



Combined NEPA/SEPA

# Environmental Impact Statement Proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal/Custer Spur

## Comment form

Please submit your comments on the Gateway Pacific Terminal/Custer Spur Environmental Impact Statement by January 21, 2013 to be included in the scoping summary report. Comments can also be submitted online at [www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov](http://www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov).

### What part of the proposal does your comment relate to?

- Vessel
- Rail
- Industrial site
- Multiple/not listed

**Does your comment relate to any of the following topic areas?** Comments can relate to any topic. If your comment relates to any of the topics below, please check the appropriate box. (check all that apply)

#### Human environment

- Noise
- Air quality
- Human health
- Traffic or safety
- Other human environment topic

#### Natural environment

- Wildlife or vegetation
- Marine species, fish or fisheries
- Wetlands or streams
- Water quality
- Other natural environment topic

#### EIS Process

- Alternatives
- Areas of potential effect
- EIS regulatory process
- Other EIS process topic

**Please share your comments below:** (comments can also be attached to this form)

I represent Hood River City Council.  
 See comments & city resolution  
 attached.

Jake McBride  
 541-490-4813

My name is Kate McBride. I am a fourth generation Gorge resident and I represent Hood River City Council. On April 23 of this year the Hood River City Council passed a strong resolution opposing coal transportation through the Columbia River Gorge. Our community is opposed to both train and barge transport methods. We have and are continuing to urge the Governors and other decision makers to work on a comprehensive policy to prevent the Gorge from becoming the Coal chute of the nation.

Over thirty trains travel through Hood River daily. With as many as 50 additional coal trains in the Gorge (20 from this project alone)(both on the Oregon and Washington sides), our quality of life will suffer and will stifle tourism in our community as a result of spewing coal dust, adding noise pollution, and potential safety and fire hazards.

The scenic Mt. Hood Railroad Tours and visiting Thomas the Tank Engine will lose attractiveness with additional coal train traffic on the adjacent rail line. The walk from our downtown area over the rail line to the water front on the Columbia River will be impacted by additional train traffic.

Many downtown businesses survive on tourism dollars. Heavy industrial use such as coal transportation that effects our safety, health, and quality of life will detract from tourism in our community and may push some small local business's below the point of viability.

Hood River is known for its water and wind sports of windsurfing, kite boarding, and more recently stand up paddling. Any additional barge traffic will make these sports more dangerous and less attractive. Coal dust entering the water from trains or barges is a health hazard for river users as well. We are asking the Army Corps and Department of Ecology to perform an area-

wide Environmental Impact Study for this project and all other forms of coal transportation in the Gorge.

I have witnessed personally four destructive fires within the Gorge during the tinder dry summer days with our famous winds blowing 10-30 miles per hour. Two of these fires started at the rail lines. Who will be responsible if a coal barge or train catches on fire or derails? With our city budgets stretched to the limits how will we be able to afford more fire and emergency personnel if additional fires start as a result of more rail traffic? I have personally witnessed lots of coal next to the tracks in Washington. With additional coal dust on the tracks the chances of those fires increasing, will rise significantly.

I was told at the Boardman meeting last week that if a barge catches on fire they will likely just let it burn out, as there will be any good solutions for fighting a fire that big from the water. The safety aspects of these projects have not been considered and solutions for eventual spills or fires are not even being looked at. This is not acceptable.

As a former real estate I know that the addition of more coal being transported through the Gorge will definitely reduce property values in our City and County, which affects businesses and our tax base.

The City of Hood River supports economic growth that does not jeopardize the city's commitment to fight the serious impacts of climate change. Through grass roots efforts the officials of the State of Oregon have now decided that closing their only coal fired power plant is the right thing to do for the state's health and in turn the best thing for the worlds environment as a whole.

Just last week the Oregon Environmental Quality Commission voted to begin requiring fuel producers and importers to start reporting the carbon intensity of their products in 2013. The

program ultimately aims to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation. Why, if this is the direction we want to head, would we allow coal to be exported and burned elsewhere, if it is the largest contributor to global climate change? It does not make sense.

The question we should ask ourselves is: Should we allow shipments of coal to be transported through the Columbia River Gorge at the expense of its residents to profit a few and then watch that coal be burned which will increase climate change to the detriment of the world? NO. We should not ship our problem to another country; the coal needs to stay in the ground.

The American people need to stand up and hold our elected state and federal officials accountable and tell them NOT to allow COAL, a known carcinogen and the biggest contributor to climate change, to escape our borders and be shipped to a place where it can be release to harm us all. I want to be proud of our state and our country as leaders in a new clean energy future, one that does not include COAL!

