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## **Helena billboard gives pause for thought**

HELENA, Mont. -- Stuck at a railroad crossing as yet another coal train passes by? In Helena while you wait on Montana Avenue, you can read what's in store as more coal trains are predicted for the export of Montana and Wyoming coal to Asia.

Sleeping Giant Citizens Council is paying for a billboard that went up today to raise awareness about the increased coal train traffic that is in Helena's future. Communities along the rail route can expect to see at least a doubling of train traffic if coal companies' plans are realized, and this would bring with it numerous impacts, including: health effects from diesel fumes and coal dust; increased risk of accidents and derailments; longer and more frequent traffic delays; lack of access to other side of the tracks, potentially dangerously delaying emergency service vehicles; and more noise.

As the billboard reads, "Asia would get the energy, corporations would get the profits, and Montanans would pay the costs."

"We believe Montanans should know about proposals to ship Montana coal to Asia, given the effect they would have on our lives," said Kate French, Chair of Sleeping Giant Citizens Council. "We put up the billboard to educate the community and encourage people to get involved and have a voice in the coal export decision-making process."

Sleeping Giant Citizens Council is the Helena-area affiliate of Northern Plains Resource Council, a grassroots conservation and family agriculture organization that organizes Montana citizens to protect water quality, family farms and ranches, and unique quality of life.

For more information, go to [www.coalexportimpacts.com](http://www.coalexportimpacts.com) or [www.northernplains.org](http://www.northernplains.org)

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