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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Tim Clark. I live on Lopez Island in the Salish Sea, and work for San Juan County as a Preserve Steward, protecting over two miles of scenic and relatively pristine shoreline. In my job, I deal with the effects of climate change, pollution, overuse, and the side effects of human occupation.

An oil spill within the shipping channels proposed for the proposed Gateway coal terminal in Washington state would be devastating for the biologic communities of kelp, eelgrass, rocky shorelines, beaches, and submarine canyons. . The economy of San Juan County is based upon our natural resources and the tourists who visit in order to experience those natural areas, specifically our shorelines and marine life. It is no coincidence that our county logo includes an orca. The same dependence on natural resources is true for Skagit, Island, Jefferson and Whatcom Counties, which would be affected by an oil spill from coal ships. In the event of a collision, single hulled ships would be more likely to break up and spill oil than double-hulled ships, and the increased number of ships carrying coal increases the chances of this occurrence.

Oregon State geologist Chris Golfinger has estimated the chances of a magnitude 8.0 earthquake occurring in the Pacific Northwest within the next fifty years as one in three. (<http://oregonstate.edu/ua/ncs/node/13426>) A category 8.0 quake would not only destroy the shipping terminal, but the resulting tsunami would likely destroy any ships within the Straits of Juan de Fuca or the outer coast.

I request that you study the impacts of an earthquake of magnitude 8.0 or greater off the Oregon or Washington coast on jobs at the terminal, the chance of ships (along with their crew) being destroyed, and the impacts of resulting oil and coal spills on Washington coastline and Salish Sea biologic communities, including the financial impacts on property values and the tourism industry, and employment in fishing, crabbing, and shellfish production. I would further request that you study the impacts on the same areas from an oil spill resulting from a collision with other ships or from coal ships running aground due to a loss of propulsion or steerage.

Unless the terminal and ships can be manufactured and maintained to withstand a magnitude 8.0 or greater earthquake, and unless there can be adequate inspection of coal ships no matter what their registry, there is no reasonable alternative and I would request that the coal terminal not be built.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tim Clark

Lopez Island, Washington