

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:

Saturday, November 3, 2012

CONTACT:

Kerry McHugh, Power Past Coal, 206.902.7555, kerry@wecprotects.org

Katie Fleming, FRIENDS of the San Juans, 360.305.9066, katie@sanjuans.org

PUBLIC HEARING: Friday Harbor Coal Export Hearing Draws Concerned Crowds

Largest North American coal terminal proposal raises concerns from oil spill risk to climate change

WHAT: Saturday, hundreds of Northwest residents will gather at 12 PM PST at the official scoping hearing in Friday Harbor, WA. Local scientists, teachers, business owners, elected officials and more will voice concerns about the dangerous plan to transport toxic coal through the Salish Sea to Asia.

Residents will testify in front of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Washington Department of Ecology and Whatcom County Planning and Development Services to demand that threats from these coal export proposals be thoroughly evaluated from mine to rail, and from port to plant. This is the second of seven public comment hearings for the proposed Cherry Point terminal.

WHEN:

SATURDAY, November 3, 2012

WHERE:

Friday Harbor High School

45 Blair Avenue

Friday Harbor, Washington 98250

[Map](#)

WHO:

Lovel Pratt, San Juan County Council

Daryll Williams, Tulalip Tribe

Brian Goodremont, small business owner, San Juan Safaris

Fred Felleman, Environmental Consultant

Stephanie Buffum, FRIENDS of the San Juans Executive Director

Debra Hopkins, San Juan Visitors Bureau

All speakers will be available for interview during or after the hearing

*****ATTENTION ASSIGNMENT EDITORS: GREAT VISUALS!! LARGE, DIVERSE GROUP IN BRIGHT RED SHIRTS, HAND-MADE SIGNS, AND GIANT BANNERS*****

BACKGROUND: This proposed coal terminal poses unique threats to Friday Harbor and the San Juan Islands. If the proposal were approved, it would mean almost 1000 transits of giant bulk carriers every year. These ships, twice the size of the oil tankers currently allowed to call on Washington ports, have the worst safety records of any commercial vessels. They would significantly add to oil spill risks in the region since they carry up to two million gallons of bunker fuel, suffer from poor maneuverability, are not required to have tug escorts, and would join the increasingly congested waterways of Rosario and Haro straits.

“This proposed coal terminal endangers the economy of the San Juan Islands,” said Katie Fleming of FRIENDS of the San Juans. “Just one accident with a giant bulk carrier would devastate our local industries – fishing, whale watching, and tourism. The risks are too high.”

Cherry Point, WA: SSA Marine has applied for a Joint Aquatic Resource Permit to annually export 48 million tons from the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal in Cherry Point, near Bellingham, Washington. Peabody Energy and investors including Goldman Sachs plan to strip-mine coal in the Powder River Basin and ship it on rail through the inland Northwest, along the Columbia River, through the Puget

Sound and Seattle, and up through Bellingham. The cargo ships would then navigate the Salish Sea to get to the Pacific Ocean.

Scoping, conducted jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington Department of Ecology, and Whatcom County, started on September 24, 2012 and will last 120 days. Hearings will be held in Friday Harbor 11/3, Mt. Vernon 11/5, Seattle 11/13, Ferndale 11/29, Spokane 12/4, and Vancouver 12/12.

###

POWER PAST COAL is an ever-growing alliance of health, environmental, clean-energy, faith, and community groups working to stop coal export off the West Coast. Already, over 160 elected officials – including both Sens. Cantwell and Murray – nearly 600 health professionals, over 400 local businesses, 220 faith leaders, 30 municipalities and dozens of Northwest Tribes including the Lummi Nation have either voiced concern or come out against coal export off the West Coast.

www.powerpastcoal.org