Janet: My name is Janet McMillan and I live at 10120 Sunset Hill Road, Greenough, Montana, 59823. I'm a member of the Northern Plains Resource Council's Coal taskforce. I want to thank everyone who has helped make this important event happen. I also want to take this opportunity to express my concerns that the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of the Washington need to take into account as they review the proposed port in Longview. As we've heard tonight, the Corps has refused to hold the hearings about the effects on Montana of granting these permits.

As many of you know, we held an event similar to this one last November in response to the potential permitting of the other major coal export terminal in [Cherry Point 00:00:51], Washington. We believe then, and we still believe that the decision makers, chiefly the Army Corps of Engineers should come here to listen to our concerns regarding permitting of coal export terminals on the West Coast. We urged them to extend their hearings to our state and when they refused to do so, we held our own hearings, like this one tonight and a big bunch of Montanans went to Spokane to make sure we were heard.

Let us connect the dots between Montana, West Coast ports and China. [Otter Creek 00:01:29] coal tracks lying in alluvial valley plain in Eastern Montana from which it would have to … the coal would have to be shipped via an as yet unbuilt or even permitted Tongue River Railroad. There is currently no mining happening in that valley. This mine, the largest proposed new coal strip mine in the United States, and its internally connected railroad would destroy aquifers, condemn ranches and private property and completely transform an agricultural valley.

The coal will be shipped to West Coast ports negatively affecting hundreds of communities en route and costing taxpayers millions of dollars. When it is burned in Asia, the pollution will lead to air quality that is dangerous to human health from Beijing to Montana. As you notice these dots from Otter Creek to Missoula to Longview are all connected by railroads. Arch Coal, the company that has leased the Otter Creek tracks has a 38% stake in the Longview port.

These projects are dependent upon one another and it is critical that we demand the cumulative impacts are looked at. Given that the Surface Transportation Board regulates the railroads, it is imperative that they be involved as well. Permitting coal export terminals on the West Coast has serious long term and cumulative downline effects in Montana and the Surface Transportation Board must be included in any of the decisions as to issuing of permits. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Eric Greene. You're up next. You already knew.

Eric: Good evening. My name is Eric Greene. I live at 303 Treemont Street, Missoula,

Montana 59801. We hear a lot about the effect of burning coal in terms of its contribution to carbon dioxide and other sorts of gases; air pollution, water pollution. I'm going to focus my remarks right now on something that we don't hear quite as much about and that's the coal, mercury link. Mercury is one of the most toxic substances we know about. There's … it causes extreme neurological problems at exceedingly low levels. We're talking parts per billion so it is a really nasty thing and in humans, mercury poisoning is called Minamata disease.

Just Google Minamata disease and you'll get an idea on how hideous this can be in large doses. To help you calibrate a little bit how much of a problem mercury can be and already is in Montana, I'm part of a project working on ospreys, looking at eco toxicology here in Western Montana along with my colleague Dr. Haiko Laigner and Rob Dominich. We're studying … we're looking among other things levels of mercury and osprey chicks around here. The osprey chicks at the nest near the Hellgate … near the windmill about a quarter mile from us have exceedingly high levels of mercury in their blood.

If you or I walked into St. Pats Emergency Ward with the levels of mercury in our blood that those osprey chicks have, it would be code red. The doctors would take this very, very seriously. Already our local ospreys here have very, very high levels of mercury in their blood. Where are they getting this from? They eat fish; exclusively they're getting it from the fish in the river. The fish are picking it up off the food chain. This is a human health concern too because we eat the same species of fish that the ospreys do. Already here in Montana we're seeing exceedingly high levels of mercury in some of our local wildlife.

The largest source of new mercury into the atmosphere is from burning coal. We're now emitting about two gigagrams of mercury per year from burning coal and I have no idea what a gigagram is. It's a billion grams. That works out to about four and a half million tons of mercury a year. Mercury is exceedingly good… when coal is burned, mercury gets up into the atmosphere and it's really, really good at what's called atmospheric deposition that mercury can travel around the world and rain out; precipitate out. The mercury that … if we were to dig it up, ship it to coal and it's burned over … to China and it's burned over there, the mercury from those releases would travel around the world.

