national governments have not decreased the number of accidents in inland and restricted waters. Since the Columbia River is an inland waterway, the risk of a significant fuel spill here is at least three fold higher than the world-wide average. In contrast to the fall in tanker oil spills (likely due to requirements for double-hulls and other structural improvements in tanker design), world-wide bunker fuel spills did not decrease between 1992 and 2011. (See Figures 9 & 13 in: [Trends in Oil Spills from Tankers and ITOPF Non-tanker Attended Incidents](#) Susannah Musk -Technical Support Coordinator -International Tanker Owner Pollution Federation Ltd, ITOPF London, UK). Bunker fuel is the fuel used by ship engines. It is heavier and more polluting than other fuels. Tankers and bulk carrier ships routinely use bunker fuel oil because it is cheaper. A spill in San Francisco Bay of only around 53,000 gallons of bunker fuel oiled about 200 miles of coastline, shut down fisheries and closed beaches to recreation.

The bulk carrier vessels that would ship coal from the proposed Millennium Bulk Terminal will carry hundreds of thousands of gallons of onboard fuel to power their engines. The increased bunker fuel demand would be met by refineries near Anacortes and north of Bellingham Bay. This would increase the tanker shipping transiting the restricted and hazardous waters of the San Juan Archipelago and the Salish Sea. Increased shipping traffic increases the risk of collision, allision, or grounding and increases the risk of environmentally destructive fuel spills in these ecologically rich marine waters.

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