

Ken Blodgett

Surface Transportation Board

395 E Street SW

Washington DC 20423

Attn: Office of Environmental Analysis

Docket No. 30186

Comments on the Draft EIS for proposed Operation and construction of the Tongue River Railroad

I -Route:

After nearly forty years of planning, and surveying, the Railroad still has no designated route. There are ten routes outlined in the EIS and still no definite plan as to where it will be.

This represents forty years of abuse of landowners, who are in the path of the RR, and whose land could be condemned.

II -The market for coal is decreasing:

Arch Coal at present is a failing company, it is in debt and barely maintaining enough price per share to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Headlines from regional newspapers this month

Billings Gazette:

June 9th

Rocky Mountain Power predicts shift from coal

Casper Tribune:

June 8th

Gillette coal-fired power plant demolished, making way for new sources of energy

Peabody Energy to lay off 250, close Gillette office

III - Also

In a recent article the Billings Gazette said that China has begun to reduce its demand for coal because of air pollution problems, so the foreign markets for US coal are dissolving and would be temporary at the best.

Why give a permit for the railroad when there are no ports for export of the product?

There are no current official plans in place to build ports in Oregon and Washington States. The mere idea of building ports has met with strong resistance from residents of those states especially by the Lummi Tribe, since building them would violate their land rights. It may take years to even get a plan for them because of the resistance from landowners and residents in those states.

If the TRR is built, Arch Coal would try to export Otter Creek coal to Asia. This means the government could give Arch Coal the power to seize land from Montana landowners to support Asian economies.

Therefore this proposed railroad is not for the

“public convenience and necessity”

which is what is required in order for a body to get the power of eminent domain and condemnation authority. This plan is strictly to generate income for owners and stockholders and is not in interest of the general public.

In summary:

Why would the STB permit a railroad :

That has no idea of its route

That depends on coal mined by a failing coal company

That would haul coal to non-existent ports on the west coast

For shipment to a country that is in the process of reducing its demand for coal and is a temporary market

Urge the STB to decide on the NO ACTION
alternative
CV 6/11/15

Submitted 6-11-15

Christine Valentine