Certainly, we would get back some of that mercury within about a week or so. Our levels of mercury here in Montana would be expected to rise, as well as global mercury inputs. There was an interesting paper that was just published two weeks ago in Nature showing that there is large concentrations … high concentrations of mercury in deep sea fish in the Pacific and the fingerprint of this was coming from … clearly from burning coal in China. What happens here with Montana coal will affect mercury pollution all around the world, so this is another good reason to keep Montana coal in the ground. Thanks.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Let's move along. Who's next? Georgia?

Georgia: Hello, I'm Georgia Milan and I live at 540 East Pine, Missoula, Montana, 59802 and I'm a medical doctor and I do want to concur with the last speaker about the mercury. Right now we have 50 lakes in Montana that we actually carry advisories warning pregnant women and children to be careful about fish consumption because of the mercury poisoning. There's 50 lakes already in Montana including Flathead Lake. As we know from a healthcare perspective, in addition to the mercury, everything that we do with coal, which is why it needs to stay in the ground, but mining coal has tremendous human health impacts as well as the burning of the coal as well as the coal storage.

This is why we're getting rid of coal in the United States. This is why we're decreasing our consumption of coal, because we know that it's contributing to four out of five of the leading diseases that are causing death in the United States, including not only respiratory problems but cancer, heart disease and strokes. When he was talking about the number of premature deaths from coal in Beijing, in the United States we had over 60,000 premature deaths from coal just in the United States, so we know that coal is very, very toxic.

When we think about digging this coal, we're still going to have all the human health impacts from mining the coal which is tremendous leaching of very harmful chemicals into the water supply and then when we think about transporting this through all of our communities, there's a lot of concern; very, very big concern about human health as far as … especially the vulnerable populations which have the children and the elderly people that are prone to disease because of the coal dust, but especially because of the diesel fumes and because of the problems that we're going to be seeing with coal going through these communities. When Sally mentions 30 coal trains a day and we know there are 100 to 120 cars, you can just imagine the problems we're going to have with the emergency vehicles.

But truly, the other main issue, one is that after it's combusted in China for a few pennies in profit, a lot of that air pollution and these toxic heavy metals will be coming back to the United States and back to Montana including the mercury. A big percentage of Alaska's problem with mercury right now is already from the combustion in China. All of these hazards and air pollutants we will be getting back into the Pacific Northwest, but from the human health perspective, looking at climate change … I don't know if any of you've read the latest edition of Science Magazine from August 4th, but it was pretty horrendous as far as what we're looking at and we're already seeing this of course in Montana with our forest fires, we're seeing it with the droughts, we're seeing it with the pine beetle. We've already lost eight million acres of pine trees to the pine beetle.

We're seeing it in the heat stress that that we're seeing, we're seeing a lot of direct deaths from that, the water contamination.

We're seeing increased violence all over the world from the climate change, but as far as our ability to survive as a species with the amount of CO2 emission in the air is extremely limited. I really think from a climate change perspective even if there was no mercury involved, we really have to keep our coal in the ground. I speak for human health, but I'm also speaking for all of these other species that are going extinct in such a very rapid rate that we're relying on 100% and we don't understand the interdependency, so keep the coal in the ground. Thanks.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: I have Jan Hoem up next.

Jan: Hello. I'm Jan Hoem, 16 [Van Briar 00:12:12] Lane, Missoula, Montana. I oppose the proposed coal terminals for many reasons. Oh, and I forgot to say I'm a member of the Montana Elders for a Livable Tomorrow, MELT, a group of people in my age group. We oppose the proposed coal terminals in Longview for many reasons. First, there is the ethical question. The U.S markets are down because of national gas and because the EPA and others recognize the toxic nature of burning coal. In Northern China, the people die five and a half years earlier than the people in the South. The Northern area is an area that burns a lot of coal and there is a direct connection.

