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July 14, 2015

Mr. Ken Blodgett  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street SW  
Washington, DC 20423  
Attn: Office of Environmental Analysis  
Docket No: 30186

Dear Mr. Blodgett:

Thank you for accepting my comments regarding the proposed Tongue River Railroad in Montana. There is one overwhelming reason NOT to approve the plan to construct the Tongue River Railroad (TRRC): currently and in the foreseeable future, the demand for coal is declining. It would be a travesty on many levels to build a railroad line through such a rural area of good wildlife habitat, ranchland, and forests to move a commodity that has a questionable future.

- There is no approval for or plans to construct a coastal export facility in Oregon or Washington. Parties behind the TRRC were banking on a West Coast facility, but a facility is not on the horizon, and as coal demand declines, an export facility in Oregon or Washington becomes even less likely.
- Darrow, LA on the Mississippi River has a new \$300 million export facility that expects to handle a large percentage of coal being exported from the United States. Darrow is in Louisiana, which is south and east of the proposed TRRC route. The TRRC would not be a logical route for Wyoming coal that might go to this facility.
- Investors are looking at developing other export facilities in the Gulf Coast region, further reducing the need to move coal on the route proposed by the TRRC.
- For the past ten months, many news outlets (Reuters, Bloomberg, CNN, The Economist to name a few) have reported on the dramatic decline in demand for coal in China. The Chinese are very rapidly changing over to alternate sources of power. The TRRC was depending on the Chinese market, but that market is shrinking.
- Coal consumption is declining in Europe, as well.
- Arch Coal, which is a subsidiary company heavily involved in the proposal to build the TRRC, is suffering such financial losses, the company is facing delisting from the New York Stock Exchange.
- For some major investors, coal is now considered too risky, as it is recognized that the future of coal mining in the US is bleak..
- Peabody Coal recently closed its office in Gillette, WY (not far from the proposed TRRC location) in response to declining demand for coal and Peabody has seen losses as well.

These are just a few points that I hope you will consider when reviewing this proposed project. It does not make any sense to move forward with such a detrimental project when the future of coal mining in Wyoming is in such question. Please do not let the proposed Tongue River Railroad project go forward.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Mitchell