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## **Hundreds Join Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. to Rally Against Exporting Coal Through Pacific Northwest to Asia**

### **Voices Rise Up to Reject Dirty Coal**

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Portland, OR – Flanked by hundreds of activists in Oregon’s largest demonstration opposing exporting coal, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. gave an impassioned call for a halt to the export of North America’s dirtiest fossil fuel. Coal companies are targeting the Pacific Northwest with six separate coal export terminals, which would send stunning volumes of U.S. coal from the Powder River Basin to Asia. Oregon and Washington could become the largest coal traffickers in North America with 150 million tons of coal per year through the Pacific Northwest. One proposal would send a dozen dirty coal trains rumbling through Portland neighborhoods each day. The Columbia River Gorge alone faces up to 30 dirty coal trains per day. Proposed coal export terminals include: Boardman, Clatskanie, and Coos Bay, Oregon; Longview, Grays Harbor, and Bellingham, Washington; as well as Alaska.

The nation’s eyes are on Oregon and Washington as our region decides between coal trafficking and a clean energy future.

“Oregon and Washington leaders are faced with a choice between healthy communities with a clean energy future or becoming tied to trafficking coal, the most toxic fuel on earth,” stated Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. “Blocking coal export is critically important to the health of our families and our climate.”

“Opening up Oregon and Washington to coal trafficking is insane,” Mr. Kennedy stated. “The coal giants would profit while our families suffered. Coal is the dirtiest fuel on earth and our nation is counting on the Pacific Northwest to do the right thing.”

Mr. Kennedy was joined by Paul Lumley, chair of the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission who spoke about the impacts to Columbia River salmon and access to traditional fishing sites. Local physician Dr. Andrew Harris and Vancouver resident Toni Montgomery also highlighted the local health impacts of coal exports.

“Last week, PGE objected to Kinder Morgan’s coal export proposal because coal dust could hamper operation of their power plant,” Dr. Harris stated. “PGE thinks coal dust is too dirty for their business, but it is far worse for asthmatics, emphysema patients, children in North Portland, and the elderly.”

At the rally, hundreds of activists wore surgical masks bearing slogans such as “Export Clean Air” and “Asthmatics Against Coal.”

Hao Xin, the Qiantang River Waterkeeper in China, spoke about the threat of coal in China. “China should not become the dumping ground for your coal industry. Our people need clean air, not dirty U.S. coal.”

Opposition to coal exports in the Northwest is mounting, with over 15,000 comments submitted in opposition to coal exports to the Army Corps of Engineers in recent weeks.

**POWER PAST COAL:** We are a growing coalition of organizations sharing a common interest to prevent the West Coast from becoming a high volume coal corridor. Learn more about coal export at [www.powerpastcoal.org](http://www.powerpastcoal.org)

**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE:** Founded in 1999 by environmental attorney and activist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and several veteran Waterkeeper Organizations, Waterkeeper Alliance is a global movement of on-the-water advocates who patrol and protect over 100,000 miles of rivers, streams and coastlines in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa.

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