I think it's wrong for us to send our toxic product, coal, to China where it will cause the deaths of many people. The tobacco industry did something very similar to this when they found that it was killing people. They started exporting to Africa, to Europe, to Asia and kept the doubt about whether or not it was harmful alive in this country for many, many years. Then I have two points that are self-interested. One is … was already made by both Eric and Georgia, that the prevailing air currents will carry these toxins back to this country. All of Montana's lakes currently have levels of mercury that can be … the footprint can be read and they can be tied directly back to what's being carried here on those air currents from China.

There's also arsenic, cadmium, and other heavy metals. The health impact of neurotoxins on the respiratory, brain, cardiovascular, and other conditions including cancer are huge. Secondly, China will probably lose interest in building … because they're now building their own infrastructure in China and there's a natural gas pipeline now going from Tajikistan around the Himalayas and directly into China. Then I think around 1990 there was an export terminal built near Portland to export coal to China and there were fluctuations in the market and no ton of coal was ever shipped out of there.

Finally, my group and many of us care about the kind of world we leave behind. Locally, should we destroy the pristine lands that are not yet mined? Should we do to our small towns and cities what the railroads would do to them? In the year 2000, on Earth Day, I spoke to a group of high school students and at the end of my talk, I was speaking about climate change, and what little was known then compared to what we know now.

A boy in the back of the room raised his hand and said, “Well, if climate change could be so serious, why aren't you doing something about it? Your generation?” and I said, “Well, some of us have only known about it for a few years and there has been a pretty major campaign to keep the validity of what we're learning in doubt, but if 10 years from now we haven't done something, then shame on us.” It's now 13 years later and I think about that boy a lot every day. This coal should stay in the ground; it should not go to China. We need to protect the world for the future. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Dave Strohmaier.

Dave: Hi. I'm Dave Strohmaier. I reside at 508 East Pine and I represent Ward 1 on the Missoula City Council. Ward 1 being what I consider ground zero for impact from coal train activity in our community here in Missoula, Montana. Ward 1 consists of the Rattlesnake Valley, the downtown in Missoula, the North side. This is a corridor that has known train traffic since 1883 when the Northern Pacific railroad came through but when we're considering the possibility of significant and almost exponential increase of coal train traffic through our community, we are currently dealing with impacts that are not mitigated and to consider that increase surely as a burden of upon those of us here in Missoula and I don't think we ought to be the ones who are bearing the brunt of the costs and the effects of those burdens.

What sort of impacts are we talking about? From a municipal standpoint, I'm asking the Army Corps of Engineers and the powers that be for two things; one, that they take a hard look at analyzing the impacts between the coal export facilities and the coal mines because the coal trains do not spontaneously generate at the border of Idaho and Washington. They pass right through our community. Those impacts need to be analyzed and those impacts need to be mitigated and we ought not to be the ones who pay for those mitigations. We have impacts related to quality of life such as noise, such as the inconvenience of being obstructed when a train for extended periods of time is blocking the tracks.

It's not just an inconvenience though; it is a public safety issue. Here in Missoula, the Madison Street crossing is really the focal point. We have two egress and access points into and out of the Rattlesnake Valley; one of them being the

Madison street, Spruce street, Greenough Drive crossing. To create a grade separating crossing there would cost in the neighborhood of around $10 million by some estimates. To create the mitigations to allow us to have a quiet zone through town would require several hundreds of thousands of dollars to add additional equipment.

Those impacts, those costs ought not to be borne by the citizens of Missoula, Montana. This is also not just an issue of cost and benefit. It is also an issue of environmental justice. Some of our poorest and lowest income neighborhoods in Missoula reside along the railroad tracks. I don't see the corporate executives living in those neighborhoods, so we have certain demographics who are bearing an undue brunt of those impacts. I would urge the Army Corps of Engineers and eventually the Surface Transportation Board in relation to the Tongue River Railroad to both require that a hard look be taken at the impacts along the full course of the route and that those impacts be mitigated. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: We have Kim up next. I can't remember what your last name is. Is there a Kim? You?

