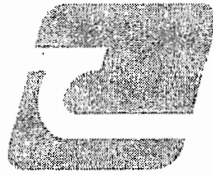


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COLUMBIA BASIN RAILROAD

December 8, 2008

Christa Dean
ATTN: 34936
Section of Environmental Analysis Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW, Room 1108
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Elizabeth Phinney
ATTN: 34936
Washington State Department of Transportation, Rail Office
P.O. Box 47407
Olympia, WA 98504-7407

RE: **CBRR Comments in Support of Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project – Moses Lake, Washington**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Columbia Basin Railroad in support of the Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project, which is a critical economic development and freight mobility project for the Moses Lake, Washington area. Columbia Basin Railroad (CBRR) is a locally owned and operated short-line railroad headquartered in Yakima, Washington and has a long and successful history of operating rail lines in the Pacific Northwest, including the rail line from Moses Lake to Connell. CBRR has an excellent track record of promoting economic and business development in Washington State.

The reason Columbia Basin Railroad supports the Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project is because:

- It will extend and enhance railroad access to vital industries in the Northern Columbia Basin area (around Moses Lake).
- It will greatly improve freight mobility and economic development opportunities in the greater Moses Lake area.
- It will eliminate a significant number of at-grade rail crossings, which will enhance safety in and around Moses Lake.
- It will reduce truck traffic and related carbon emissions as freight trains are more than three times as fuel efficient as trucks and only produce 1/3 of the greenhouse gas emissions as trucks.



- It will reduce road damage and congestion on our streets and highways as a railcar can haul three times as much cargo as a truck.
- It will help to retain jobs of current industrial customers in the Moses Lake area that need rail access in order to be more competitive. The jobs created by the industrial companies that need rail are family wage jobs that are critical to the economic livelihood of Moses Lake and the northern Columbia Basin.
- It will open up hundreds of additional acres of prime industrial property to rail access. As a result of the relatively high price of fuel, many companies are looking for rail-served sites that will allow them to be competitive from a transportation standpoint. By having new rail access to over 1,500 acres of industrial property in the Moses Lake area, hundreds of new family wage jobs would be created which would greatly benefit the economy and the tax base in Central Washington.
- It will eventually open up water front property for a trail or walking/biking path and other tourism developments.

In conclusion, for the above mentioned reasons, Columbia Basin Railroad strongly supports the Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brig Temple". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brig Temple
President
Columbia Basin Railroad
111 University Parkway, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98901