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Organization:

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Submission Text

Could there be a big picture plan that addresses our energy needs and gives our children the clean and healthy earth they deserve? Organizations such as <http://thesolutionsproject.org/infographic/#mt> believe there is! They see every state having 100% clean, renewable energy. Their research -- teaming with Mark Jacobsen from Stanford University -- shows we can save \$1.1 billion in health care by using wind, water, and solar instead of burning fuel. We can create 13,833 construction jobs and 5,642 operation jobs that last 40 years, using only .04% footprint area and .22% of the space in Montana. We already have a functioning mine that will churn out coal until we can get healthier and more sustainable practices in place. The last thing we need is to create a new coal mine and train route. Proponents for the coal train say that we can't fear change, as if coal trains are a new thought. Isn't it the same thing we've been doing for years? If we always do what we always do, we're always going to get what we've gotten. As listed above, there are new and better ways for energy solutions. We must think of our energy solutions in terms of a doctor involved in science who must first think of the means to cure people of disease instead of bringing only temporary relief. As the saying goes, it is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a society that keeps people sick. If we can't think of new ways of sustainable energy solutions, then we will always be stuck in our current energy dilemma. A big picture plan takes into account the effects on ways of life -- what a professor might call the anthropological view. We've all seen tragedies of well-intended but misguided growth. Sometimes it's easier to see this more clearly when we look at places we have less direct attachment to. Look at the effect of ruining the farm lands in Haiti. There are efforts to now regenerate the land and try to get the people to move back into the countryside and out of the city. How much harder is it to fix something rather than have it be efficient in the first place? Look at the effect of science on the rice stalks in China. The rice may fall off much easier, but now the people do not get together for the harvesting of shaking the stalks. Their connection with one another fell away just as easily as the newly bred rice. We now know that drugs and addiction are caused by feeling a lack of love; we feel love when we are connected with one another. Would a coal train really create a better way of living or inhibit it? Where is the human cost computed on the balance sheets? If we create suffering (even if we think it is perceived) on the people of this land, they won't be as efficient of a member in society, and that will create a pull on other people in order to help them, creating more suffering for each of us. Having grown up here and knowing what it's like to have space away from other people's influential viewpoints, to be able to see somewhat outside of our society's dilemmas, I believe this isn't the healthiest option for the people of this area. The only privilege anyone has is knowledge of history and being able to not make the same mistakes again. Here's to actual change! I agree with the No-Action Alternative to the proposed Tongue River Railroad.