Female: I think that’s her daughter on there too.

Female: Over there?

Female: Mm, it might be a friend. Let’s just ask her.

Kim: Hi, my name is Kim Davitt. I work with the American Lung Association at 3919 Heritage Way, Missoula, 59802. I work on the Lung Association's Healthy Air Campaign and protecting lung health by ensuring healthy air protected under the Clean Air Act. Coal is a health issue. It impacts human health at all stages; mining, black lung, transport, air pollution from diesel emission, emergency vehicle disruptions and burning. Air pollution from nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide in particular matter. All of this also contributes to the climate change which then fuels increased air pollution. The CIS process needs to consider these health impacts and how it contributes to heart disease, stroke and respiratory diseases including asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, and cancer. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: We'll have her daughter come up next please. Francis Smith.

Francis: Hi. My name is Francis Smith and I live at 3919 Heritage Way and [inaudible 0:21:27] and we think there should be no coal trains because they disturb wildlife and they hurt lots of animals and people. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: I have Lee Bridges is next.

Lee: Hi. My name is Lee Bridges. I live at 203 Clyde Street in East Missoula, Montana. I would like to thank [Lee Fang 0:20:00] for coming and giving us this presentation because I know it takes a lot of time and devotion to an issue and have a commitment to something like this. I personally have enough battles on my own plate that I can't put a lot of time to this, but I wanted to show up to say that as a concerned citizen, I live in East Missoula directly across … we are right on the interstate so the railroad is right across from us and I certainly noticed the traffic, the increased trains coming by and I don't know where you get your counters but every time I count the cars with the coal trains it's 125 cars every time and there's plenty.

My husband has asthma and we've noticed, particularly in the last couple of years, it has certainly had an impact on his condition. He can't be outdoors a lot now as a result and we have a lot of work to get done on our place and he's unable to spend a lot of time outdoors. We've noticed being in Hellgate Canyon, we have a lot of wind and we do notice the coal dust kicking up off of the train loads and I don't know if they have a tarp or something or maybe some type of a [spray 0:23:13] coating that they might cover the top of it with, but we notice as it comes through East Missoula there's a perimeter around each car that's already unsettled its coating or perhaps it's just the tarps don't go all the way to the edges, I don't know.

I know that when you work on an issue and you have people come up and make statements and everybody has a complaint to say, which sounds like what I'm doing, I would like to say that as a solution or as a possibility since we are located where we are, I would happily offer our location as a site for testing. If it's as simple as an adhesive strip to collect airborne particulars to test, please, please contact me. My phone number is area code 406-549-4543. We would be happy to accommodate that. I don't know what the answers are. I'm not a scientist, but we are definitely noticing a difference and I know that we have a lot of dust accumulating within our home as well as on our exterior sites, buildings, vehicles, et cetera. I know that the coal dust is having an impact. If you want to test it, please feel free to use our site. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

JP: Hi, my name is JP Kemmick. I live at 847 West Pine, Missoula, Montana 59802. For the past 27 years, I have lived in four cities. That's Billings, in Missoula, Tacoma and Seattle; all cities directly on the rail line. I know how uniquely beautiful each of those cities is on their own very specific way and I also know that coal trains, especially with the increases that coal exports would cause …

would significantly depreciate the beauty of those cities and having lived in each of them and spent so much time admiring them, I want the coal to stay in the ground and I want those coal trains to cease in the near future, so I can't say enough about how each of those cities is a fantastic place and will only be hurt if the coal exports go through. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Nick Engelfried.

