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Conservation Groups Intervene to Defend Washington State Against Coal Exporter's Lawsuit

Groups filed in support of Washington Department of Natural Resources' decision rejecting nation's largest coal export terminal

March 7, 2017 (LONGVIEW, WASHINGTON) – Columbia Riverkeeper, Washington Environmental Council, and Sierra Club took steps today to defend the Washington Department of Natural Resources against a high-profile lawsuit filed by backers of the nation's largest coal export terminal. On February 2, 2017, Millennium Bulk Logistics and NW Alloys, a subsidiary of Alcoa, sued the Washington Department of Natural Resources after the department denied a key lease needed for Millennium to operate a proposed 44 million ton per year coal export terminal along the Columbia River.

"For over six years, people from across the Northwest, Tribes, and community leaders worked together to protect clean water and our climate from coal export. Now we'll fight tooth and nail to defend Washington State's commonsense decision rejecting Millennium plans to turn the Columbia River into the West Coast's coal export highway," stated Brett VandenHeuvel, Executive Director of Columbia Riverkeeper.

"We stand with the Department of Natural Resources and are working towards a cleaner, healthier Washington for all," said Rebecca Ponzio, with Washington Environmental Council. "Simply stated, the future is about clean energy, not coal."

"Millennium had no answers to the State's basic questions on its finances and ability to protect the Columbia River," said Kristen Boyles, an attorney with Earthjustice representing the conservation groups. "Especially for a project that has already been caught misleading the public about its size and impacts, DNR's decision protects Washington's fiscal and environmental health."

"In 2010 there were six new coal export terminals proposed in Oregon and Washington. Thousands of Northwest residents spoke loud and clear about their myriad concerns with the dangers of coal for our health, safety, air, and water," said Cesia Kearns, Deputy Regional Director for Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign, "Millennium is the last remaining project, and we will continue to do everything we can to make sure Northwest families are heard and protected."

Background

On January 3, 2017, DNR rejected Northwest Alloys (a subsidiary of Alcoa) request to sublease to Millennium to build and operate the proposed coal export terminal at the site of a former aluminum

smelter near Longview, WA. Without the sublease, Millennium cannot build new docks necessary to export coal, and without new docks, Millennium cannot operate its coal export terminal. Millennium and Northwest Alloys filed a lawsuit in Cowlitz County Superior Court on February 2, 2017, challenging DNR's decision.

Resources

Legal documents, DNR's letter rejecting Millennium's proposal, and a Question & Answer Fact Sheet on DNR's decision are available below.

- [Columbia Riverkeeper and the Washington Environmental Council's Motion to Intervene](#)
 - [Columbia Riverkeeper Declaration](#)
 - [Sierra Club Declaration](#)
 - [WEC Declaration](#)
- [Millennium and NW Alloys Notice of Appeal Challenging DNR's Decision](#)
- [DNR's Letter Rejecting Millennium's Coal Export Lease](#)
- [Question & Answer Fact Sheet](#)