

Virjeana: Hi, my name is Virjeana Brown and I live at 720 Northern Pacific Avenue in Belgrade and I'm here to ask the Army Corps of Engineers to please open a scoping meeting in Montana for the Longview Export Terminal. It is going to have a serious impact in our community. I literally live 280 feet from the railroad tracks. I stay at home full time to care for my granddaughter. I don't get much sleep. I'm exhausted, I'm tired, I'm cranky, I can't leave my windows open in the summertime because of the trains sound like they're coming right through my house.

My quality of life has plummeted significantly in the last few years. I contacted Montana Rail Link a couple of months ago and they said right now there is like 18 trains coming through a day. I can't even begin to imagine how horrible it will be if they increase. I live on one side of the railroad tracks. The emergency services, the fire, the police are all on the other side of the tracks. On August 26th the tracks were blocked for 25 minutes when my neighbors told me. My granddaughter has seizures and today she had a 4-1/2 minute seizure [inaudible 00:01:14] supposed to call emergency 911. Honestly I cannot rely on that. I'm scared about not only myself but any kind of emergency on that side of the railroad tracks if this goes through. I hope the Army Corps of Engineers does look at the cumulative impact and do an environmental impact study for the entire state of Montana. Thank you.

Female: Right, next up we're going to have Don Kincaid and then Julie Belschwender.

Don: It's Don [inaudible 00:01:54] and I live at 34 Berlin Drive in Bozeman, Montana and the cost of the coal shipping through Bozeman are significant. When we talk about those 25 minute train delays, there is a large group of people that live on the other side of the tracks, the opposite side of the tracks at the hospital. Those people need emergency access to the hospital. A 25 minute wait is unacceptable. When we are called upon to build overpasses and underpasses, it's going to be us, the citizens of Bozeman that have to pay for that. Not Arch Coal and not Burlington Northern. For that reason I would strongly suggest that we have a review process for this plant.

Also, the coal dust is estimated by Burlington Northern, that each train leaves 500 pounds of coal dust along the tracks between eastern Montana and Seattle. True, a lot of that is lost when the train first starts, but a tremendous amount is lost along the way. When you multiply that times 40 trains a day, that's a significant amount of coal dust. Coal dust has many damaging carcinogens and trace minerals in it that will roll around and that we end up inhaling. For that reason I would ask for a review of this process.

Female: All right, we have Julie and then Jeff Bukowski.

Julie: Hi. I'm Julie Belschwender and I live at 309 North Black Avenue. I'm really involved with the Northeast Neighborhood Association and I've lived in the North side since around 2000, my husband; mid-1990's. I'm a mom, I'm a nurse, and I love the North side. We are kind of known for our train noise and traffic and I kind of think about ... I was actually getting my degree in Flagstaff a couple of years ago and we had up to 80 trains a day coming through Flagstaff and that would be a lot more than what's proposed here today, but I just can't imagine living in that rhythm of life and how it affects your day to day getting from here to there, taking your child to school, waving from the other side of the tracks.

I think about all the people going to Bridger Bowl, all the recreationalists waiting for the trains. Honestly, it would affect our community in a big way and I think North sider's are just like anybody else we're really afraid of the traffic and the pollution. Like I said, just the complete change in life and noise rattling our homes and polluting our homes and our children playing outside and how that's going to obviously affect our lives tremendously. I guess I'm just here as a concerned citizen and I'm going to keep being involved and I welcome any body from the North side to contact me and join me in being involved in this situation. Thank you.

Female: Now we have Jeff and then up next is Courtney Lyman.

Jeff: Hi. Thank you all for coming, my name is Jeff Bukowski. I live at 310 North Plum Avenue in Bozeman. I've been a member of Northern Plains since the late 70's. My old college roommate Russell Brown got me involved and ... let's go back to like 78, I testified at the Colstrip Hearings and said that there [inaudible 00:06:13] helms were going to leak. I was pretty much basically booted off the stage and now we're here at this 20 years later, and guess what? Those [inaudible 00:06:24] and impoundments have failed. They pollute, they do damage to everybody around the [inaudible 00:06:31] area.

So now we fast forward to what's going on here with trying to strip mine coal in Montana and the specific point I'd like to make is the coal severance tax.