Nick: Hi. My name is Nick Engelfried. I live at 321 South First Street here in Missoula, Zip Code 59801. There are so many reasons why this issue is important to our community, but the one that I really especially want to hit on tonight, and I should say too I'm a member of a group here in Missoula called Blue Skies Campaign that works on this issue. The specific point I really want to hit on is that there has never been a comprehensive done on what the full potential impacts of pollution, especially coal dust from these trains might be in Missoula. About the only thing that we know for sure is that there is dust coming on the … coming off of those trains.

There is some kind of impact on our health, but no one has ever done a really scientific systematic study to tell us what we should expect if these coal trains increase. About the only study that you hear cited a lot in the media is one that was done by the Missoula City County Health Department about two years ago and that was … I mean it's nice that they did that study. It's better than nothing, but that was not a systematic, scientifically designed study. They basically took samples from four random places along the tracks, analyzed them to see if there was coal dust. There was nothing done to measure how coal dust levels might fluctuate over time, how it might vary from place to place, nothing like that.

The only thing that that study can tell us since it wasn't really very systematically designed is that there is some coal that's coming off of the trains. They did find coal dust in every single sample that they took, but we don't know what the full scale of the implications on our health might be. Now these companies are proposing to bring in more coal trains through town before we even have this information. I would request that the Army Corps of Engineers before they let this Longview terminal move forward at all, do this kind of study. Give us this information so that we know. Conduct a systematic study over time of how much coal dust is coming off of those trains so that we can use that to inform our decisions. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Emily McKnight.

Emily: Thanks. Hello. I'm Emily McKnight. I live at 5800 Rattlesnake Missoula, Montana. I'm writing to point out that there will be huge impacts in places other than Longview if you permit this export terminal. It is unfair to leave the rest of us out of the discussion when we will be deeply affected by the coal trains that will ensue should the terminal be built. That makes pressing concerns. One, safety. I'll wager that every town along the track will be impacted by the inability of firefighters and ambulances to cross tracks quickly in an emergency. Two examples, A.) Missoula, Montana, 20 coal trains a day means the Rattlesnake Valley in the North side of Missoula will be largely cut off from accessing the main down town for several hours a day and during the night.

Traffic will be backed up on the only access routes. This will also be true for businesses and industry located on the wrong side of the tracks, necessitating longer, more [secured less 0:29:40] routes to reach emergency situations. In Frenchtown Montana, like many small towns, Frenchtown is divided by the railroad tracks. On one side of town in addition to houses and businesses are the grade school and the fire department. On the other side of town are located businesses, homes and the high school. There is no way across the tracks except at grade level. You tell me how emergency services are to get across the tracks when a train is coming.

If there is a fire in the high school, how would the students be provided services? Most part of this is where the exact number of towns along the tracks in three states and you have significant safety problems. Other rail services; if coal trains take up many hours a day, as 20 of them or more, pass along the rails, how will other products now served by the trains find a way to market? Will they simply continue to come? Thereby having the rails used even more of the time and can they pay the rates that the coal trains can pay? Or perhaps they will be rerouted along the Northern line. In that case how will towns now receiving products by rail get their products?

I'm concerned about assuring that there is diverse use of the rails. Air quality; it is clear that coal trains lose a lot of coal along the way. It's unclear where they lose it, in what form and what the impact on air quality is. In addition, trains idling on the tracks release emissions with detrimental health effects. My friend Christie who lives immediately adjacent to the tracks have lung problems as a result. Or how about my friends Nancy and Champ who live along further away? That's still near. What about low income people on the North side of town? Are they to have this added to difficulties they already experience?

For a simple inconvenience on a big, long scale. All along the rails, if we have hours and hours of trains going by, people in three states will have problems crossing to, for example, get their children to school, get to work, carry out business matters, go grocery shopping, get to doctors' appointments, listen to

music, go to church, herd cattle. All these … are all these citizens businesses, agricultural concerns and safety providers to take a back seat to one business venture because of the impacts of shipping tons and tons and tons of coal overseas where it will be burned and create more greenhouse gases, exacerbate climate change and send the air pollution back to us via the prevailing winds?

