POWER PAST COAL

communities against coal export

Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel, by far.

Across the country, Americans are turning to cleaner energy and phasing out coal power. Because of that, the coal industry has come up with a new plan: strip-mine coal in Montana and Wyoming, transport it on long coal trains through Northwest cities and towns, ship it on massive cargo ships off the West Coast and sell it to Asia.

Shipping more than 150 million tons of coal a year through West Coast communities would release toxic coal dust and diesel exhaust along the rail lines, clog our railroads, ports, and highways, risk our families' health, pollute our air and water, and stoke the climate crisis.

We can do better.

We need to

POWER PAST COAL

The Powder River Basin in Wyoming and Montana is one of the largest coal reserves in the world, and the easiest gateway for coal companies to get that strip-mined coal to Asia is through West Coast ports, especially Washington and Oregon.

Global coal companies, including Peabody Energy, Arch Coal, and Australian-based Ambre Energy, are seeking permits to build at least six coal export terminals in Washington and Oregon – currently four along the Columbia River, two on the Coast and one on the banks of Puget Sound. Some of the largest coal companies in the nation and world, have proposed at least six coal export terminals in Washington and Oregon communities:

The current proposals are located at:

- Cherry Point, north of Bellingham, WA
- Grays Harbor, WA
- Longview, WA
- St. Helens, OR
- Coos Bay, OR
- Port of Morrow, OR

They want to move the strip-mined coal from the Powder River Basin along rail lines, on barges and in massive cargo ships to the coast, endangering every community along the way. If they build these terminals, more than 150 million tons of coal annually would travel through Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon.

health impacts of coal transport and burning

Coal dust and diesel exhaust from coal trains and cargo ships can cause serious long-term health problems like lung and heart disease and cancer. The wide ranging health dangers of coal dust include exposure to toxic heavy metals like mercury and increased rates of asthma, especially in children. Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) railroad studies estimate up to 500 pounds of coal can be lost in the form of dust from each rail car en route. Coal dust would pollute our clean air and water.

Many of the communities that coal trains would travel through are already disproportionately suffering the health impacts of poor air quality. Transporting coal

Moving and storing coal is dirty, dangerous and disruptive

the mines

The Powder River Basin is the largest potential source of US coal. At the expense of taxpayers, coal companies get dirt cheap coal from public lands.

The coal is strip-mined, polluting water and destroying valuable rangeland and habitat.

Coal mining also causes significant air pollution in the coal fields and local communities.

the trains

Coal trains are the loudest and the heaviest trains on the rails.

Diesel particulates from the coal trains dramatically increase cancer, asthma and other ailments.

Noise exposure can cause learning impairments in children.

