

Laura Baumgartner

As a parent, a teacher, and a faithful Christian, I must advocate for a complete ban on Owl export facilities in Longview or anywhere along the Columbia. The ecosystem and river are more valuable than any amount of coal could ever be if we look at the long term value to generations to come. Development of coal resources not only degrades the river system and its ability to withstand flood events or storms in the future but coal development and export in the United States today also adds to the damage that mining is doing to our groundwater and topsoil supplies. Finally, exporting coal for use overseas adds additional carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides to the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is associated with catastrophic climate change. Sulfur dioxide is associated with acid deposition. Nitrogen oxides cause smog in urban areas. By denying the permits for a coal export facility, the people of the northwest can avoid unnecessary toxic and hazardous conditions from all these sources. Washington state has the opportunity to be part of a transition to clean energy by investing in long term industries and jobs for our communities rather than short term get rich quick schemes that leave destruction in their wake.