

heather.acheson@camaspostrecord.com

Hi Heather:

Please review and consider publishing the attached op-ed piece on the Tesoro-Savage terminal. I think it's important to hear from Gorge officials and folks at this point in time. Happy to answer any questions you may have. Many thanks!

--Amy

Vancouver Oil Terminal Threatens Our Gorge

The State of Washington is looking at allowing 28 dangerous crude oil trains per week to travel through the Columbia Gorge. This means through small towns like ours: White Salmon, Stevenson and Washougal, and on through larger cities like Vancouver. At 15 million gallons of oil per day, the Tesoro-Savage proposal would be the largest oil-by-rail terminal in North America. This is the most dangerous project our beloved scenic Gorge has ever faced.

The alarming safety record of oil trains means an explosive train derailment is a question of when, not if. Since 2013, over a dozen such accidents have cost lives, spurred multiple evacuations and saddled communities with billions of dollars in property damage and environmental cleanup costs. Emergency responders up and down the river are speaking up, saying we are underequipped and understaffed to deal with such an emergency.

The risk of fire and explosion could happen in any of our cities, all of which have railroad tracks running close to or through the center of town. As you know, the tracks also run right next to the Columbia River and/or along Highway 14. An oil train spill could close the Highway, shut down river traffic, destroy recreation like fishing and sailing, and decimate the salmon and fish runs for decades.

Even the everyday operation of this project would result in significant and continuous environmental and public health degradation, through a daily parade of rail and river traffic, and harmful air and water emissions.

Until August, the Port of Vancouver could vote to end its contract with the terminal developers. Both the cities of Portland and Vancouver have taken a stand against this project. We in the Gorge need to do the same. Please contact the Port of Vancouver and ask them to end the contract. Now is the time to take a stand, the risks are simply unacceptable. Call to protect our community from an oil spill or explosion; do it for yourself and for your family. If the Port of Vancouver fails to terminate this project, it goes to Governor Inslee.

--Amy Weissfeld, Councilor, City of Stevenson