

January 18, 2013

Army Corps of Engineers
GPT/Custer Spur EIS
c/o CH2M Hill
1100 112th Avenue NE Suite 400
Bellevue, WA 98004

comments@eisgatewaypacificwa.gov

RE: Scoping request

Dear Sirs,

I am a teacher at Lummi Nation School in Bellingham, Washington and have resided in Bellingham for about three years. I have lived in several other parts of the USA and traveled extensively abroad, including China.

I have come to love the region I currently reside in for its spectacular beauty and variety, from mountains, lakes, seashores, islands, wildlife, and environmentally conscious citizens.

In working for the Lummi Nation tribe, I have come to respect their sincere efforts to preserve the native culture and ways of life while interacting and adapting to mainstream 21th century American life.

Through my world travel and study of other cultures, and particularly Chinese culture, I am also sympathetic to the energy needs in China and in the desire of Chinese people to raise their standard of living. I understand that the proposed project for a coal port at Cherry Point could potentially benefit business interests in the US and China, and consumers in China on a grand scale.

However, before this project gets started, it is essential that the environmental impact be examined in great detail. I am particularly concerned about detrimental effects of coal dust on our marine life, wildlife, tribal life, and human life. The health effects must be studied from the bottom of the food chain in the sea life in the Puget sound to the atmosphere, not only in the Puget Sound and Pacific Northwest, but also in world-wide wind currents.

Locally, we experience very high and gale-force winds, particularly in the winters. How much coal dust will be sent into the atmosphere from the trains and from the Cherry Point loading docks? How will that coal dust affect all forms of life? How can these potentially detrimental effects be measured over time? With the scale of operations planned, it is certainly necessary to study the effects of the inevitable industrial and marine accidents that will occur.

The legal rights of the Lummi Nation tribe, granted in their treaty, must be observed. Protection of fishing rights, sacred burial grounds, and potential human health issues must be addressed.

Impacts on the current economy of the region must also be studied. What would the effect of coal dust have on local agriculture, fishing and tourism? While some jobs would be created, others could well be lost. What is the net gain or loss for local jobs and the local economy?

Finally, what impact will the project have globally? Will it add to global warming as China burns the coal? How far will the coal dust that escapes travel? How can coal dust be trapped and contained to the extent needed? How can the giant tanker ships avoid contamination by invasive species?

I think you have a huge amount of data to consider before allowing this project to advance to the next stage, and I sincerely hope that your study will be extensive, scientifically sound, open-minded, and impervious to political pressure from those who stand to benefit financially from the project.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy K. Sheng
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Bellingham, WA 98226