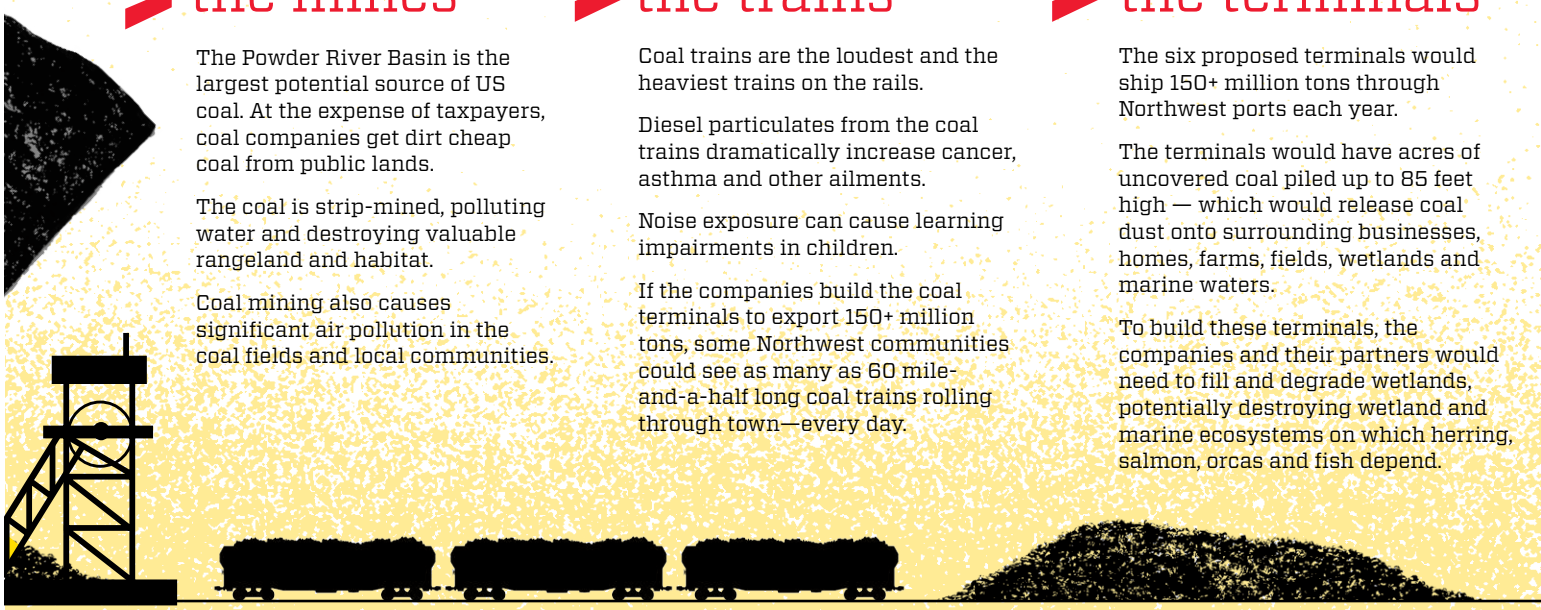
If the companies build the coal terminals to export 150+ million tons, some Northwest communities could see as many as 60 mile-and-a-half long coal trains rolling through town—every day.

the terminals

The six proposed terminals would ship 150+ million tons through Northwest ports each year.

The terminals would have acres of uncovered coal piled up to 85 feet high — which would release coal dust onto surrounding businesses, homes, farms, fields, wetlands and marine waters.

To build these terminals, the companies and their partners would need to fill and degrade wetlands, potentially destroying wetland and marine ecosystems on which herring, salmon, orcas and fish depend.



WHO IS IMPACTED	**communities in the Powder River Basin, MT and WY**	**cities and towns on rail lines from MT and ID to OR and WA**	**communities, business corridors and ecosystems by the terminals**
WHO BENEFITS	**coal companies including Peabody, Arch Coal and Ambre Energy**	**rail companies including BNSF, Rail America and Union Pacific**	**SSA Marine, Goldman Sachs, Kinder Morgan, coal companies**

through neighborhoods that have higher percentages of people of color and lower-income households would exacerbate these existing inequalities.

More coal burning in Asia means more toxic air pollution — especially mercury — travelling across the Pacific to contaminate West Coast rivers, lakes and fish.

congestion from coal train traffic

Northwest communities in and along rail lines and near the coal export terminals could see 20 or more coal trains rolling through town every day -- and some rail communities up to 60 trains daily. Increased traffic delays at busy rail crossings would clog commuter traffic and could slow response times for emergency responders and limit access to neighborhoods, schools and business corridors.

Many neighborhoods targeted for increased train traffic are lower-income communities that are already over-burdened with pollution and economic development challenges.

For example, at two terminals alone, Cherry Point and Longview, Ambre Energy, Arch Coal and Peabody Energy could ship at least 100 million tons of coal per year through Washington State Transporting the coal for just those two terminals would add more than 8,000 noisy mile-long loaded coal trains to Washington's rail system every year.

more environmental problems

Exporting coal off the West Coast would mean increased strip-mining in Montana and Wyoming. New and expanded mines would put more communities at risk, and would threaten precious water and long term productivity of fragile farm and rangelands and wildlife habitat.