**Resolution 2012-15**

**A Resolution stating the City of Hood River's concerns and opposition to transporting coal through the Columbia River Gorge**

WHEREAS, The City of Hood River has committed itself to being a leader in protecting the environment, air quality, and water quality in the Columbia River Gorge, and

WHEREAS, the impacts of climate change on the Columbia River Gorge and other tourist attractions negatively impact Hood River's economy, and

WHEREAS, coal is commonly transported via open top rail cars, contaminating cities, towns, farmland, forestland, streams, and rivers within the Columbia River Gorge with coal dust and chunks of coal, and

WHEREAS, coal contains toxic heavy metals - including mercury, arsenic, lead, and uranium - and exposure to these toxic heavy metals in high concentrations is linked to a multitude of health problems, such as cancer and birth defects, and

WHEREAS, increased rail traffic will lead to an increase in diesel emissions in communities along rail lines, and

WHEREAS, an additional 58 or more trains per day will have detrimental effects on traffic congestion and air quality due to idling cars, and

WHEREAS, increased noise and vibration from large freight trains have been shown to have a negative impact on psychological health, and

WHEREAS, an additional 58 or more trains per day may inhibit the travel of emergency vehicles in the Columbia River Gorge

WHEREAS, increased freight train traffic will have a negative effect on property values, and

WHEREAS, an increase in coal train traffic would raise the risk of a train derailment taking place, and communities within the Columbia River Gorge are not equipped to deal with the public safety and health risks caused by a coal train derailment, and

WHEREAS, public health risks associated with diesel emissions and other pollutants from coal trains disproportionately impact children, the elderly, and those with existing respiratory issues, and

WHEREAS, the route coal trains would follow through the Columbia River Gorge runs along the Columbia River through popular recreational areas, a major source of the economy in the Gorge, and

WHEREAS, the negative impacts of shipping coal by barge on the Columbia River will have the same affects on the Columbia River Gorge as those associated with shipping coal by rail.

Now therefore be it RESOLVED, that the City of Hood River opposes coal export projects that entail transporting coal through the Columbia River Gorge either by rail or by barge.

Be it further resolved, that the City of Hood River supports economic growth that does not jeopardize the City of Hood River's commitment to fight the serious impacts of climate change,  
and

Be it further resolved, that the City of Hood River urges the Governor and other decision makers to work on a comprehensive policy to prevent shipping coal through the Columbia River Gorge  
by rail or barge.

Be it further resolved, that the City of Hood River intends to address any impacts to public health and/or property caused by the transport of coal through The City of Hood River by actively enforcing local public health, safety, building, electrical, and fire codes, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River intends to address any impacts to surface and/or groundwater caused by the transport of coal through The City of Hood River by actively enforcing applicable environmental statutes delegated to The City of Hood River, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River strongly requests that the State of Oregon through its elected officials require the railroad and barge companies to mitigate any public safety hazards created by the transport of coal through the Columbia River Gorge such as access  
by emergency vehicles and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River will request from the railroad, and make public, any plans for new or expanded rail facilities or significant rail traffic volume increases  
within the Columbia River Gorge, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River will request that the railroad and barge companies provide representatives to meet periodically with local citizen groups and local government officials from the Columbia River gorge to seek mutually acceptable ways to  
address local concerns, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River will request that the railroad submit an emergency environmental clean-up plan in case of a derailment that affects local watersheds and  
recreational areas, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River will request that the railroad and barge companies perform an Environmental Impact Study prior to approval of permits and later provide continued environmental monitoring of noise, air, groundwater, and surface water quality, including monitoring for the presence of coal dust, and that the results will be shared  
with local and state agencies, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River will request that the railroad and barge companies carefully monitor the loading of coal at the coal mines as part of the contract(s) with the coal companies to assure best loading practices in order to reduce the amount of coal and coal dust coming out of the rail cars, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River urges appropriate permitting authorities to require an environmental impact statement that identifies and measures the impacts on our community from a significant increase in coal train traffic, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River urges appropriate permitting authorities to hold at least one environmental impact scoping hearing at a location in The City of Hood River, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River transmits copies of this resolution to the Governor of Oregon, to all members of the Oregon State Division of Lands Board, and to each state Senator and Representative in both Oregon and Washington whose districts fall within Columbia River Gorge, and

Be it further resolved that the City of Hood River transmits copies of this resolution to each Senator and Representative from Oregon and Washington in the Congress of the United States and

Be it further resolved that passage of this resolution shall not preclude the City of Hood River from taking additional actions to protect residents from the effects of coal trains in the future.

Approved by the Hood River City Council this 23 day of April, 2012, to take effect immediately.

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Arthur Babitz, Mayor

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Jennifer Gray, City Recorder

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submitted by  
Kate McBride