

January 21, 2013

GPT/Custer Spur EIS
c/o CH2M Hill
1100 112th Avenue NE Suite 400
Bellevue WA 98004



The Community Food Co-op is a consumer-owned natural food grocery retailer that has been a reliable source of quality products and honest information in Whatcom County since 1970. The Co-op has two locations, a 15,000 square-foot store in downtown Bellingham and a 17,000 square-foot store in the Cordata neighborhood. We are recognized for our commitment to building community and supporting a vibrant local economy.

The Co-op is the tenth largest cooperatively owned grocery retailer in the US. In 2012 our stores will have sales in excess of \$29 million from over one million transactions. The Co-op is a major employer with an annual payroll of \$4.8 million and over 200 local residents on staff.

A significant percentage of Whatcom County households are Co-op members. Our active membership numbers over 18,000 households, 15,000 of which are in Whatcom County. Co-op members live and work throughout Whatcom County; approximately 2,500 of our active Whatcom County members live outside Bellingham.

As a business that is committed to continued success and to the well-being of the community we serve, we are writing to request that you include in the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal a study of the effect on local aquaculture. In particular, please consider:

- Increased vessel traffic of 487 ships every year (970 transits), and risk of accidents and spills
- Construction of proposed pier in a herring spawning bed, and resulting impact on salmon food chain
- Impact to water quality and herring spawning bed of leaching and runoff from 48 million tons of coal per year in uncovered piles, especially in light of weather patterns in this location (Frasier Gap Wind)
- Impact of global warming and ocean acidification (from burning of 48 million tons of coal) on shellfish and their ability to form shells
- Destruction of 172 acres of wetlands nearby to

The Community Food Co-op is known for its seafood, and a healthy local fishing and aquaculture system is important to our business. In 2011, our seafood sales totaled nearly \$200,000, and 36% of this was sourced from local fisheries. Disruption to our supply of local fish or diminishment in the public perception of the quality of those products due to impacts from any or all of the factors listed above would have an adverse economic impact on our business and damage our brand image.

We would like to request an analysis of the economic, social, health and environmental costs—direct, indirect and cumulative—associated with the impact on local aquaculture and fishing. This analysis

should be done in the context of the current and likely future vessel traffic.

We are requesting that you mitigate the risk posed to local aquaculture by not allowing any development or activity at the site.

Sincerely,



Megan Westgate, Board Chair

On behalf of Community Food Co-op Board of Directors:

Brooks Dimmick

Rosalinda Guillen

Steven Harper

Brent Harrison

Beau Hilty-Jones

Mariah Ross

Jim Ashby, Community Food Co-op General Manager