

From: Marcia Guderian
Bellingham, WA

To: US Army Corp of Engineers
Washington State Dept. of Ecology
Whatcom County

January 18, 2013

Dear Sirs:

I am a long term resident of Bellingham, WA. I live in the northwest part of town in what is known as the Columbia Neighborhood. I am very concerned about the proposed Gateway Pacific coal port at Cherry Point and all other such facilities for a number of reasons:

What are the impacts to the environment and health from coal dust and diesel particulates?

Since the wind blows most of the time here, coal dust will be spread from the facilities for miles on both land and water¹. Coal dust is contaminated with toxins and heavy metals, such as mercury, chromium, arsenic, lead and cadmium². Increased trucking and shipping traffic will also have direct and indirect impacts³. *How much dust and particulate will travel on the wind?*

In addition to the direct hazard to human and animal health from breathing toxins⁴, there is also potential contamination of the soil in local gardens⁵. I grow organic vegetables outside in the summer, as do my neighbors to the east and west and across the street to the north. Ours is not the only food supply that could be affected. There are farms all over the area, including farms that raise livestock as well as those that raise produce, orchards, dairies and also oyster farms and hatcheries, all of which could be negatively impacted by air borne coal dust⁶. There is also the problem of rain washing toxins into the ocean and groundwater⁷. *Just how far will the toxins spread? What about the herring beds at Cherry Point?*

What will happen to our quality of life?

I have lived in Bellingham for over thirty years. Part of the reason I live here is the natural beauty of the area, not yet completely devastated by industry as are some other parts of the continent. *What will the coal shipping industry do to that quality of life which is so important? What threat does it represent to local waterways? What are the risks of collisions at sea and spills of fuel and cargo due to the increased shipping? How much will shipping coal contribute to the devastation of already endangered species of ocean life and water fowl? What is the risk of introducing harmful invasive species into local waters?*

What will happen to property values from the impacts of increased train traffic?

I live within 1 mile of the railroad tracks. When a train goes by, my property actually shakes. At first it's like standing on the deck of a boat. When the first "wave" hits, you need to be on an even footing to avoid falling. Then as the train gets closer it settles

down to a more even vibration followed by the noise of the train on the tracks and the whistle. The house where my mother used to live is a few blocks east on Eldridge Avenue. I remember watching the computer monitor move because the house would shake whenever a train was passing. *Please investigate the increase in this seismic effect caused by heavier, longer and more frequent trains.*

Many properties, (my own included), in this neighborhood and others near the tracks are built over abandoned mines. The increased vibration from the trains is causing more sink holes⁸ to appear on all these properties, at least that's what is happening here. *Please investigate the possibility of surface destabilization and cave ins.*

