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Organization:

State: Montana

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

I submit that the TRRC application should be denied for the following reasons: 1. On February 7, 1861, an Irish physicist named John Tyndall, spoke of his research finding that carbon dioxide absorbed “nearly 100 times as much (heat) as oxygen.” One hundred and fifty four years later, President Obama visited Kotzebue, Alaska, on the shores of the Arctic, because we have ignored Tyndall’s research. President Obama promised new funding efforts to relocate villages that have lost much land to the Chukchi Sea due to global climate change. Decreased ice pack makes the reach of the winds longer, waves bigger, and more damaging. Allowing TRRC to be built fuels global climate change and the destruction of more tribal villages. This week my son, a coast guard rescue swimmer, will be stationed in Dead Horse on the Arctic because global climate change caused by burning of fossil fuels, primarily coal, has melted enough of the ice cap resulting in open sea where once there was ice. This is the second year the U.S. Coast Guard has been required to station a rescue team on the Arctic. 2. The coal is going west and the impacts along BNSF and MRL rail lines to the west have not been adequately addressed. Ask any builder in Helena who much time is now lost waiting from trains then multiply that by twenty plus. Ask any farmer in Montana how backed up grain traffic was last fall, then compound that by the new coal trains. 3. Destroying grasslands for a rail bed releases tons of stored carbon and prevents those lands from storing carbon in the future. Nicole Masters, agro-ecologist 4. TRRC rail bed cuts the flow of springs and aquifers, which will result in pooling of water. This stagnant water will hold the seeds of invasive weeds, and breed insects that can negatively affect livestock. One need only drive north from Helena, Mt to see the negative effects of rail lines across ranch and farm land Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important public policy issue.