Montana was fortunate enough to be one of the states that taxed coal at 15% because once it's gone, it's gone, it's gone. It's gone, it's not an infinite resource. It's finite. It's going to go away and Montana is one of the states ... it's the only one left that has any money [inaudible 00:07:15]. Colorado, gone. Wyoming, gone. New Mexico, gone. Hey, for mining that coal at 10 or 15 dollars a ton [inaudible 00:07:31]. Guess how much it costs to get to China? \$80, \$100. Where's that money going? There only taxed here at the strip mine crossed at the mine. We're losing out. I'd like anybody in the government, all the republicans that are for free enterprise and capitalism, let's have some actual data on that money and where it's going. So thank you all for coming and listening to me.

Female: All right we have Courtney and then Chris Nixon is our last speaker.

Courtney: Hi, my name is Courtney Lyman and I live at 428 North Yellow Storm in Livingston, Montana and it was approximately about a year ago when I noticed there was something different with the trains. I live on the North side of Livingston and everything, the hospital, the schools, the down town shopping area, the grocery store; everything is on the other side of the tracks. I kept getting caught by the train. Where when my son started kindergarten it wasn't a problem but now there in 1st grade and all of a sudden every other morning I'm being caught by a train. I don't watch a lot of TV, I don't read the paper a lot, I didn't know what was going on.

It was some friends, some people in the community that alerted me that it was the coal trains, in fact. I started learning about it. I live 2 blocks from the track. I haven't been sleeping well for the last year, it makes sense. I'm getting reports from my son's second grade teacher this year, that she's catching him falling asleep in class. So, clearly he's not sleeping well either. We just opened Washington School, which is a half a block from the railroad tracks, to only kindergarteners. Okay, so not only are they going to, I think, get pollution from the coal coming off the trains and the diesel fumes, but we have one underpass and two other railroad crossings that the mile and a half long train is coming thought Livingston. Both of those passes are blocked, so we only have the underpass, and guess what? They're doing infrastructure work and they're getting ready to close that underpass. They're this close to doing it.

Male: [inaudible 00:10:03] rain, floods...

Courtney: What's that?

Male: [inaudible 00:10:03] rain, floods...?

Courtney: Well they're redoing all the water systems in Livingston right now but they're going to have to close that underpass. That's already a funnel right now. When those trains are coming through it's a bottleneck. People are coming from every different direction on the North side trying to get their kids to school, trying to get to work on time. Emergency services ... yeah, when that underpass floods then there's no way to get across the tracks in Livingston Montana. So I am asking the Army Corps of Engineers ... I'm demanding that you include us in this scope because it absolutely affects everybody along the rail line to Longview. Thank you.

Female: All right, so we have Chris and then Dan Woolery is going to come up after Chris actually.

Chris: I'm Chris Nixon. I live a 719 North Wallace Avenue which is about a block and a half from the railroad. I run a bed and breakfast there. Over the years some people notice the trains, some people think they're a little bit quaint but at plus 30 more trains with what they've increased already, it's not going to be quaint any longer. You're going to have a local business that is definitely going to be impacted. It won't be only my business, I think everyone that lives around there ... at that point you get awakened enough at night ... some of the conductors that you all know, honk a certain way. There's one guy that he wants to make dang sure that nobody gets to sleep if he's not sleeping. I just think it's becoming excessive. It's no longer nostalgia and I think they should include Montana in these reviews.

It is effecting all of Montana. It's affecting all of us along the rails. It's going to affect everyone in Montana as this pollution blows back over there. We got to remember we're not living in this self-contained bubble and we ship this stuff to China, it's affecting their health. Ultimately if affects our health and we need to be cutting the ties to this coal, the strings that connect it, as Beth said. So that we force ourselves to go with something better. You look at past history, we don't really do something unless we have to do it, and until we wean ourselves off of coal and these high-carbon fuels, how are we going to get ourselves to have a chance at something better with renewable resources and start really putting our funds into those resources that will take us on into a positive future. Thank you.

Male: Here, here!

Female: All right. We're going to have Dan Lourie and you guys are so inspiring and more people are signing up so ... then after that Taylor Meinke.

