

Will Oregon power past coal?

COAL COMPANIES, in the face of shrinking domestic demand, have a new plan: strip mine coal largely from public land in Montana and Wyoming, transport it on mile+ long coal trains to massive proposed coal export terminals along the Columbia River and our coastline, and then ship it to Asia.

WHO'S BEHIND THESE PLANS?

The world's largest coal companies Arch Coal and Peabody Energy, as well as Australia-based Ambre Energy.

CONGESTION FROM COAL TRAIN TRAFFIC

Communities near or bisected by rail lines, including The Dalles, Hood River, Rainier, St. Helens, Scappoose, Portland, Salem, Reedsport, Eugene, Milwaukie, and Albany could see a dozen coal trains rolling through town every day. A terminal handling just 8 million metric tons of coal annually would add more than 700 noisy coal trains traveling Oregon's rail system every year.

A single slow-moving coal train can obstruct a rail crossing by six minutes or more. Increased traffic delays at busy rail crossings would cause critical emergency response delays, impact businesses and block access to communities.

COMMUNITIES CUT IN HALF BY COAL TRAINS

Added coal train traffic along Oregon's rail lines would limit access to neighborhoods, schools, business corridors, ferry terminals, and hospitals close to the tracks.

HEALTH IMPACTS FOR OREGONIANS

Diesel exhaust and coal dust from coal trains can cause serious long-term health problems like lung and heart disease and cancer. Diesel exhaust is associated with asthma, cardiopulmonary disease and increased incidences of cancer. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad studies estimate at least 500 pounds of coal can be lost in the form of dust from each rail car enroute. The wide ranging health dangers of coal dust include exposure to toxic heavy metals including mercury, arsenic and lead, and increased rates of asthma, especially in children.

Coal dust would pollute our prized clean air and waterways, and negatively impact our beloved and majestic Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

Mercury and other pollutants from coal burned in Asia blow across the Pacific and deposit along the West Coast of North America where they poison our air, water, fish, and food supply.

(cont)



*Oregon communities, including those in the Columbia River Gorge could see polluting mile+ long coal trains rolling through town **every day**.*

PHOTO CREDIT: DANIEL DANCER



The wide ranging health dangers of coal dust include exposure to toxic heavy metals like mercury and increased rates of asthma, especially in children.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SIERRA CLUB

IMPACTS TO OUR WATERWAYS AND REGION

To feed both Oregon and Washington proposed export terminals, trains would travel through the Columbia Gorge, impacting communities and spewing dirty and dangerous coal dust along the windy corridor. Close to the terminals, shorelines would be given over to industrial sites with enormous piles of coal and constant dust.

The companies plan to ship the coal in massive cargo ships. The proposal at Boardman, OR calls for barging coal down the Columbia, nearly doubling barge traffic on the river, and transloading the coal to ships. These vessels would pose continuous threats to the Columbia River, our precious coasts, wetlands, waterways, fisheries and wildlife, as well as existing and more sustainable uses of the river corridor. The coal ships would pass through the Columbia River Bar, considered one of the most dangerous bars in the world, to the Pacific.

Exporting coal promotes deeper global fossil fuel dependence. It delays the urgently needed transition to cleaner alternatives. It makes climate disruption inevitable, including extreme flooding and ocean acidification, impacting our shorelines, waterways, and shellfish and salmon based economies.

BAD FOR THE ECONOMY

Major public ports, such as the Ports of Vancouver and Portland have rejected coal export proposals. The sites now proposed for coal exports have the potential to generate hundreds of local jobs in light industrial and smart-tech growth instead of being mired in a single-commodity, unpredictable dirty export trade. Increased coal train traffic could lower property values along the rail lines and would create congestion and add costs for critical business corridors and emergency response. Coal dust and congestion could drive away investors for new developments in rail-adjacent communities. Increased public health costs would largely be borne by taxpayers.

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“What does it mean for the United States to become a major energy exporting nation? What does it mean in terms of domestic pricing? What does it mean in terms of energy security? And how does that decision, which is being driven only by short-term profit, provide transition for a lower carbon future for the United States?”

— **GOV. JOHN KITZHABER, FEBRUARY 19, 2013**

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1

Call Governor Kitzhaber at 503-378-4582 and tell him “Given the significant impacts to air, water, climate, human health, our businesses and our communities, I strongly oppose construction of coal export terminals in Oregon. Please deny all state permits for proposed coal export projects in Oregon and request that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for any coal export project proposed in our region.

2

Tell Senators Wyden and Senator Merkley that “Given the significant impacts to air, water, climate, human health, our businesses and our communities, an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared for each individual project, especially the Port of Morrow. Congressional switchboard: 202-224-3121

POWER PAST COAL

communities against coal export

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