

12/13/12: GPT Hearing Testimony for Chris Wilke: Puget Soundkeeper and Executive Director
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I am here today representing the more than 3000 members, volunteers and supporters of Puget Soundkeeper Alliance. We are concerned about water quality and our acidifying waters. We are opposed to this terminal. We are opposed to any expansion of coal export or coal burning from the U.S.. But we know you are not asking us for an up or down vote. We do not have a democratic process to determine if this is a good idea- even at the end of the warmest year in history, even after the largest melting of the Greenland ice sheet, and even after one of the largest and most expensive storms ever.

We are here today to discuss a very simple concept. Whether the proposed Gateway Pacific Coal Terminal, should prepare a broader Environmental Impact Statement that would consider not only the terminal but the entire supply stream, waste stream and other impacts of this massive project. And even bigger still, whether it is appropriate to consider the overall job-killing impacts of all five proposed terminals and their significant force on global climate change, sea level rise and ocean acidification.

Just today, Jane Lubchenko, NOAA Administrator, said we had better get ready for more monster storms like SuperStorm Sandy. The monster metaphor is mine, but we say perhaps it's time to stop feeding the monster. 54 million tons of coal, shipped overseas is feeding the monster— even the coal that will spill along the way is feeding another sort of monster- as we pollute our waterways with toxic coal dust full of brain-numbing mercury and cancerous polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

We are here today to give the Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Washington and their hired consultants PERMISSION to study all of these impacts. In fact we believe that you could come to no other conclusion given the sheer magnitude of the project and the rising tide against it.

We believe you must also consider the risk of a marine catastrophe with over 900 container ship transits per year travelling through already-crowded waters of Puget Sound. This could create a maritime disaster of titanic proportions, equivalent to a tanker spill costing people's livelihoods and billions of dollars. Just last week one of these ships lost control and took out a coal terminal loading-pier, spilling 30 tons of coal just 1 mile from US waters.

And Finally – You must consider ocean acidification resulting from carbon emissions. 54 million tons per year is a lot of carbon and Puget Sound is already suffering from global carbon emissions in a way like no other place on earth, already making our waters too acidic to grow oysters. If this continues we will lose the base of the food chain and all of the thousands of jobs provided by salmon fishing and wildlife tourism. The economic impact will dwarf a few hundred temporary jobs created by this foolish and greedy enterprise.

Don't make Washington subsidize our own destruction by shipping and breathing and eating the very instrument of our demise. **We vote No.** But **You** must consider the **entire** impact, **and include an analysis of the benefits of no action at all.** Thank you.