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Submission Text

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Tim Skufca, 107 North Avenue West here in Missoula. Approving the railroad before the Montana Land Board approves the mine seems a bit like approving the cart before the proverbial horse. If the Surface Transportation Board approves the Tongue River Railroad, there will be a momentum created to approve the mine. You can't separate the analysis of the environmental effects of the railroad from the analysis of the mine.

I realize we're here to talk about the railroad, but the two are so intertwined that we must analyze the entire situation. All projects should go through a cost-benefit analysis. Let's see who benefits from digging the largest open-pit mine in the lower 48, and who benefits from putting a railroad through the pristine Tongue River Valley.

First of all, there's about 100 or so Arch Coal employees, and then including their families, maybe 500 or so of them. Then of course, there's the Arch Coal investors. I can't put a number to this, but as Jim showed you on the graph, price shares have dropped from more than \$70 in 2008 to less than \$1 today. Then there's the fact that big banks are voting against further dealings with the coal industry in general.

How do we put a number to the beneficiaries of this category, this antiquated industry that's not accepting its fate? I don't know, but then there's other beneficiaries. There's the various trades that are employed to get the coal to market. Again, we're not sure how many that is, but let's assign a figure of 1,000 workers that would occasionally benefit from this coal export flow. Then finally, there's the various populations over in Asia that benefit from electricity that's generated from this coal. But we all know there's a better way to generate that electricity.

So, those are the benefits. Let's weigh the costs. First of all, the people affected are the communities lining the railroad from eastern Montana to the Washington or British Columbia ports. The coal will most likely enter this pipeline of sorts by passing through Colstrip and then up north to the I94 Corridor.

Then it goes through Bighorn, Custer, Worden, Lockwood, Billings, Laurel, Columbus - sorry if I missed your town, but the scale of my map probably didn't get them all, but - Reed Point, Big Timber, Springdale, Livingston, Bozeman, Manhattan, Townsend, Helena, Avon, Clinton, Missoula, Arlee, Ravalli, Dixon, Paradise, Plains, Thompson Falls, Noxon, and then through Idaho and, of course, to Washington and the proposed ports. Those are the people.

Then we have to consider the Powder River and Otter Creek basin bionetworks. Countless flora and fauna ecosystems are going to be affected. And then of course, everybody's breathing the air that this is creating. In conclusion, let's say the communities along the railroad that suffer, cancel out the amount of people benefiting from the electricity, let's weight the rest of it. Basically, there's 1,600 people benefiting from mining and shipping billions of tons of coal.

Then I try to find the antonym for beneficiary. I thought maybe "dispossessed." What is the total number of dispossessed, ignoring the thousands along the railroad? It's about seven billion people.

I put before the Surface Transportation Board these two numbers: 1,600 people benefiting, seven billion people

affecting. The answer that they should be making is clear.
Thanks.