

September 9, 1998

Dear Surface Transportation Board:

I am writing, with great concern, about the Tongue River Railroad project. I am a Conductor for Burlington Northern Santa Fe R.R., living in Forsyth, Montana.

If T.R.R. is allowed to be built Forsyth, a town of approximately 2,700 inhabitants, will ~~lose~~ lose half of its population as there will be no railroad jobs left. There are about seventy railroad jobs in the transportation department alone. When these railroaders are forced to leave, with their families, businesses, schools and health services will be severely impacted, some forced to close and some forced to cut back greatly in further loss. Are the profits of a few worth it?

The T.R.R. is not needed, as rail service is already provided to the existing coal mines. The profits in ton mile transportation savings, because of a shorter route, will never be passed on to the electrical consumer. The ~~profits~~ profits will end up in the pockets

of the T.R.R. and its financial backers under the guise of increased operating costs.

The building of T.R.R. will destroy or severely harm the Tongue River Valley and its ecosystem, especially, with the implementation of the so called Western Alignment. What cost profit?

Is the T.R.R. with its profits for a few, worth the loss of hundreds of jobs, the devastation of a town, the destruction of a River valley and the loss of the rights of the people who live and work in the Tongue River Valley to manage their own property and Lively holds. What cost profits?

Tonya B Strong
P.O. Box 924
Forsyth, MT. 59327

Bill Strong
Box 924
Forsyth, MT. 59327

Notary Public for the State of Montana
Residing at: Billings, MT
My Commission Expires: 4-11-00