

David Turnoy

I live in San Juan County, where our economy is mostly based on tourism, and where orca whales are one of the biggest attractions drawing tourists. Coal terminals and healthy orcas don't mix! The Columbia River may be many miles away from our homes in the Salish Sea, but we are connected because of the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales. Our resident orcas swim that long distance, following the salmon (the Columbia Chinook salmon is also listed as endangered). What happens on the Columbia River affects us. The proposed coal export project in Longview, if approved, would increase the number of vessels navigating the Columbia to and from Asia. Any increase in ships, and their hazardous cargo and fuel, elevates the risk of accidents and spills in the river and surrounding coastal waters — salmon waters — further jeopardizing the orcas' fragile existence.

We need to ask the Department of Ecology to deny the Section 401 Water Quality Certification for this coal terminal project, because clean water is a must for the survival of salmon and orcas and humans.