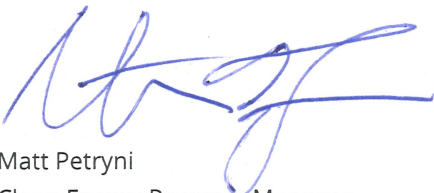


August 19, 2015

Program ContactMatt Petryni
Clean Energy Program Manager
mattp@re-sources.org
Phone 360.733.8307**Ken Blodgett****Surface Transportation Board**395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423
ATTN: Office of Environmental Analysis
Docket No. 30186**Dear Mr. Blodgett:**

Please find enclosed three comments from our members regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Tongue River Railroad project, docket number 30186. Though we are submitting these comments in a single enclosure, they come from separate individuals and should be included in the public record on this proceeding as distinct and independent comments.

Thank you for your assistance and understanding,

Matt Petryni
Clean Energy Program Manager
RE Sources for Sustainable Communities

P.O. Box 30826
Bellingham WA 98228

August 17, 2015

Victoria Rutson, Director Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423

Dear Ms. Rutson:

We are writing this letter to oppose construction of the Tongue River Railroad, and we strongly urge the STB to take the "no action" alternative.

We understand that TRR wants to haul coal from the Otter Creek mine, but this doesn't make any sense when you consider that coal has dropped from 50% to 30% of our domestic energy supply in the last five years. Coal markets around the world aren't faring much better, as other countries are becoming increasingly aware of the renewable energy market.

Otter Creek is the largest proposed coal mine in the U.S., representing 1.3 billion tons of coal. If it were to be mined, it would have adverse impacts on climate chaos for the next 55 years.

The draft EIS incorrectly assumes there is a domestic market for high-sodium coal from Otter Creek. It also makes the wrong assumption that there would be no train traffic impacts from building a rail line that could haul an additional 18-26 coal trains per day.

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Communities close to the tracks between the proposed railroad and export terminals in the Pacific Northwest would suffer the consequences of dramatically increased coal train traffic, including slashed property values, increased traffic congestion (cars, trucks), safety hazards, and air pollution from both diesel exhaust and fugitive coal dust.

Another objection we have to the Tongue River Railroad is that Montana farmers and ranchers face federal condemnation of their private property if the TRR were to be permitted. These farms and ranches have been owned and run by families for many years. They are growing and raising renewable resources that can be used by others. The huge difference is that, ultimately, by condemning the private land of these ranchers and farmers, it could open up this land to the spreading of weeds and more wildfires.

Finally, we oppose the potential destruction of hundreds of treasured Native American cultural sites along the TRR's proposed route. The TRR and the export of coal benefit only private coal companies and Asian energy users while it hurts those of us living along the rail line. Absolutely - just say no to the TRR.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Christine R. Hansen / Peter T. Hurd
Christine R. Hansen / Peter T. Hurd