Map of Bellingham Coal Mine Number 1

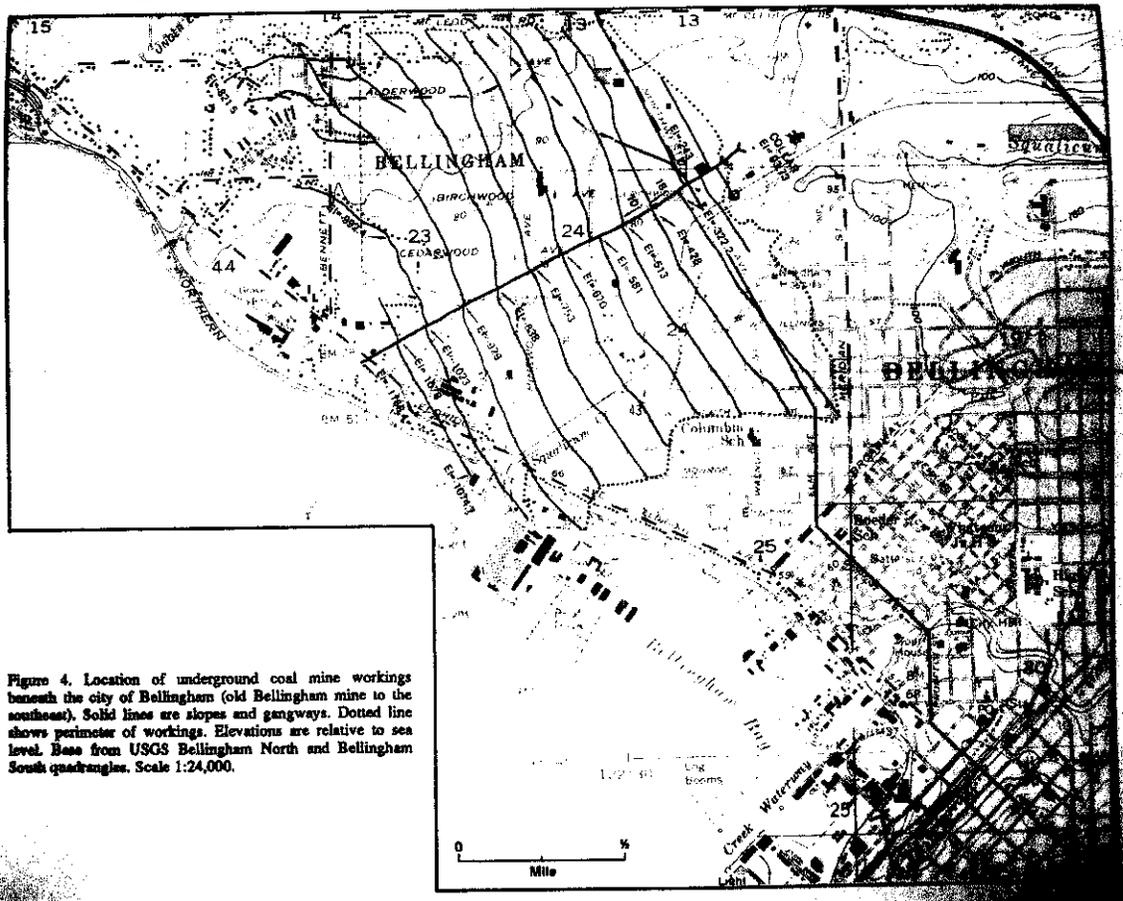


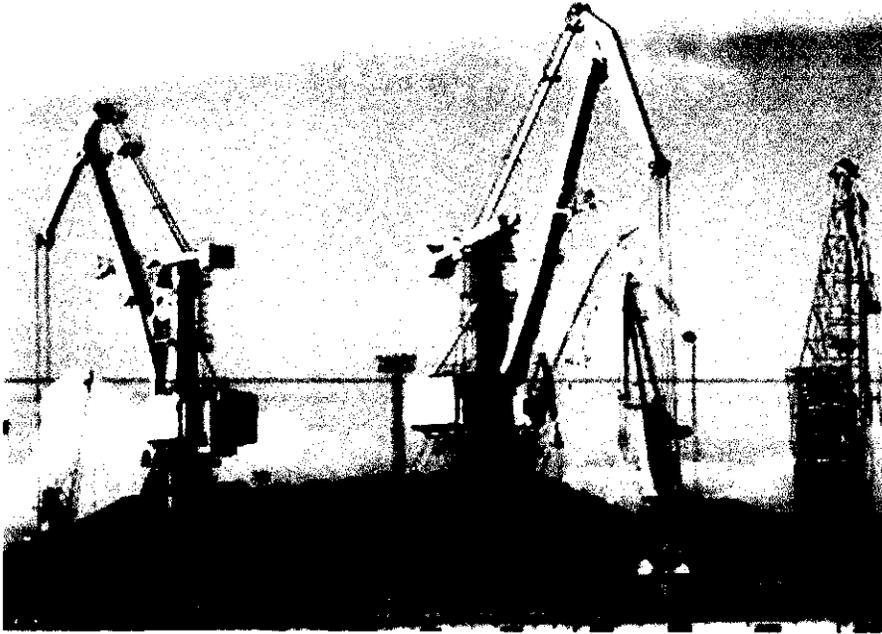
Figure 4. Location of underground coal mine workings beneath the city of Bellingham (old Bellingham mine to the southeast). Solid lines are slopes and gangways. Dotted line shows perimeter of workings. Elevations are relative to sea level. Base from USGS Bellingham North and Bellingham South quadrangles. Scale 1:24,000.

These effects are already happening all up and down the rail lines as there is already increased train traffic due to the terminal in BC⁹. If the Gateway terminal is built, the further increases in train traffic cannot help but affect the value of my property and of properties all up and down the line. I am a first time home buyer and have most of my resources invested in my property, as do many other homeowners. The effect of operating the Gateway Pacific Coal Terminal with its accompanying train traffic could be devastating to everyone who owns residential property near the tracks. *How much will residential property values be affected?*

How will the coal shipping industry affect local business?

At the very least, fishing, boating and tourism will all be affected by the introduction of a coal facility here because of increased shipping traffic and pollution and negative visual impacts. Local small businesses keep other businesses going as well. I am self employed and my business depends on other local businesses. If they are not doing well, I'm not.

How much will the increased traffic interfere with local business? How much will increased pollution and negative visual impacts affect the tourism industry? What impact will increased shipping activities have on the Washington State Ferry System? What will be the impacts to small boats and the pleasure craft industry?



GFC Coal Port, Australia



McDuffe Coal Port, Alabama

A related area of concern is that the City and Port of Bellingham have already spent several million of our tax dollars on the designing and initial development of a new Waterfront district which is planned to be home to recreational areas, educational and research facilities, restaurants, shops and eco-friendly industry. Unfortunately, the new district is located across the tracks from the rest of the town, and will be sometimes inaccessible due to increased train traffic. It will also be subject to noise and pollution problems from transporting coal nearby¹⁰.

What are the cumulative impacts on a global level?

