

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PGE Joins Growing Chorus of Voices Objecting to Coal Exports

St. Helens, OR - Today, Portland General Electric (PGE) objected to a Kinder Morgan proposal to ship up to 30 million tons of coal per year to Port Westward, adjacent to PGE's natural gas power plant. The coal proposal would use coal sourced in the Powder River Basin for export to Asia. As reported in the *South County Spotlight*, PGE is concerned that coal dust and traffic congestion could impair the operation of its natural gas power plant at Port Westward.

PGE spokesman Steve Corson told the Spotlight his company felt the presumed coal dust from the export terminal might harm its significant investments if Kinder Morgan moved in next door. "We take in air in the course of operating our generator and the coal dust could be a substantial problem for the facility," Corson said.

Pat Zimmerman, a resident of Columbia County and a former Port of St. Helens Commissioner stated, "I am delighted that PGE has better sense than the Port and acted on their right to protect their business from dirty coal dust."

The Port of St. Helens issued a controversial lease option approval of the Kinder Morgan project in January, despite strong public testimony in opposition to coal exports and with virtually no public notice.

Laura Stevens with Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign, added, "Coal dust is clearly a problem at coal export terminals. Nobody wants to be a neighbor to dirty coal, and PGE is joining a growing chorus about why coal exports are wrong for the Pacific Northwest."

Last week, Governor Kitzhaber called on federal agencies to conduct a full, thorough environmental review of coal export proposals in the Pacific Northwest before making a decision.

Dan Serres, Conservation Director of Columbia Riverkeeper, put the coal export issue in context, saying, "PGE operates a coal plant, and they are concerned about coal pollution. If coal dust is not suitable for a gas-fired power plant, then it's certainly not safe for children's lungs in Portland, neighboring businesses in Rainier, or our scenic, protected Columbia River Gorge."

Added Serres, "Governor Kitzhaber raised many of these issues last week, himself, and we call on our Governor to go further and ensure that Oregon uses its own power to reject coal exports."

Upcoming: Next week, on Monday, May 7th, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will be the featured speaker at a noon Power Past Coal rally at Pioneer Square in downtown Portland. Mr. Kennedy will be joined by tribal, public health, and international environmental leaders to oppose coal exports.

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The Power Past Coal Coalition is an ever-growing alliance of health, environmental, clean-energy, faith and community groups working to stop coal export off the West Coast.

www.powerpastcoal.org