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Submitted via online form at: <http://www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov/get-involved/comment>

January 21, 2013

Regarding: Scoping EIS for GPT / Custer Spur project.
Train & Vessel Traffic: Economic impacts.

Dear sir/madam:

My family of five and I have lived and worked in Whatcom County for 24 years. Please include for the scope of the EIS the following areas of inquiry related to the potential economic impacts this project might have on our local community.

- 1) As a tax payer I fear that there will be adverse economic impacts due to increased train & vessel traffic, and I am particularly interested in:
 - Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased train traffic on the route through Whatcom County that causes safety and traffic problems?
 - If so, then mitigation of those problems should be calculated and born by Gateway Pacific as per Whatcom County Code 20.88.130 (6) that states that a “proposed major development...will not impose uncompensated requirements for public expenditures for additional utilities, facilities and services, and will not impose uncompensated costs on other property owned.”
 - Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased train traffic on the route from Wyoming through Whatcom County that causes safety and traffic problems?
 - If somehow the costs to mitigate those costs are not deemed part of the project cost born by Gateway Pacific, and the public will participate in those mitigation costs, then those costs paid by the public should be included and offset against any claims for cost benefits of the project.

- Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased train traffic through Bellingham that decreases the free access to the current parks (Larabee, Boulevard, Marine, Zuanich, Little Squalicum Beach) along the waterfront?
 - If so, my paid (through taxes) use of these parks is limited. How does Gateway Pacific mitigate this impact or reimburse taxpayers for loss of use?
 - Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased vessel traffic through the Strait of Georgia and Rosario Strait?
 - If so, what will the impact be to local and regional fishing industries and to marine life?
 - If so, what are the expenses related to accident mitigation and the creation of or addition to emergency response capacity?
 - If so, does that increase the chance of boat to boat collision or boat to rock collision?
 - If so, if there were a major coal or oil spill into Northern Puget Sound, what would the economic impacts be due to loss of fishing, tourism, shoreline private and public property destruction?
- 2) As a business person I fear that the train traffic through our community will have an adverse effect on the economic diversity and vitality of the county, and I am particularly interested in:
- Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased train traffic through Bellingham that decreases the free access to the former Georgia Pacific site? (I have already heard of one large new business to the area that had initial interest in a downtown Bellingham waterfront location, but has decided to look elsewhere due to the train traffic.)
 - If access to the waterfront development site is reduced, how will that affect the economic prospects of the redevelopment itself, and how will that affect the ability for the Port of Bellingham and the City of Bellingham to attract dynamic and vital companies to Bellingham?
 - How will that potential loss of business investment slow or reduce the potential tax base over time?
 - How will the potential loss of local diverse business investment (for example, light industry to technology), and their ancillary support businesses (for example, construction to software consultants) compare with the local cost benefit claims for the terminal project?
 - Due to the creation of the terminal will there be increased train traffic through Bellingham that reduces access to the ferry terminal at the foot of Harris Avenue?
 - If so, will this affect the ability for the ferry terminal to operate at full capacity?
 - There is competition among cities to have this Alaska Ferry operation -- could this potential reduction in access to the ferry terminal precipitate a departure of the Alaska Ferry operation moving to another city?
 - What would the economic impact of its departure be on tourist industry and the dozens of businesses that depend on it?

Thank you for your time and commitment to this process.

Sincerely,

Todd Citron