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regional and global impacts

U.S. coal companies would provide our global competitors with a cheap, dirty fuel. By encouraging rapid expansion of new coal plants in Asia, coal export would lock the world into emission levels that essentially guarantee catastrophic climate impacts, in the Northwest and abroad. We would also have more greenhouse gas emissions from increased coal train and ship traffic.

Mercury and other pollutants from coal-burning power plants travel from Asia to the West Coast of North America where they poison our air, water, fish and food supply.

We would have reduced economic investment and development in waterfront communities on the Columbia River and Puget Sound—where coal trains would dominate shorelines—meaning negative economic impacts to the Northwest.

the ships

Every year at least 2,500 of some of the world's biggest cargo ships would navigate our coastline and waterways including the Columbia River and the already-crowded Straits of Juan de Fuca and Georgia. This would mean ongoing threats to local communities, wetlands, waterways and wildlife.

While in port, these ships burn tons of diesel fuel adding to air pollution and health impacts to nearby communities.

One of the OR proposals calls for barging coal down the Columbia River — at minimum four barges every day — and transloading the coal to ships.

the power plants

Coal power plants emit at least 1.6 tons of climate changing gases for every ton of coal burned. A single large plant can emit upwards of 10 million tons of climate pollution a year.

Recent scientific studies show that Asia is an increasing source of mercury and other pollutants on the West Coast.

Disposal sites for coal ash release toxic contaminants such as lead, boron, selenium, cadmium, thallium and other pollutants into the surrounding air and water.

island communities, fisheries, freshwater and marine ecosystems

communities, countries, the planet, our future

private shipping companies, coal companies

coal companies, private utilities, investors

PHOTO: RBCT

The proposed terminals would ship at more than 150 million tons through Northwest ports each year. This facility at Westshore Coal Terminal in Canada exports 21 million tons per year.

PHOTO: PAUL K. ANDERSON

Coal trains are the loudest and the heaviest trains on the rails, losing hundreds of pounds of dust en route.

PHOTO: TIM WAGNER

Coal power plants emit at least 1.6 tons of climate changing gases for every ton of coal burned.

PHOTO: SIERRA CLUB

The wide-ranging health dangers of coal dust and diesel exhaust include exposure to toxic heavy metals and increased rates of asthma, especially in children.

continued from interior

Close to the terminals, shorelines would be given over to industrial sites with enormous piles of coal and constant dust. For example, the proposed 48 million ton per year terminal site at Cherry Point would span 1200 acres, destroy or degrade 162 acres of wetlands and sit directly on critical habitat for herring, a primary food source for endangered salmon.

Exporting coal promotes deeper global fossil fuel dependence. It delays the urgently needed transition to cleaner alternatives. It makes climate disruption inevitable, including extreme flooding, drought, food shortages and ocean acidification – costs that fall disproportionately on lower-income and middle-class communities.

It would impact communities in the Northwest, North America and around the globe.

We can do better

Coal companies stand to make huge profits. The West Coast, especially the Northwest, would pay the price.

We need to power past coal. We can build strong local economies and keep the places we love intact for our families. We won't sell the soul of our communities for coal. The costs to our health, quality of life, and our towns are too high.

Our region has a long and proud history of economic leadership. New and traditional industries alike provide good jobs here while protecting our quality of life. We should look forward and build on those strengths – not lurch backward toward a 19th century coal economy.

Pioneering a sustainable prosperity is both our responsibility and one of our greatest economic opportunities; coal export would bind us – economically, politically, and morally – to the opposite path: a global economic development strategy that is fundamentally incompatible with energy security and climate stability.

Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark, Washington Governor Gregoire, Oregon Governor Kitzhaber, our members of Congress, city and county officials and others can be leaders in saying no to coal export and yes to continuing a legacy of leadership on addressing climate change and a building clean-energy economy.

They need to hear from you today. Learn more and join the effort: ***www.powerpastcoal.org***

POWER PAST COAL

communities against coal export

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We are an ever-growing alliance of health, environmental, clean-energy, faith and community groups working to stop coal export off the West Coast.