It is time to address the worldwide problem of climate change without further delay. It is time to acknowledge that the planet is a combined eco-system. What happens on any part of the globe affects the whole. Our oceans cannot stand much more degradation, and all life on this planet depends on them. Ocean currents and air streams spread man-made toxins around the world and the pollutants from coal burned in China come back home to plague us here.¹¹ Also please take into account the further acidification of the ocean waters by contamination with coal and the effect that will have on sea life. *It is now imperative that any study of the impacts of building even one coal facility must also take the cumulative global impacts into consideration.*

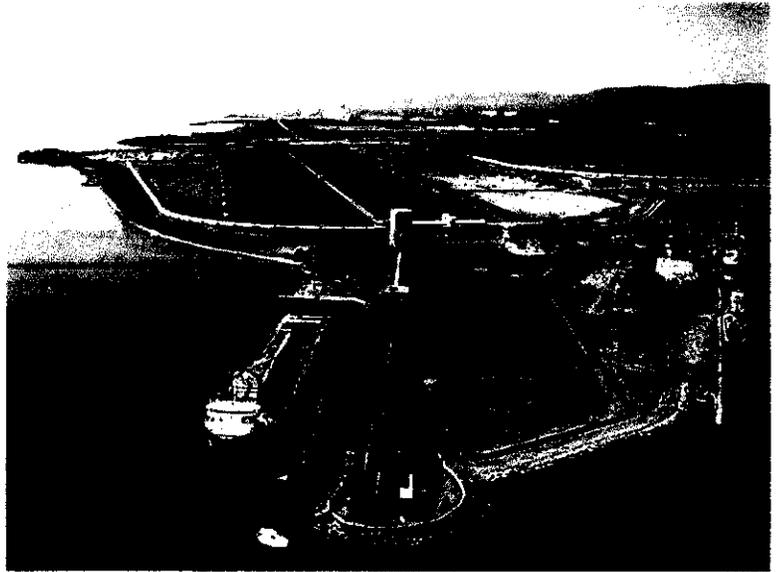
The environmental, social and financial impacts of mining, burning, transporting and shipping coal are numerous and inevitable. The population of China is just as much at risk as we are¹², and so is the rest of the world. *I beg you to please consider the immediate and cumulative effects of these impacts before permitting this usage.* I am not a scientist, but I see no way to mitigate the effects of increased train and ship traffic, noise and pollution except to stop mining and shipping coal, and share safer energy technologies with the rest of the world. I ask you to deny permits to Gateway Pacific and to all the proposed coal exporting facilities.

Thank you.
Sincerely
Marcia Guderian
PO Box 1569
Bellingham, WA 98227
marcia@entendremusic.com
entendre@clearwire.net

1. a. Coal Dust Frequently Asked Questions
<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/BNSF-Coal-Dust-FAQs.pdf>
- b. "Wind and Coal Dust"
<http://members.virtualltourist.com/m/p/m/1dac7e>
- c. Coal Dust on the Loose
 Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance, Seward Alaska
<http://www.rbca-alaska.org/page8/page13/page13.html>
2. <http://www.minersnews.com/EMarApr2012/HeavyMetal.html>
3. Clean Air Task Force
http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/Cradle_to_Grave.pdf
4. a. Backgrounder on Coal Export Prepared by Mark Glyde, Resource Media April 2011
<http://climatesolutions.org/nw-states/washington/no-coal/coal-export-backgrounder>
- b. Coal Pollution Damages Human Health at Every Stage of Coal Life Cycle, Reports Physicians for Social Responsibility WASHINGTON, Nov. 18 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -
<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/coal-pollution-damages-human-health-at-every-stage-of-coal-life-cycle-reports-physicians-for-social-responsibility-70367462.html>
5. Portland General Electric opposes proposed coal terminal in Oregon
<http://earthjustice.org/blog/2012-july/who-likes-coal-dust-pretty-much-nobody>
6. Portland General Electric opposes proposed coal terminal in Oregon
<http://earthjustice.org/blog/2012-july/who-likes-coal-dust-pretty-much-nobody>
7. <http://www.minersnews.com/EMarApr2012/HeavyMetal.html>
8. a. Observations of Washington State Landscapes, Geology, Geography, Ecology, History and Land Use:
 A Few Notes on Bellingham's Former Coal Mines by Dan McShane,
<http://washingtonlandscape.blogspot.com/2011/03/few-notes-on-bellinghams-former-coal.html>
- b. What Lies Beneath Bellingham Attracts Attention of Federal Government
http://www.whatcomwatch.org/php/ww_open.php?id=241
9. Backgrounder on Coal Export Prepared by Mark Glyde, Resource Media April 2011
<http://climatesolutions.org/nw-states/washington/no-coal/coal-export-backgrounder>
10. Clean Air Task Force
http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/Cradle_to_Grave.pdf
11. Physicians for Social Responsibility
<http://www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/coal-ash.pdf>
12. Health impacts of domestic coal use in China
<http://www.pnas.org/content/96/7/3427.full.pdf>



**McDuffe Coal Port
Alabama**



**Thunder Bay
Coal Port
Ontario**



**GFC Coal Port
Australia**