



Fw: Docket No. FD 30186
Kenneth Blodgett to: Joshua Wayland

01/09/2013 12:45 PM

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From: Carol Marsh <carolnhero@msn.com>
To: BlodgettK@stb.dot.gov
Date: 01/09/2013 12:23 PM
Subject: Docket No. FD 30186
Sent by: Greenpeace <info@wdc.greenpeace.org>

Jan 9, 2013

Ken Blodgett

Dear Blodgett,

Attention of: Mr. Ken Blodgett

The environmental impact statement for the proposed Tongue River Railroad should analyze the following:

Public convenience and necessity: This proposed railroad is not for the "public convenience and necessity" as required for a body to get the power of eminent domain and condemnation authority. This railroad would serve only one coal company giant, Arch Coal, which intends to sell the coal to China and other Asian countries. The public neither needs nor would be inconvenienced by this rail line. Instead, the rail line would be a disservice to the community, the region and the planet, and would cause more than minor inconveniences.

Impacts on property values: The project would devalue property and infringe on property rights. This railroad would cause fires, spread invasive weeds, devalue property (especially riverfront property), make ranching and farming more difficult and expensive, split ranch land in half and separate fields from the river, and shift the liability of train crossings to the landowner.

Wildlife: The Tongue River Valley is rich in wildlife habitat and home to outstanding elk and mule deer populations as well as upland birds. Industrializing this valley with a railroad and the coal strip mine it serves would seriously degrade this excellent sportsman's resource.

Flooding: The railroad bed would act as an earthen dam and potentially worsen the flooding problems now experienced in Miles City in the winter with ice jams.

Noise: The loud trains would ruin the quiet enjoyment of recreation areas near Miles City.

Infrastructure, traffic and safety: Taxes would go up for residents in communities along the rail lines as the coal heads to coastal ports for shipment. The proposed railroad would increase coal train traffic substantially causing traffic delays, noise, diesel pollution and safety issues at crossings. Coping with the increased traffic would

require expensive over passes and safety crossing which are paid for primarily by local taxpayers.

Greenhouse gas and diesel pollution: The Tongue River Railroad would allow publicly owned coal that should stay in the ground to be burned in Chinese and other Asian countries' dirty power plants and will fuel intolerable, decades-long increases in carbon dioxide emissions. The greenhouse gas costs of Otter Creek coal go far beyond just burning the coal. It must be mined, hauled by trains fueled by diesel to West Coast terminals, shipped overseas by ships fueled by diesel, and then hauled in Asia to the plants. Increased mercury deposition from Asian coal fired plants will also impact those who catch and eat fish in Montana and other western states.

By far the most important consideration is that the burning of this coal, no less in China than here, will contribute to global warming. Climate change already made 2012 the hottest year on record in America, with drought covering half the country and not over yet, with Superstorm Sandy, with wildfires throughout the West including Montana. In August we all breathed smoke, and I'm still coughing. Cities on both coasts, not to mention Pacific Islands, are threatened by the rising ocean. The Arctic is melting. The permafrost is melting. This proposed expansion of coal mining has no redeeming social value. A few rich people will get richer while the earth suffers irreversible damage. For the sake of the planet, we must stop mining and drilling and burning carbons and switch to clean renewable fuels immediately. Say no to this application, for the sake of your own children.

Sincerely,

Carol Marsh
420 E Front St Apt 2
Missoula, MT 59802-4745
(406) 543-1038