

GPT/Custer Spur EIS  
c/oCH2M HILL  
1100 112th Avenue NE, Suite 400  
Bellevue, Washington 98004

January 19, 2013

Dear Sirs or Madame,

I am writing to you to submit comments for consideration in the scoping document for the proposed multi-use shipping terminal to be located at Cherry Point , Whatcom County , Washington.

As a person who worked most of his life as a Longshoreman in Bellingham and as a person who grew up on a farm on the Kickerville Road I am intimately acquainted with the area where the pier, hopefully, will be built. As dispatcher/ business agent of ILWU Local 7 in the 1990's and later, I was involved in efforts to get a terminal located at Cherry Point.

Cherry Point is the perfect site for the location of a deep water terminal. The site has extremely deep water located near shore that will never have to be dredged because it isn't like many shipping facilities located near an outflow of a river. The near shore water is deep enough to accommodate any vessel that is currently involved in the trade including the Post Panamax Vessels that will be built in the future. It will be an ideal site for the location of a modern Shipping Terminal and when built will meet the needs of commercial shippers for the next fifty years. It is located in an area that is zoned industrial that contains most of the industrial activity that still goes on in Whatcom County. The location of this terminal will provide a much needed addition to Whatcom County's diminishing Industrial Base.

While I was involved in trying to get this terminal sited in Whatcom County the first time I had occasion to work with the people who were trying to build the terminal and they said from the outset of trying to get the terminal built that they would meet the environmental requirements established by the permitting agencies. Throughout the process they never tried to chisel on meeting environmental standards. As longshoremen we have worked with these

Stevedoring Companies for generations and while we have had differences with them at times, they honor the agreements they commit to. They want to build a clean terminal just like everyone else but do feel that the process and mitigation should be reasonable.

In following the debate over this project it becomes apparent that opponents of the project aren't really too concerned about whether the project has any merit or there is any need for it in the community. Their main goal is to stop it at all costs. I attended a Sierra Club meeting where their stated goal was to obscure the scoping process as much as possible. Their stated goal was to plug scoping with questions and if questions weren't answered to their satisfaction the next tactic would be to sue, sue and sue again. I have never in my 70 years seen debate over a project that has so polarized the community. The whole debate is based in hype, hyperbole, and hysteria. Outrageous claims are made about the amount of pollution that will be incurred with the creation of this terminal. If claims of expected coal dust pollution were true, existing railroad tracks, which are already carrying five coal trains a day into Canada would be buried in coal dust.

One of the social concerns and issues that should be examined in the scoping process is how much effect the donation of \$26 million dollars to the Sierra Club by Chesapeake Natural Gas producers to fund the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign has had on the debate here. The donation was made with the caveat that the Sierra Club had to agree not to criticize fracking when they took Chesapeakes money. How much needless fear has been ginned up over this project with that money?( Time Magazine blog Feb. 2012) To date there are something like 50 environmental groups opposing this project. Opposition to the project has become a no growth industry. Opponents have done everything that they can to totally paint this project with a coal brush, totally ignoring the fact that this is going to be a multi-use terminal. Long term use of this terminal for coal shipments could be questionable because of the discovery of a huge deposit of coal in Mongolia. When coal shipments stop we need to have a terminal in place that can handle other cargoes. Because of work that was done previously when they were trying to build the last proposed terminal one would hope that studies that were done in the initial research for the pier do not have to be duplicated. I have heard opponents say that coal changes the whole equation. Another position that has been taken is that nothing should be built in the aquatic reserve that is established in the area. The reality is that the reserve was established with the caveat that one more

industrial pier would be built in the reserve. This condition of the agreement is totally ignored by most of the environmental community.

In regard to issues that I believe that should be considered in the evaluation of this project;

I believe that conducting a programmatic EIS to evaluate the effect of this project is to far a reach and would be beyond the scope of the existing evaluating process. Some groups would have you examine the project from the strike of the miners pick in Wyoming to the burning of the coal in China. The terminal will be built with covered conveyors and high fences to keep any dust that might start to migrate from the area from escaping. To attempt to examine this on the basis of CO2 that is released into the atmosphere in China after the burning of coal is totally beyond the purview of the EIS. This is also the case in the study of railroad grade crossings between Montana and Cherry Point. Local communities along the rail route are welcome to enter into negotiations with railroads separately. Regarding the issue of rail traffic within the county, when you time these unit trains traversing a crossing, passage usually occurs in about four minutes. Eighteen trains a day would impact county crossings an average of seventy two minutes a day. As far as the issue of trains isolating the central waterfront from downtown is concerned, the waterfront can be accessed from Chestnut Street on one end and Squalicum Parkway on the other. Regarding the issue of the railroad impacting the development of the Ports property on the Central waterfront; The time line on development of that site has been moved back considerably because of budget constraints and lack of environmental cleanup money in the state budget. The Cherry Point Project will be built and mitigation measures will be in place before the Port property is even in the process of being built out.

Much concern has been voiced over the prospect of 500 new vessel per year using the waters at Cherry Point. The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee reviews the safety and security of public waterways surrounding Washington State and has Vessel Risk Assessment studies to review how navigation is handled throughout Puget Sound. The risk imposed by the extra ships calling at Cherry Point is miniscule compared to the risks of the 3200 ships per year that cross the Columbia River Bar to call at Ports upriver. 500 vessels per year look pretty paltry compared to the 100 ships per day calling in Rotterdam from the

North Sea.

In closing the buildout of a new multi-use terminal at Cherry Point would be a huge step toward re-establishing the industrial base that once thrived in Whatcom County. We used to have a pulp mill in town that employed over 800 people and provided living wage jobs for a huge number of families. It was shut down because of manipulation of the power market by Enron Corporation. The mill had been buying power on the spot market to power the mill and could no longer afford to buy power at Enrons price and the mill shut down. This left a vacuum in the county. Creation of this terminal will re-establish that industrial base with the creation of 2120 construction jobs and 2310 indirect jobs. Initial direct jobs running the terminal at ½ capacity would be 290 with 430 jobs at full operation. The economic and tax benefit to the community will be huge with annual tax revenues and savings of \$7 million per year making it the second largest tax payer in the county. Everyone talks about the value of creating living wage jobs. We have a chance to actually do it. Thank you for considering my concerns. I think it is possible to build this terminal and build it in a way so most people won't even know it's there.

Respectfully yours,

John Munson

2195 Lummi Shore Rd.

Bellingham, washington 98226

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Munson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Hard Copy will follow: