

EIS Scoping Comment on Health Impacts of Diesel Particulate Emissions

My name is Michael Crum. Following a career in health care, I chose my retirement home in Birch Bay, WA for the area's overall quality of life, natural beauty, cultural resources, recreational boating and hiking opportunities. I was attracted to the area after reading articles in three different national publications listing Bellingham, WA as "one of the top ten cities in America for: 'Retirement', 'Walking,' and 'Paddling'". In retrospect, if Bellingham and Whatcom County had been written about for having America's largest coal shipping terminal, I would have not even considered relocating to this area. I am deeply concerned about significant unavoidable adverse impacts related to the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) from wind-blown coal dust and diesel particulate emissions spreading over homes, businesses, corporations and beaches within a five mile radius of the proposed GPT site.

Figure 1 (at left) shows wind-blown coal dust emissions from the Westshore Terminal at Roberts Bank, B.C. on April 12, 2012 as well as accumulated particulate emissions along the shoreline (shown at lower portion of photo). A homeowner captured this image from his waterfront patio nearly three miles from the coal terminal. That homeowner has voiced numerous complaints regarding accumulated particulate emissions to Westshore Terminal's general manager, Denis Hogan. The homeowner explained to me that Mr. Hogan denies the blackened shoreline is due to coal dust emissions. Rather, Mr. Hogan reportedly claims the build-up of black deposits along the shoreline is "due to diesel emissions," as if that should relieve the Tsawwassen, B.C. homeowner's health concerns!



The proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) would be more than twice the size of Westshore Terminal, with 90 coal-train locomotive transits per day (32,850 locomotive transits per year) and 974 Panamax and/or Capesize bulk-cargo vessel transits per year. All coal-train locomotives and all bulk-cargo vessels are expected to leave their diesel engines running continuously, while at the proposed GPT terminal site and wharf. This represents foreseeable and significant adverse health impacts from diesel particulate emissions.

I agree with the January 9, 2013 EIS comment submitted by Sara Mostad, M.D., Ph.D.

<http://www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov/get-involved/comment/6353>

I ask that all of Dr. Mostad's requests be included and thoroughly studied as part of the EIS. Namely, that the EIS include:

- A comprehensive and cumulative Health Impact Assessment that includes careful study and modeling of the air pollution from diesel locomotives and bulk-cargo vessels transporting coal

through our region, with particular attention to adverse health impacts on citizens of Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit Counties.

- Analysis to determine how many excess deaths and hospitalizations would be expected, across the entire state of Washington, from diesel particulate matter associated with the diesel locomotives and ships from the Gateway Pacific Terminal. Such an analysis, should, at a minimum, compare baseline and expected rates of asthma, stroke, heart attack and cancer. There is abundant peer-reviewed medical research establishing irrefutable links between diesel pollution and the above noted diseases.