Docket EF-131590

Tesoro Savage CBR
Scoping Comment
#3815

From: Liz Rondeau <rondeau.liz@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2013 10:53 AM
To: EFSEC (UTC)
Cc: Bob Rondeau
Subject: Tesero/Savage Project, Port of Vancouver oil Terminal

Categories: Green

My husband and I would like to go on record as opposing the proposed oil terminal at the Port of Vancouver.

We live on the Columbia River in Camas with the railroad track is 50 feet from our home. We knew this when we built and have co-existed with the trains for the past six years. However, this proposed oil pipeline by rail changes everything. We were shocked to find out that the goal of the Tesoro/Savage project is to send 360,000 barrels of oil per day by rail down the Columbia River. We believe that this project will cause the reckless endangerment of the environmentally sensitive Columbia River Gorge, and of the river itself. The amount of oil to be shipped by rail is equivalent to 50% of the oil proposed to be shipped down the Keystone Pipeline, which has already been approved by the EPA and is only held up for political reasons. It makes much more sense to send oil in a pipeline down the prairie than to risk a major oil spill of a tipped over oil train on the Columbia River. Tesero has recently been involved in a train oil tanker spill in Canada and experts say that it's only a matter of when, not if, an oil tanker tips over and spills into the Colimbia River with devastating effects. We do not believe that sending this oil along the Columbia River is worth the risk.

We understand that the EFSEC is in the process of determining the scope of the environmental concerns to be studied for the environmental impact statement. We believe that the impact to the water table that would occur with an oil spill should be considered. Our water comes from a well, and contamination to the water table would impact all of us who use wells along the Columbia as our only water source.

The financial impact of the Tesero/Savage project should be listed within the scope of concerns for the EFSEC. The BNSF Railroad is planning to accommodate the extra oil-carrying trains by building a two-mile long spur with tracks terminating along our neighborhood, negatively impacting the value of our expensive homes on the river. If we end up with oil trains being parked in front of our houses instead of just rolling on by then the value of our property will immediately be significantly decreased. The negative financial impact will affect all the property owners living along the river when they're exposed to the risk of an oil tanker overturning near their home. Although the promotional material about this project discusses 120 jobs, the negative financial impact to be burdened exclusively by those people living near the terminal or tracks out-weighs that positive.

Among the environmental impacts to be considered is the amount of noise generated by all the trains. Theses oil tankers are heavier and therefore noisier than the usual boxcar trains. The impact of this noise will be worse as the trains arrive in Vancouver and will be a serious problem for the people who have already taken the significant risk of building the Waterfront Village which was planned to revitalize the downtown community. Selling condominiums to people who will be facing increased train noise will become a very tough sell while the extra train tracks make the area feel more industrial and less like a village. It would be a serious loss to Vancouver's highly rated livability to have two-mile long oil tanker trains noisily arriving and then leaving again an extra eight times a day or more over the current train schedule.

I'm sure that others are encouraging your committee to look at other serious impacts of pollutants from this project so I won't list them in this letter but my husband and I share their environmental concerns.

We appreciate your inclusion of our concerns in your scoping of the impact of this project to the people of Washington State. We believe the negative impacts of the Tesoro/Savage Project outweigh the perceived benefits, and believe that the permit should be denied.

Sincerely,
Liz and Bob Rondeau
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