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# City of Mosier

U.S. Army  
Corps of  
Engineers,  
Portland  
District  
Mr. Steve Gagnon  
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RE: Public Comments on NWP-2012-56; Coyote Island Terminals, LLC /dba/ Ambre  
Energy Morrow Pacific Coal Export Project

Dear U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,

The Mosier City Council strongly opposes the proposed new coal export terminals which could result in an untenable increase in train and barge traffic through our community and the exposure of our entire population and our environment to the harmful effects of coal dust and diesel pollution. This includes Ambre Energy's proposed Morrow Pacific Project. Ambre's proposal will significantly increase barge traffic on the banks of our community. Moreover, we have serious concerns about whether Ambre's representation that it will use "fully enclosed barges" is technologically viable and whether the company, over the course of decades of operating the coal export project, could change its operations without any government oversight and public process. In turn, we request that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) evaluate both the environmental and public health impacts of shipping 8.8 million tons of coal per year by covered barges or, alternatively, uncovered barges.

The City of Mosier is located on the Columbia River in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Our community thrives on our connection to the Columbia River. Many of our residents and tourists are attracted to Mosier because of access to and use of the Columbia River for swimming, sailing, kayaking, fishing, windsurfing, kiteboarding, boating, and other water recreation. Tourists visiting this national treasure also visit Mosier because we offer excellent cycling roads through the natural scenic beauty of the Gorge and because the City of Mosier has invested heavily in a waterfront park that includes a windsurfing beach on the Columbia River.

Cherry orchards have historically formed the economic base of the Mosier Valley and are still the Mosier area's strongest industry. Vineyards have contributed recently to this strong agricultural presence. Within our city limits, Mosier relies more heavily on the tourist industry to sustain the businesses in our downtown core.

Ambre's proposal to barge coal through the Columbia River Gorge would heavily impact the Mosier community. This proposal represents a significant increase in river traffic along the Columbia River at Mosier. Ambre's application does not account for how its coal barging project will impact river users and Columbia River communities, including Mosier, that rely on the river. The Corps has a duty to fully evaluate the harm to the public interest that would result from Ambre's project, as well as the significant environmental and public health impacts of barging 8.8 million tons of coal per year.

The City of Mosier urges the Corps to prepare a thorough site-specific Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Mosier Pacific Project. This should including holding scoping hearings in impacted communities in the Columbia River Gorge and offering a public comment period and holding public hearings on the draft EIS.

In its evaluation of the Morrow Pacific Project, the Mosier City Council requests that the Corps:

1. Require an analysis of public health impacts and environmental impacts of coal dust if Ambre changes its operations to uncovered barges.
2. Require an analysis of public health and environmental impacts of diesel pollution from Ambre's barging operations.
3. Require an analysis of the economic impact of coal barge traffic on Oregon communities (property values, fishing, river recreation), including the City of Mosier.
4. Require an analysis of public safety impacts from Ambre's barge traffic.

The City of Mosier also joins the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's recommendation that the Corps integrate environmental review and consultation requirements into a single environmental review process that can inform the Corps' site-specific evaluation of coal export projects. A Programmatic EIS is necessary to thoroughly evaluate the wide-ranging cumulative impacts of multiple proposed coal export terminals on the City of Mosier and other communities that will be inundated with rail and barge traffic if these proposals move forward.

The City of Mosier and other Columbia Gorge communities that could be seriously impacted by the proposed coal export terminals have not been invited to participate in any form of information gathering or decision making related to Ambre's proposal. In turn, we rely on the Corps and its technical and scientific review of the project's impacts to understand how this proposal will impact our constituents and economy.

Thank you for your attention to this issue which could have such a strong negative impact on our community. We request that you inform the City of Mosier in a timely manner of any updates regarding the proposed new coal export terminals, including the Morrow Pacific Project.

Sincerely,

Andrea Rogers, Mayor  
Mosier City Council  
City of Mosier