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December 5, 2008

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

RE: Comments Regarding Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project – Moses Lake, Washington

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you 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.

The reason we support the entire project with the preferred route of alt. 1A

- 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, we strongly support the Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,


Debbie Doran-Martinez
Executive Director