

Dear EIS Co-Leads,

My name is Lynne Oulman and I live in Bellingham Washington. Though a NW resident most of my life, I moved to Bellingham several years ago because of its clean air, beautiful Salish Sea, peaceful surroundings and its commitment to sustainable, respectful living. I am writing to ask you to study the impact of both coal dust and diesel particulate from not only trains and terminal sites, but from ships, locomotives and any other service vehicles needed to operate a coal terminal. Simply, these residues, diesel particulate and coal dust, will determine whether or not I can remain in my retirement home as I have compromised lungs.

It is already known from studies of the Spokane rail yard that cancer rates increase in the proximity of diesel particulate. This has been proven the case in other similar studies. We also know that coal dust causes black lung and other respiratory disorders. We know that increases of both coal dust and diesel particulate will increase the rates of asthma in children and will adversely impact the elderly, such as myself. I want you to carefully study the situation here in Bellingham. On "South Hill" not only does the excruciating train noise float uphill, but so does the dust and diesel particulate. I already see some of these residues on my sills inside my house!

In addition, I ask that you study these residues in all seasons and in various weather conditions, during the day and at night. We, the residents and taxpayers, already know there is fluctuation, but we need honest research to tell us the actual impact. We need to know if daily walks will be unhealthy (long term impact), will I experience more illness (cumulative over time); will our wildlife suffer from the pollution (canary in the cage!)? This cannot be a band-aid job like filter cigarettes were for tobacco. We need you to be scrupulously careful because people's lives depend on your integrity.

While I need to find out about these particular impacts in order to make personal life choices, I must add that similar impacts will be experienced by all living near the rail road from Powder River to Cherry Point. This dust and particulate must not be swept under the "proverbial rug," because its consequences are deadly. I must trust you to study coal dust and diesel particulate air pollution with exacting science, remembering that your diligence will impact the health of our community - human and otherwise - as well as all the communities along the tracks, and around the 80 acre pile.

Thank you for your attention. Most Sincerely,
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problem. Exposure to *arsenic, cadmium, barium, chromium, selenium, lead and mercury* can cause any number of health problems, including cancers and neurological diseases. It is unknown if and to what extent these heavy metals might leach out from the coal and/or fugitive coal dust, from the train cars and at the terminal storage site, into local water supplies and into the marine environment. There are potential implications for the safety of the water we drink and the seafood we eat.”

3) Diesel Emissions – not just trains

<http://www.epa.gov/oms/oceanvessels.htm>

“Large ships such as container ships, tankers, bulk carriers, cruise ships, and Lakers are significant contributors to air pollution in many of our nation’s cities and ports.”

1)Health Risk Study for the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad Spokane Railyard"

<http://www.coaltrainfacts.org/docs/BNSF-Spokane-Railyard-Health-Study.pdf>

2)Coal Dust and Residue

<http://www.coaltrainfacts.org/key-facts#air>

"BNSF has indicated that each coal car loses *500 lbs to a ton of coal dust en route*; 80 near shore acres at the GPT terminal site would be covered in open heaps of coal. Newspaper photos of coal dust over two relatively small British Columbia coal ports, one at *Westshore* and one at *Ridley* would seem to indicate that dust management, as currently practiced, is not effective. While coal dust is a reported *nuisance* in coal port communities, the health effects of pulverized coal released into the air have not yet, to our knowledge, been systematically studied. Coal dust inhalation in closed situations is, of course, a different matter, although instructive in the kind of governmental oversight and corporate compliance that is necessary to keep people safe: NPR and the Center for Public Integrity recently reported the resurgence of black lung disease in American miners is due to "*weak regulation and industry deception.*"

It is worth considering that our air is directly affected by what happens in Asia, the market to which GPT would ship coal. The *Jaffe Group* has proven that mercury emitted by coal combustion in Asia crosses over the Pacific Ocean and pollutes our Northwest water supplies; mercury is implicated in a number of health problems, especially those involving the brain and nervous system. *The New York Times* has written that sulphur dioxide, which can cause respiratory disorders, likewise blows back to us from Asia. Noted meteorologist and UW atmospheric scientist *Cliff Mass* has shown that the haze over much of the Pacific Northwest coastline in early summer 2012 was smoke from massive Asian wildfires. What burns in Asia does not stay in Asia: we all breathe the same air.

