

Received: 9/23/2015 12:00:00 AM

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Organization:

State: Montana

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

Alaina Buffalo Spirit

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Good evening. My name is Alaina Buffalo Spirit; my Cheyenne name is Ta'nohetse'e. It's kind of funny that everyone has to talk about this, when back in the 1800s this was ancestral Cheyenne and Lakota country, and we are claiming it today, saying we do not want railroads, we do not want the Otter Creek Coal Mine. I am a cancer survivor, that's why I speak up. I also speak up for my grandchildren, future great grandchildren, and seven generations ahead of me. I'm speaking because my homeland, the Medicine Bull homeland is two miles north of the Birney Village.

We still practice our ceremonies. We sit in a tepee, we sit and pray and sing and it's very quiet. I do not want the noise pollution when we are praying, just like in any American church. Do you guys want noises when you're praying? I don't think so. That's the same feeling I have when I'm sitting in the tepee or in the sweat lodge. I don't want any coal trains coming along and whistling their awful loud noises, because I am in meditation. I don't want any disturbance and I want my grandchildren to enjoy what I enjoy today, is quality water, the Tongue River is still somewhat clean, we've swam there since I was a child. We used to fish for catfish, eat it. I'm not so sure it's safe anymore because of the coal bed deposits from the Sheridan Decker area. We are still here. I'm natsu'uta. I'm native. We are here, and we're not going away, and we are protected by treaties. Treaties, in my view, are contracts with the US government, and Article 6 of the US Constitution says that treaties are the law of the land, and I will continue to talk about that.

I live right now on the west end, 5110 Danford Drive. However, next week, I'm moving to my homelands in Cheyenne country, and I will continue to fight from there.

Thank you.