

January 22, 2013

Scoping Comment

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Beth Robinson. I am a single mother of a nine year old son. I live one house away from the railroad tracks in the train corridor at 719 Marine Drive. I am concerned for several reasons about the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal and the impacts that it will cause our community. There are several concerns that I would like to be addressed.

Firstly, as a low-income home owner, I am very concerned about the reduction of property values as a direct result of the increased train traffic. I have been a homeowner for 9 and one half years. As a single parent with a limited income, I am very concerned about the impact to my home resale value and that of our community in general. As I live VERY close to the railway, I worry that the increased train traffic and diesel fumes will make my home a much less desirable location. At this time, it is not economically feasible for me to move to an alternate location.

Secondly, I am a gardener and forager. Every year my son and I pick blackberries from our neighbors bushes to make pie and jam. The neighbors are next to the railroad tracks. I am concerned about the possibility of continuing this practice. Will it be safe to eat blackberries with the increased diesel fumes? What about the run-off from the coal itself? How will this impact the water table and the crops and berries grown near site? Are there other metals such as copper from the run-off that will make our gardens and berries unfit for human consumption? How will the increased train traffic affect the surrounding environment in regard to food growth? How far away from the tracks will a kitchen garden be a viable option. We grow food for health and joy? Will we be able to maintain this process?

Thirdly, I moved from the Mid-West for the dynamic landscape and healthy environment. I live in Bellingham because of the beauty of its surroundings, the clear water and air. I am concerned about the impacts of increased train traffic in regard to this quality of life. My concerns include the flora and fauna of our environment as well. I enjoy watching the orcas every year in San Juan island. How will the increased marine traffic affect the movement of the orcas in our waters? They are a threatened species. Will the increased underwater motor sounds affect their movement, their ability to communicate, their quality of life? If our native orca population is reduced, how will this affect our reliance on our tourism economy? In addition, the proposed site is near the herring spawning grounds. What will the affect be to the herring, the salmon who feed on the herring, and the resident orca population who feed on the salmon? With a decrease in herring, will our salmon and orca population decline in direct result? What assurances will be made to safeguard this delicate balance?

Fourthly, I have concerns in regard to our Native American neighbors. In what way will the proposed site disturb graves and heritage sites of our neighbors ancestors?

I have concerns for my son. We relish in our backyard playground, enjoying walks at Boulevard Park and the marine flats near our home. Will we be able to safely access these areas? How will the development of barriers and bridges impact our property taxes? Will there be affects to his hearing from the increased noise level due to the train traffic as we live so close to the train tracks? Will he have breathing problems due to the increased diesel fumes? Will our water be affected? Will he be able to share our dynamic environment with his children? With his children's children? He is an avid birder. How will our resident birds be affected by the diesel fumes and increased noise?

Finally, I am concerned about an environmental disaster. If a ship was to crash into the pier designed to move the coal to the ship, how would our community handle the resulting disaster? Do we have the resources to handle a major coal spill? What about the fuel from a crashed tanker? Do we have marine disaster rescue equipment? What would be the economic impact to our community from said disaster relief? Who is responsible for providing the resources to handle such a disaster? In addition to disaster relief, I am concerned about the interconnect systems as a result of this project. What are the environmental impacts to the Powder River Basin? How will the shipment of the coal affect our global waters and the increased possibility of a marine shipping disaster through our global waters? How will the increased use of coal effect the air quality in China? Will our own air be effected by this increase in coal burning. Our

systems are interconnected. Please consider the effects to our neighbor communities and global neighbors as well.

Thank you for addressing my concerns.

Sincerely,

Beth Robinson

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