Whatcom Real Estate Professionals
Against Coal Trains

When people buy a home or locate their business they look for good neighborhoods, strong schools, clean environments, accessible services, healthy local economies and appreciating property values. They do not seek noise, pollution, traffic and major industry that negatively impacts the single largest investment they are ever likely to make.

As real estate and financial services professionals on the front-line of our local economy, we implicitly understand what makes for a strong quality of life and vibrant economy. And chief among these is stable employment. Indeed, our very industry and livelihoods depend on it.

As such, we do not take lightly our opposition to the proposed coal train terminal at Cherry Point.

While the promise of job creation in this struggling economy is very compelling, we are gravely troubled by the undetermined costs of which our entire community will have to pay for these jobs, estimated at 89 to 213 at various stages of operation. 1

In addition to the 14 cargo and passenger trains currently running through Whatcom County, the proposed additional 18 coal trains per day (perhaps more depending on market demand), each estimated at one and a half miles long, will amount to upwards of 32 trains per day – one approximately every 48 minutes (if evenly spaced). 2

Excessive noise pollution from train horns and engines, dangerous air pollution from coal dust and diesel fumes, and stifling traffic and pedestrian delays along our developing waterfront and downtown Fairhaven will hugely detract from our quality of life, property values and business opportunities at a time when we can least afford it. Although a few people will benefit, it is clear to us that this project will be a net negative for the rest of us.

We implore our elected officials, policy makers and candidates for local office to join us and countless numbers of concerned citizens in courageously standing against coal trains and a sole source or multi-purpose coal train terminal at Cherry Point. We simply can’t afford it!

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Whatcom Real Estate Professionals Against Coal Trains is comprised of residential and commercial brokers, mortgage lenders, contractors and affordable housing advocates.

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1 Project Information Document, Bellingham Herald, May 21, 2011
2 http://www.coaltrainfacts.org