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"Robert Russell"  
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To <christa.dean@stb.dot.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Columbia Basin Railroad Project

Dear Christa Dean:

My name is Robert Russell. My family has owned a business in Moses Lake for over 50 years. I am not opposed to rail service to the Port of Moses Lake, but for safety and economic reasons I am very concerned about the proposed route through Moses Lake. Since the beginning, the preferred route has been touted as safer due to its fewer grade level crossings. This is simply not true. Yes, the *new* section has fewer crossings, but when combined with the existing track, the total route does not. In addition, the *total* preferred route crosses many busy arterials and goes past an elementary school. How can you compare an alternative route with only the *new* section of the preferred route? Yet this has been done since the inception of the project. Wheeler Rd. and Stratford Rd. are both busy four lane arterials. Road L and Broadway Extended are busy two lane arterials, not to mention the other four crossings on the preferred route. Why are we moving the track from one part of the city to another? If so valuable, why not do it right and move it out of town? Moses Lake and the surrounding area have experienced steady growth and can expect to for the next 90 years, the life expectancy of the rail line as proposed. What will be the impact on safety and quality of life? Does the potential economic growth justify it? Is there not enough industrial land served by rail? Who/whom is really benefiting by this expansion? According to the Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Feasibility Study to just break even economically will require 30 cars per day with a \$50 per car added fee, or 10 cars per day with a \$150 added fee. Either the taxpayer will be subsidizing this project to the benefit of a few, or there will be a great deal of freight traffic through Moses Lake with the accompanying train whistle at every crossing and the annoying wait in the car.

Again, if there is such a need for this project, I submit we look to the long term and do it right. Move it out of town!

Respectfully submitted,

Robert L. Russell