



September 8, 2014

Daniel R. Elliott, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423
Dear Mr. Elliott:

Friends of Two Rivers (FO2R) is a community-based non-profit corporation staffed by volunteers and supported by grants and member contributions. Our mission is to enhance the quality of our community life by supporting economic, social, and natural resource conservation actions that are consistent with our cultural traditions.

The Surface Transportation Board is preparing an EIS in response to the proposed construction of the Tongue River Railroad. The Railroad would transport coal from the proposed new coal mining in Otter Creek, Montana to existing BNSF and MRL rail lines terminating on the west coast.

There are three BNSF/MRL rail crossings in our community. The current level of coal train interference with residential and emergency vehicular traffic is marginally unacceptable. If the Tongue River Railroad is built the problem will be exacerbated by additional rail traffic.

FO2R urges STB to take two actions: 1) Include impacts upon our Milltown and Bonner Montana communities in the EIS; 2) Provide opportunities for our community to provide public comment on the EIS. It should be noted that any costs of impact mitigation infrastructure must be born by the Railroad developers. Further, we ask the STB to include consideration of these items in its Tongue River Railroad EIS:

1. Impacts of the highest expected level of coal train traffic upon local vehicular residential and emergency traffic.
2. Quantification, according to existing scientific models, of the extent of global warming that can be expected from burning the coal carried by the Tongue River Railroad.
3. Quantification, according to the best available scientific evidence, of the amount of mercury that would be deposited in our local water bodies as a result of Tongue River Railroad coal being burned in Asia with the effluent being brought to Montana by prevailing winds.

Private energy corporations and regulatory governmental agencies alike disclaim responsibility for atmospheric impacts of expanded Asian coal burning on grounds that it is not a direct result of their activity or regulatory responsibility. Quite to the contrary, every single part of the extraction, processing, transportation, and regulatory activity regarding coal shares responsibility with the final user burning the coal and creating the atmospheric impact. If our government continues to dodge responsibility for protecting our vital air and water resources future generations of Americans are indeed doomed to a much lower quality of life than we now

enjoy. We urge strong action by STB in considering all impacts of coal that would be transported by the Tongue River Railroad.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Whiteman".

Alice Whiteman, President

C: Senator Jon Tester
Senator John Walsh
Representative Steve Daines
Missoula County Board of Commissioners
Sarah Coefield, Missoula County Health Department