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Commenter: Siamak Samsam

Organization: River Ranch of Montana, LLC

State: Arizona

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

Dear Mr. Blodgett, My ranch is located 2.5 miles north of Ashland on the east side of Tongue River. One of the proposed railroad alignment alternatives, which was not rejected by OEA study, runs approximately 100' from my house and 1/2 mile further north of the house it splits our 2 pivot-irrigated fields in halves. My comments are: 1. How was the safety and life quality of the residence of my house considered when the fugitive dust from the trains will poison the air that we breathe? For a moment, imagine that your home was to be subjected to the close proximity of coal carrying railroad 24/7, and whether you would consider that to be environmentally acceptable. 2. My irrigated hay fields are pivot irrigated, and you cannot have a train go through a 2000' long wiper-arm of a pivot, similar to why you cannot have an obstruction on your car's windshield and expect the wiper blades to function normally. 3. We have had 4 wildfires so far this year, and the quick access to fires before they grow out of hand is imperative. The railroad would severely restrict our access when it splits the ranch in halves, with a limited number of access crossings the railroad. 4. We have 12 pastures where each pasture has its own stock water drinking tank. The railroad would split pastures and the cattle would not have access to water or the grazing portion of the particular pasture. 5. Tongue River is one of the few undisturbed Riparian corridors in southeast Montana. Why would it be environmentally acceptable to irreversibly ruin this pristine corridor to facilitate low cost shipment of coal to our Asian economic competitors? Isn't this exercise a complete misuse of the Federal eminent domain power to condemn private land? I would greatly appreciate it if you would respond to each of my 5 points separately.