

Anonymous Anonymous

I live in Rathdrum, Idaho. My family bought property recently in Blanchard. we are planning to build our house there. To our surprise and horror, local people started telling us about the magnitude of the Newport Silicon smelter. After some research online, I could not believe that such a massive facility will be built just around 10 miles from our property. We chose Blanchard because it is far from train tracks and quiet. It also has no industrial pollution. I'm very dissapointed about that. There will be train tracks in the area and so much burning of coal. Also there will be a lot of silicon emissions. The particulates will cover our crops. We were planning to grow organic vegetables in our own garden. The money that we invested into this property will be lost, because we see that it will be difficult to sell it for the same price that we got it. It will lose value. I would like to know how the emissions will affect crops locally grown. I also would like to know about the most common diseases that other populations have developed in areas surrounding that kind of factory.

I believe that the building of the PacWest Silicon smelter will affect the local economy negatively. That area of Idaho relies on tourism and recreational activities as one of its main industries during the summer. People will not want to come to a place severely polluted for outdoor recreation. The air will be negatively affected, on top of the summer wild fires. I would like to know how it will affect the air quality combined with the wild fires smoke. It will drive tourists away. Some temporary jobs will be generated, but those hired temporarily will return to their homes before the fumes and particulates are emitted onto my property. Local jobs are not going to be in high amount. They will have to hire people with engineering degrees from out of state. More people will suffer economically and health-wise than those that will have some professional and economical benefit. That kind of facility should be built in Canada, and they should handle the pollution. There is wood and water in abundance there.

Washington state is another good option, in a place far away from the Idaho border. It is a sad fact that the PacWest silicon smelter might be built right on the border. It is unfair. The profit will go to Washington state. The pollution will fall on Idaho. The Idaho roads will be damaged by heavy traffic. The noise of trains will be constant in that area. This is one of the real state assets that will be lost in that area. Properties will lose value.

Please, build that silicon smelter in Washington far away from the border or in Canada. The local people are not happy about all the damage that it will cause. All my friends are very worried as well. They are health conscientious people. They know the real threat of environmental pollution. Libby, MT is famous for all the cases of lung cancer because of all the particulate in the air. Desert places with no natural beauty are a good match as well for that kind of smelter. Many more people will suffer economically, health-wise and with lower quality of life than they have enjoyed it so far.

The environmental study should consider looking for another place far from touristic areas with well established populations in Idaho.

Thanks