None of this sounds like a good plan to me. Maybe we want our nation to be strong and moving toward a sustainable future, a future beyond coal and climate change. My thought is that we can, A) start changing now, B) mitigate later or C) do nothing and deal with the dreadful results after it's too late to do anything to change it. I prefer option A) start changing now. I therefore respectfully request, beg really, you to include much more than just the citing of the export terminal in your evaluation. It's going to affect a whole whopping lot of us.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: Jordan Hess up next.

Jordan: My name is Jordan Hess. I live at 834 Sherwood Street, Missoula, Montana, 59802. I am also a candidate for the city council in Ward 2 and I bring that up because I think I take exception to Dave's remarks that Ward 1 is in fact ground zero. I've had the opportunity to talk to a number of people and I get this concern a lot about rail traffic, about coal dust. I myself am a concerned West side resident. I live on a house … in a house that is on a block of … where that is the only house on the block and the rest of the block is essentially a rail yard. I functionally live in the rail yard.

Studies have shown that 500 to 2,000 pounds of coal dust, of heavy metal laden coal dust can blow off of coal trains … off of coal cars on their route from their origin to their destination point. Anecdotally throughout the summer, I wipe a fine jet black dust off of my white painted window seals on the side of the house that faces the tracks; sometimes once a week. That makes me wonder how much of that dust ends up in my lungs when I'm out in the yard. How much of that heavy metal ends up in the eggs from my chickens that scratch around in the ground in my yard.

How much of that heavy metal ends up in the produce from my gardens? How much, when I have … I have a friend who brings his two year old over, how much of that dust and how many of those metals end up on her skin or in her lungs when she plays in our sandbox? Stories and anecdotes often get dismissed as not being hard science, but how many pieces of hard science began as a story or a question or an anecdote? You all remember when that apple allegedly fell on Newton's head. I would like to request a comprehensive analysis of the health effects of coal dust and I would like to see some hard plans come out of all these

stories that we're hearing about coal dust. This summer, as every summer, I had the opportunity to spend some time in Glacier National Park.

In 2003, Dickson Landers an EPA Scientist found that persistent organic pollutants were found in miserable quantities in the bottom of lakes in otherwise pristine wilderness in Glacier Park. These pollutants were found in water, in fish and up the food chain from fish. Just like what goes up must come down, if we ship 100 million tons of coal against the jet stream, we must anticipate the receipt of sulfur dioxide, mercury, and particulate matter within five days back in Glacier's lakes. Glacier, just like Montana's coal is in our back yard. It's close to home, but burned half a world away it's amazing how those impacts can come back close to home again. I'd ask also for a comprehensive review of the global impacts of building the Longview port. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]

Speaker 2: The last person I have on here is an Anne Hedges.

Anne: Hi. I'm Anne Hedges with the Montana Environmental Information Center. I don't remember signing up, but I'm always happy to talk. I don't want any more studies, I don't want any more analysis, I don't want any more delay. I want the President of the United States to direct the agencies that he is in charge of to do what he promised he would do. He promised us in June that he would reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this country and he would do so expeditiously because he said we have a problem. Our president admits there is a problem.

He is in charge. He is in charge of the Army Corps of Engineers; he is in charge of the decision makers in this process. We cannot keep digging up coal in Montana, contaminating our ground water, ruining the lives of those who live nearby, putting greenhouse gases into our atmosphere. Even China today said it is going to quickly start reducing its greenhouse gases. When I read that about Beijing this morning, I thought if they can do it, why not us?

When I read the full article, I saw that they intend to do these reductions by 2017. 2017. Our president put out an action plan in June that said we are going to have final rules telling people that they might have to do something with emissions of greenhouse gases from power plants by 2015. That's not even action. That's just a rule saying some day we're going to act. Beijing is saying, “We're going to do this by 2017.” I think we can do as well as China. I think the Army Corps of Engineer should do what our president has directed them to do and I think our Army Corps of Engineers should just say no. Thank you.

[Audience clapping]