Coal is an outdated, backward and dirty 19th-century technology. Not only is coal burning responsible for one third of US carbon emissions—the main contributor to climate disruption—but it is also making us sick, leading to as many as 13,000 premature deaths every year and more than $100 billion in annual health costs.

The Beyond Coal campaign opposes coal exports because mining, transporting and burning coal fouls our air, pollutes our water, sickens our children and destroys the environment.

TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD STRONGER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES FOR ALL PEOPLE.

GET INVOLVED!
Contact your local organizer to join a community of people taking action on coal exports.

SPOKANE/EASTERN WA: Jace Bylenga
jace.bylenga@sierraclub.org | 509-209-2395

PUGET SOUND: Robin Everett
robin.everett@sierraclub.org | 206-378-0114 x308

SW WASHINGTON & OREGON: Laura Stevens
laura.stevens@sierraclub.org | 503-238-0442 x305

www.CoalFreeNorthwest.org

COAL-FREE NORTHWEST
Clean Air, Healthy Communities, No Coal Exports

August 2014: Hundreds gathered in Spokane to bless a totem pole carved by the Lummi Nation’s House of Tears Carvers to raise awareness about the dangers of coal export proposals. Photo: James Leder

Credit: Paul Anderson
Oregon and Washington have made major strides to end our use of coal by making concrete plans to close our states’ last coal-burning power plants. Coal companies want to reverse our progress by exporting vast amounts of coal from the Powder River Basin to Asia using Northwest railways and ports. If they succeed, dirty coal would pollute our air and water as it passes through Northwest communities on trains and ships. But tens of thousands of people in Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia are standing together to say no to dirty, dangerous coal exports.

Bad for Us, Bad for the Planet

Coal leaves a toxic legacy wherever it travels, from the time it’s mined until it’s burned for electricity. Coal dust pollutes our air and water, sickening our children and polluting our rivers and streams with mercury and other toxins. Burning coal also creates carbon pollution. Coal will destabilize our local economies and markets overseas. We won’t sacrifice our communities to be a pass-through for dirty, dangerous coal.

Spokane has much to lose, and little to gain by allowing all these new coal trains through our town. Such an increase would harm our air quality, transportation systems, and emergency responses.

— SPokane City Council President Ben Stuckart

Unsafe and Costly

Many Northwest farmers and businesses rely on rail lines to bring goods and services to market. If coal export proposals go forward in Oregon and Washington, communities along rail lines could see up to 42 new coal trains travel through town every day. These 1.5-mile long trains would travel through the centers of many cities, severing downtown businesses from customers, increasing congestion at crossings, and creating critical delays for paramedics, fire fighters, and police.

Our rail system wasn’t built to handle the weight of so many heavy trains, which stress the tracks and increase the risk of derailments as they spew coal dust into our nation’s air and waterways.

Coal trains clog rail lines that already operate near capacity. As more coal trains leave the Powder River Basin for North American ports, Amtrak passenger trains on the same tracks have experienced delays of up to six hours. Grain, fruit, and other Northwest products are being pushed off the tracks to make way for oil and coal trains.

Our waters are a way of life and survival for our people. The bottom line is, you can’t mitigate or buy your way out of the damage that this proposed shipping facility would cause.

— Lummi Chairman Tim Ballew II

We Can Do Better

U.S. taxpayers waste hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies to coal companies, even as major coal consumers like China announce landmark commitments to using more clean energy, and communities around the world stand up to demand clean energy access instead of coal. Globally, coal prices are in freefall because there’s already too much coal on the market. Many of the original companies who supported Northwest coal export projects—including Goldman Sachs and Ambre Energy—have backed out due to community opposition and bleak market reports. The writing is on the wall: coal exports are financial train wrecks.

Join thousands of Northwest families, Tribal Nations, businesses, medical professionals, public officials and community leaders who’ve taken a stand against coal exports. Instead of handing over our region to a single, unreliable, unsafe and highly polluting industry, we can create good jobs by investing in clean energy, importing and exporting value-added goods and supporting our robust, safe and clean Northwest.

Spokane has much to lose, and little to gain by allowing all these new coal trains through our town. Such an increase would harm our air quality, transportation systems, and emergency responses.

— Spokane City Council President Ben Stuckart

The tide is turning against coal export—with communities demanding to know the true costs of coal export terminals to our safety, our traffic, our environment, and our economies.

King County Executive Dow Constantine

Photo: Paul Anderson