Coal dust is notoriously difficult to control. BNSF estimates that each uncovered

car loses between 500 pounds and a ton of coal dust en route. It is unknown how much coal dust will be released into the air, onto the land, and into the water from the from the 80-100+ acres of open, continuously turned-over, coal heaps in storage at the terminal site. There are concerns about train derailments, the effects of dust on human health, local clean water supplies, and on the marine environment. The methods of containing coal dust, especially in adverse weather conditions (wind, rain) are unproven, and it is uncertain which party would pay for dust mitigation measures.

Because most coal trains are *uncovered*, they produce significant amounts of coal dust in the course of transporting the coal from one place to another. According to BNSF research, *500 pounds to a ton of coal can escape a single loaded car*. Coal dust is regarded as a nuisance, as the dust can damage the ballast and, the railway claims, *cause derailments*. BNSF asks that shippers pay for dust mitigation; *shippers typically balk at paying*. The Puget Sound coast line is notoriously rainy and windy; it is unclear as to how effective surfactants might be at containing the pulverized coal in adverse weather. There seem to be no guarantees that dust would successfully be controlled en route from the mines to the port.

Dust is also generated at the terminal site, as bulldozers continually shift and rotate the ground-up coal. Constant turnover is required to both keep the coal in one area, and also to prevent *spontaneous combustion*. Wind and moisture can agitate the combustive properties of coal. The potential *adverse effects of coal dust on adjacent sites* was a factor in the Port of Vancouver rejecting a proposal to export coal from a new export site there. The dust is notoriously *difficult to control*, and has proven to be a concern for residents close to Westshore, the coal port in BC. The coal at the proposed GPT terminal will be stored in open heaps on 80-105 acres located in proximity to the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve. Cherry Point can be buffeted by high winds, winter conditions often see wind gusts in the 60-70 knot range. It seems likely that the wind will agitate the heaped, pulverized coal.

The *leaching of toxic heavy metals* from coal ash into water supplies is a proven

My name is Lynne Oulman. I live near the tracks in Bellingham, Washington. I care about my children, their children, my neighbors, region, and planet. There are literally hundreds of foreseeable, significant adverse impacts that need your study. Today, I ask you to study just one: *effluent run-off*.

I am very concerned about the effluent run-off from coal train cars and from the very coal pile itself. You spray water on the terminal pile to keep the dust down, but the water eventually joins the life-giving water of the Salish Sea. What heavy metals will flood into those waters, routinely, and constantly..... mercury, lead, cadmium, selenium, arsenic, just to name a few!?

Then there is the run off from the coal train cars themselves. Yesterday we had a deluge and I thought about the amount of water cascading through the coal cars traversing my city and neighborhood. GPT has talked about using surfactants to mitigate the dust. Although surfactant does not truly do the job against dust, just what is this surfactant, and do we want it added to the coal car run-off along the tracks and from the terminal pile? I suggest the chemical stew added to our ground water and pouring into the Puget Sound will be harmful to all animals (humans included as well as all aquatic life).

I ask that you study all the chemicals found in coal and determine just what exactly these substances will do to our water (therefore our health and health of all living organisms)? What will they do to our ground water, our drinking water, and ultimately, the Puget Sound? People used to say that cigarettes did no harm. Then the fraud, and corporate manipulation of the public came to forefront. We are smarter now, and can hope not to be deceived. The science is out there and most of the nasty chemicals found in coal are "old hat." What we need is honest evaluation, with no bias given to money and power. We, the public look to you to safeguard our health and well-being and the well-being of our environment. Thank you for studying this foreseeable, significant, adverse Impact.

Sincerely,
Lynne Oulman

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