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Commenter: Catherine Logan

Organization:

State: Montana

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

Aug. 24, 2015 Docket No. 30186 Dear Ken Blodgett, Surface Transportation Board & Victoria Rutson, Director, Office of Environmental Analysis, I appreciate your granting extensions for public comment on the TRR EIS – a reasonable gesture due to the documents complex & confounding information. I now strongly urge the STB to take the “no action alternative.” It is truly bewildering that the draft EIS claims seem to support the building of the TRR, which would haul 20 million tons of coal annually from the speculative, un-permitted Otter Creek Mine. Even if the mine owner, Arch Coal did not intend to export this high-sodium content coal to Asian markets from our west coast ports, the other assumptions, and flawed analysis throughout the EIS should also invalidate a permit for the TRR. The known impacts of coal mining, transporting, and power generation on our American public health, and the health of the environment that supports all human’s well-being, and our livelihoods should not be trumped by corporate profit-driven incentives (especially now that the coal industry is diminishing as a viable source of power around the world, and Arch Coal is nearly bankrupt). It would not only be a ridiculous, but a hideously, shameful legacy if the STB allowed this ill-fated permit. Wake up, the dominate narrative that the corporate demigods who may be holding your judgment hostage to is transitioning. We all need to face the realities of the challenges of our times, heed the facts and pivot away from merely profit-driven motives. The 2.5 tons of greenhouse gas carbon emissions that this strip mine operation would produce would be too ruinous to ever be a consideration. The STB should have a moral, and ethical obligation to proceed with a just, proactive, and safeguarding manner! The cascading impacts from the TRR would have so many negative effects on any down-rail inhabitants, and communities that those alone should dissuade the STB from issuing this permit (i.e.: condemning land, infringing upon various land-based livelihoods, decreasing land values, disturbing native cultural sites and rights, increased train traffic causing more diesel emissions, toxic coal ash, and noise pollution, plus be detrimental to public safety, and cause taxpayers expensive infrastructure costs). Therefore, I disapprove the construction of the TRR, and request that you, the STB take the “no action alternative.” Sincerely, Catherine P. Logan