

Received: 6/23/2015 12:51:45 AM

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Organization:

State: Oregon

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

Hello, The TRRC makes about as much economic sense as a football-bat. Why invest in high-sulfur coal when infrastructure for that kind of coal is a dying industry? Take the No Action Alternative. Government should not be abetting poor economic-decisions, while at the same time allowing the company to pass costs and risks, outlined below, along to the public. Tragedy of the commons 101: The production of dirty coal not only doesn't make economic sense, it threatens air quality and climate change. Okay, only 97% of scientists agree climate change is man-made. But even if you are not 100% certain, why not take a cautious route here and keep these fossil fuels in the ground? Again, I support the Take the No Action Alternative. The Board's conclusion that there are no impacts on our climate from the new railroad opening up a new 1.5 billion ton coal mine at Otter Creek is fatally flawed. The Board's draft environmental impact statement does recognize that "greenhouse gas emissions have a uniform impact on global warming regardless of where emissions occur." So...how could opening up 1.5 billion tons not contribute to climate change? That doesn't make sense. The argument that it will displace other coal production is not proven or even convincingly laid out. Lame. Since there is likely little or no domestic market for high-sulfur coal, the Surface Transportation Board should analyze the cumulative environmental impacts when 1.5 billion tons of Otter Creek coal is burned. This includes the impacts on our climate when more than 2.5 billion tons of new carbon dioxide enter our atmosphere. Of primary importance is an analysis of whether this new "carbon bomb" will trigger what the International Panel of Climate Change terms "abrupt or irreversible" tipping points. It is an immoral act to ignore a new "carbon bomb" that will lead to disaster for our children and grandchildren. Why do corporations such as these get to pass these risks for free onto the public with government sanction? Get it together. Take the No Action Alternative. These coal trains are going to be rolling through my state of Oregon, likely, since there will be little domestic market. Please do the right thing here and keep those fossil fuels in the ground. Danny