Dan: I'm Dan Lourie and I live on ... out of suburbia in [inaudible 00:13:23]. Last time we did this we all spoke about pretty much what's been said this evening. The health impact, the noise, the delays, and someone came up right at the end and said something that I thought was an absolute revelation and hasn't been said again tonight. That is that so much of the thriving economy of Bozeman depends upon corporations that come here and hire people because of the quality of the air and the quality of the water and the quality of the life of their lifestyle. Most of them don't have factories, they don't have plants, they have computers. The minute these coal trains begin to foul our air and foul our water and keep us from getting up first thing in the morning and going for a hike before work because the air is terrible, they will pack up ... they even refer to them as pack-up-and-go companies ... and so this unique thriving economy of our valley town will disappear. It's just that simple and I think that's a worthwhile point. Thanks.

Female: All right. Then we have Taylor and then Carson, and I'd like to remind you guys if you are going to leave early, which I hope you don't, please make sure and fill out a comment card before you do. So Taylor ...

Taylor: Hi, I'm Taylor Meinke. I live at 506-1/2 North Bozeman. Sorry, at 506-1/2 East Babcock Street. I would like to speak to the mining aspect of this whole thing. The resource extraction of coal is going to have a huge impact on our whole state. I'm a Montana local and the 5th generation Montanan from both sides of my family. The aspects that it speaks to is greater than just the mining of the coal itself. The loss of land, the loss of farmland, the loss of the natural treasure state that we have is really important to us as Montanans. As many of the speakers talked about tonight, coal in and of itself is a depreciating commodity. At this point with the coal is and even some of the [inaudible 00:16:09] research that we saw on the board tonight, that there is not a future in it as it is. I think that it's irrational to mine the coal from Montana in sort of a last ditch effort and a desperate move to make money on a resource that doesn't need to be extracted. I feel strongly towards this and I'd like to speak to that as well. Thank you.

Female: All right. Next up we're going to have Carson.

Carson: Hi, my name is Carson Taylor, I live at 8 West Harrison Street and I'm on your City Commission and I feel a little but like we haven't done all that we could do and I don't know that I can explain why. I can say this, meetings like this, groups of people like you all, getting persistent and articulate are what are going to force governments. Whether it's federal governments or the local governments to do more than they've been able to do right along the way. I ran into Jon Tester the other day, I said Jon what are we going to do about coal trains? The reality is more and more people need to be asking him that. As these meeting grow in size, you will give us more power to organize town meetings and say what are we going to go about this.

To gain some sort of traction and I'd like to see it focused in two different directions. One is, what's the effect on our town? Okay, the City Commission and the city needs to deal with that but there's an overarching issue here which has to do with the world and the environment. We have to proceed on both of those at the same time. They may be different jurisdictions or whatever, but as I listen to you all, you all are doing that. So how do get more people involved so that people will have to start paying attention and the changes that we need to make will actually occur. Thank you very much for being here and doing this, and keep doing it.

Female: All right. Any last minute takers? All right, we have a few people so if you can come up and anybody else who's in line ... we just have space for just a few more and so we have three here and just go ahead. Say your name and address.

John: Hi, my name is John Meyer. I live at 14190 Cottonwood Canyon Road. I'm the Executive Director of Cottonwood Environmental Law Center. Cottonwood is a non-profit conservation organization based here in Bozeman. We have hundreds of members in Montana, Idaho, and Washington State. We're concerned that the Army Corps of Engineers is going to overlook several significant impacts from the folks down in Southeastern Montana whose land and 4th generation farms and ranches are going to be taken by the railroad, to the quality of the Tongue River to the [inaudible 00:19:38] that will be impacted if the railroad is built. We're worried that the coal trains are going to have coal spilt into waterways all along the rail lines. We're concerned that health responders, first responders won't be able to react in a timely manner if there is an emergency. We're concerned that the burden of building the overpasses and the underpasses is going to be borne by the taxpayers and communities like Bozeman. We're concerned that the folks in China are going to have to breathe and suffer the impacts if these ports are filled. All of these are massive cumulative impacts that need to be studied in a programmatic environmental impact statement.

Female: Okay, we're going to have Margaret and then Carol.

