

Date: Jan. 22, 2013

City: Monroe

Part: Rail

Human environment: Noise, Air quality, Human health, Traffic or safety

EIS process: Area of potential effect

Comment:

These scoping comments are submitted to you in my capacity as Mayor of the City of Monroe, Washington. While the project proposal, as submitted by the project proponents, is limited to 1,200 acres at Cherry Point, the City of Monroe will also suffer from potentially significant adverse environmental impacts, due to the increase in train traffic through the center of Monroe.

The following specific scoping comments are provided for consideration and inclusion in the Final Scoping Document, in order to inform the various alternatives to be studied in the EIS.

1. Please analyze the cumulative impacts of all currently proposed coal export facilities and/or dry bulk commodity terminals within Washington and Oregon in a Cumulative Impact Analysis pursuant to the National Environmental Protection Act. Specifically, please analyze the cumulative impact to existing freight and passenger train traffic capacity in Washington State as well as the cumulative impacts to natural and cultural resources resulting from the increase in freight train trips through the City of Monroe. In addition to the proposed coal terminal, the BP Refinery located within the Cherry Point Industrial Area has applied for permits to develop new railroad (loop) infrastructure that is intended to accommodate a planned increase in trains carrying crude oil from the Midwest to their facilities at Cherry Point. This one additional train every two days can be expected to travel on the BNSF line traveling through the City of Monroe and then to the refinery itself. Please include this additional train traffic in the Cumulative Impact Analysis.

2. Please analyze the increase in impacts to the health and welfare of the citizens of Monroe, including impacts from diesel emissions from trains, noise, and the potential for increased rail/car and rail/pedestrian accidents through a comprehensive independent third-party Health Impact Assessment.

3. Please analyze the impacts to existing freight train and passenger train service, including impacts to shared capacity by the addition of up to nine additional bulk-commodity train trips per day on Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad infrastructure through the City of Monroe.

The following comments relate to the City's potentially affected resources. The City expects these resources to be adversely impacted by the increase of up to nine additional freight train trips traveling through the City of Monroe every day at the time of full build out of the GPT. We request that the "increase" in impacts resulting from this action be analyzed through the EIS process for each element list below.

1. Please analyze the increase in impacts within an EIS to the following economic elements:

- Existing and planned land use and economic development potential within the City's Central Business District, Frylands Area, and North Kelsey Area; all of which have development potential that will be impacted as a result of additional, longer, and more frequent freight train trips;
- Property values and assessments and the impacts to services resulting from a potential decrease in property tax revenue;
- Job retention and creation within the City of Monroe;

•Associated costs of transportation improvements necessary to mitigate safety congestion and access issues resulting from an increase in freight train trips as part of the GPT proposal.

2. Please analyze the increase in impacts within an EIS on to the following public safety elements:

- Response times and services of Monroe Fire District #3 and the City of Monroe Police Department;
- Safety of the general public resulting from idling locomotives and train derailments or collisions;
- Impacts resulting from accelerated wear and tear on the rails themselves, ties, supporting ballast, bridges, and crossings.
- Public access issues, including delays in emergency response time and operational access, caused by increased rail traffic;
- Impacts of trains idling to adjacent park land, including public access, emergencies and operational access, noise, and dust;

3. Please analyze the increase in impacts within an EIS on the following mobility elements:

- Crossing safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit buses, automobiles, and freight delivery vehicles;
- Traffic congestion backing up into other intersections, blocking access to side streets, alleys, and driveways;
- The following at-grade street crossings all within the City limits:

☐ Fryelands Boulevard

☐ 179th Avenue SE

☐ North Kelsey Street

☐ Lewis Street/SR 203

☐ East Main Street

As Mayor of the City of Monroe, I look forward to the inclusion of the study of these potential impacts as part of the GPT project EIS.

Looking forward,

Robert G. Zimmerman
Mayor