



September 26, 2013

Dear President Obama:

The below signers, all members of the Leadership Alliance Against Coal, represent leaders from across the Pacific Northwest, including elected officials from cities, counties, tribal governments and the state legislature. We share a collective concern about the review of proposals to export coal from Northwest ports.

Thank you for your recent announcement that you will take further action to address climate change with your Plan to Cut Carbon Pollution. We agree with your assertion that as a nation we can meet the challenge of climate change in a way that advances our economy while also protecting the environment and our health. The plan takes important steps to regulate carbon emissions here in the United States and ratchet up investments in clean energy and energy efficiency. It also lays out a strategy for us to lead internationally, working with other countries to reduce emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. These are all steps that are urgently needed and they will complement the actions being taken by communities here in the Pacific Northwest and all over the country. In your speech you acknowledged these local actions, asking people to push their communities to adopt smarter practices, including a call to invest and divest. Your support and acknowledgment of this work is important, thank you.

We also hope that this plan is just a first step. We urge you to go further. Here in the Northwest, we've been working for years to incrementally reduce climate emissions, from greening our buildings to deploying electric vehicles, from expanding mass transit to investing in renewable energy. Now, with a few simple permitting decisions, the federal government could enable massive carbon emissions that would overshadow our gains. There are currently three proposals to build coal export terminals in Oregon and Washington State that would ship coal from the Powder River Basin to Asia. These export proposals will nearly double national coal exports and continue to drive the burning of coal in Asia as a cheap and readily available energy source. In addition, the coal will need to be shipped across the West, in open cars on mile-and-a-half long trains, impacting dozens of communities with noise, traffic congestion, air and water pollution and many other potential impacts. In our cities, these coal trains will create unacceptably long delays for residents, visitors, freight, first responders, and others who are trying to cross the already busy tracks.

Recently, in a congressional hearing on energy export, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced it will not perform a programmatic or area-wide environmental assessment on the

impacts of the three proposed coal export facilities. In addition, the Corps concluded that climate change produced by the transport and burning of coal overseas and the impacts from increased rail traffic generated by the coal terminals is outside the scope of the Corps' environmental analysis. Representative Castor responded by asking "shouldn't someone, some agency, consider the larger impacts of expanding coal exports on climate change?"

We continue to believe that a single, comprehensive analysis of the impacts of all three proposed Northwest coal terminals is warranted in a combined EIS. Tens of thousands of citizens and hundreds of groups, businesses, elected officials and tribal leaders from across the Northwest have called for a full and thorough review of the impacts of the proposed terminals. Federal, State and local agencies have also weighed in with recommendations for an inclusive scope.¹

We believe the federal government has the responsibility to conduct this analysis. As a nation we need to understand the net effects of these projects on our climate and whether they exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution. We believe it is necessary to consider the three terminals together, in a cumulative impact analysis, in order to understand the full breadth of the impacts. We urge you to direct the Army Corps of Engineers or another federal agency to conduct a broad analysis of the impacts of coal export, including the impacts of mining in Wyoming and Montana, transporting the coal via rail across state lines, shipping it through our waters and eventually burning it in Asia. We need to understand the full impact of these proposals on our local communities, on our environment and on our health; and the federal government needs to take the lead.

Sincerely,



Mayor Arthur Babitz
City of Hood River, OR



Mayor Stephen H. Buxbaum
City of Olympia, WA

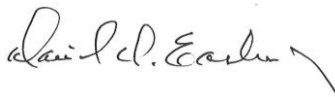
*Councilmember Nancy Dumas
City of Sumner, WA

*State Representative Jessyn Farrell
State of Washington

*Councilmember Joan Bloom
City of Edmonds, WA



Councilmember Richard Conlin
City of Seattle, WA



Mayor Dave Earling
City of Edmonds, WA

*Councilmember Mark Gamba
City of Milwaukie, OR



Councilmember Tim Burgess
City of Seattle, WA

*Councilmember Rick DeGloria
City of Burlington, WA



Deputy Mayor Chris Eggen
City of Shoreline, WA



Councilmember Jean Godden
City of Seattle, WA

¹ Federal agencies submitting comments included the Environmental Protection Agency, Housing and Urban Development, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service. <http://www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov/resources/project-library>

Councilmember Jennifer Gregerson
City of Mukilteo, WA

Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland, OR

Councilmember Will Hall
City of Shoreline, WA

Commissioner Katherine Haque-Hausrath
City of Helena, MT

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*Electronic signature unavailable.