Margaret: Hi, I'm Margaret Ketchiverian, 809 [inaudible 00:20:50] Creek in Gallatin Gateway and also Chicago eight months of the year, I work in the Cancer Wellness area for the past five years. As I was listening, I thought to come up and speak because what I found and many researchers through doing my own research ... and researchers have testified but everybody in the room knows that environmental disturbances, we cannot pinpoint exactly how they affect our health. If you listen to the stories of people with all kinds of cancer diagnosis, it's just too compelling for a commonsense person to know that when you disturb the water, when you disturb the land, that this is a risk to all of us. It's a risk to our children. I thought people can live in poverty and people do all over the world but if we don't have our health it's ... and when you see people suffering in ill health, it's all gone. Really overarching, whether it's people in Beijing or people in Montana or Chicago there is such crucial evidence that this is going to affect every one of us somewhere down the line. For that reason ... there's a great book called Living Downstream, if you haven't come across it ... she's a researcher that has had cancer for 20 years. She grew up outside of Illinois, a small town I think Moline Illinois. She's done tremendous research around how environmental pollutants in the farms outside of Chicago have caused all kinds of cancer diagnosis. So for our own good health, and our children's, I'm certainly behind this effort. Thanks.

Female: There are three more people testifying; Carol, then Traci, and then Joan.

Carol: My name is Carol Dietrich and live at 120 East Story. It's such a treat for me to be here and be able to speak with you, and you know what? I wasn't going to do this but I have two spots on the back of my back here and I don't know what they relate to but they just start hurting when I know I need to get up and say something. I don't know if anybody else experiences that but they just hurt like crazy. So I just have to get up and say. So I was able, in the last petitioning, I was able to go ... I have four different sets of petitions ... one I went to a meeting at the Transition Town Bozeman. The first transition town was started in 2006 in England and on their trip [inaudible 00:24:28] card, and I have cards with me tonight that people are ... I didn't know I'd pass them out ... it's so encapsulizes so much to get here tonight that ... how did this go? If we wait for the government it will be too late. If we act as individuals ... I don't know if I'm getting this quite right ... it will be too little. If we act as a community ... and I tell you, I am starting to feel like a community with the people who come here, to this ... like the first person who got to speak with her little child. I feel I like I'm a part of a community with her. It says if we act as a community it might be just enough, just in time. So I have these cards here and would be glad to toss them into the air and give them all to you and feel that we are a community. Thank you so much.

Traci: My name is Traci Isaly and I live up on Bozeman Pass, Sun Creek Road. My husband and I have lived in the same house for 30 years this year. We've seen a lot of changes on the tracks over the years and the most significant changes that we've seen are most recent, as you all know. There's a couple of things that ... all of it has been said tonight as far as the noise pollution, the degradation of our water and our air, and all of that. The City Commissioner, I think, brought up a really good point that there are two separate categories here. One is local and one is globally. I think that is huge that we think of it in terms of global. I served on the Park County Planning Board and I think one of the things that I really noticed is that there is a really loud minority out there of people who have a way of thinking and they make their voices really loud and really strong and they wave their hands and they want you to nice them. Then there is kind of the silent majority and we can't be silent anymore. We have to be loud and boisterous and say what we and how we feel. There's a book out called Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt by Chris Hedges and he talks about the sacrificial zones in our country that are all about industry. How industry comes in and they totally gobble up everything they can for the sake of making money, for the sake of energy here or there or wherever. They leave behind broken lives, broken land, broken environments. They were the sacrificial zones. This rail line, this space between Powder River Basin and Longview is a sacrificial zone. We need to really, really get on it and be loud. We need to, like Courtney said, demand that the Army Corps of Engineers does their study and include us.

Include every single community along the line because this is serious business. There's a lot of money to be made in this whole thing for somebody. Whether or not it going to actually come through in the end to be anything that China buys, maybe not, but somebody's going to make money along the way and we're going to pay for it. That's it.

Joan: My name is Joan Kresich. I live in Livingston at 410 South 6th. We're not really telling the Army Corps of Engineers anything they don't know and we're not telling ourselves anything we don't know. The issue is not that there are incredible impacts on us here in Montana. The issue is will we be allowed to have our voices heard. I just want to speak about some of the invisible impacts that I think the kind of destruction that this kind of coal represents. It affects all of us. We have a vision for the future, we're trying to push toward a kind of livable future. Those of us who are older and who can see the end of our lives would like to be leaving a planet that's livable. This kind of action Traci mentioned sacrifice zones, we know what that means. Our own bodies are sacrifice zones because they've been filled with chemicals we did not invite in. We're not inviting coal, we don't want it and the Army Corps of Engineers needs to hear us. We need to be heard because we are the ones who are asking, demanding, and building a future that the children who are young now, deserve. Thank you.