

Kathleen Freeman

I live on Hoop Loop Rd in Idaho six miles from the smelter. We have a 93 acre organic farm. This is my husband's dream. He is out working every day of the year to make it bloom. The Hoops homesteaded a section in 1926. This is the last piece of the original section which Mr Hoop had to sell to retire. Three generations of Hoops have lived and farmed here. They at one time sold all the potatoes, beef, eggs, and milk to the people of Priest River. Our neighbor on five acres is Anne Hoop Hulling. She was born here and lived here all her life and even was the school bus driver for 50 years. We have an original pristine hidden valley. They called it the hidden valley farm. We are surrounded on three sides by forest. No one comes over without commenting what a beautiful place it is. We have one fenced acre for the house and gardens and one fenced acre for the organic gardens, a seasonal creek, a pond, 33 acres of hay which my husband hays himself and 10 to 15 acres of pasture which the deer and wild turkeys also use. What if the effect of 24/7 emissions from this smelter on our pasture, hay, organic, garden, fruit trees, and remaining 30 acres of forest. We have a small herd of heritage breed galloway cows and a small flock of saanen goats and a flock of chickens, free range, who share the pasture with the deer, occasional moose or elk, and turkeys. We have our own beef, goat milk, and eggs, and vegetables. What is the percentage of pollutants that will be in the soil, the plants, the pasture that are shared by wild and domestic animals? After all this work would it be better to buy our food at the Safeway? How will this affect our water and the ground where the deer and turkeys eat and where we grow our food. What about the forest that is already stressed from the drought like summers we have had recently. We are covered with wild geese who come to eat and drink here in their annual migrations. Will the water poison them? Should we drink the water from our three wells and water our garden?

Every night on TV we see how Cathy McMorris, the US congress wants clean air and water for every citizen. Is this some kind of joke? This is an unscrupulous business man who comes down here to do what he can't do in Canada. He wants to build something so dangerous to the water, trees, air, that it is totally banned in Canada. Every Friday I go to Newport to visit the fragile elderly from our Church St Anthony's in Newport and bring them communion. They live in a small residential home called "the Cottage" owned by Laura Gillette. Laura is terrified what is going to happen to her clients who are already sick and live and breathe one mile from the smelter. I asked Laura why Canada banned this industry from their soil. She said they have national health care and can't afford to allow industries that make people sick because they have to pay for it! Why would the US government fail to protect the fragile elderly here? Face it lots of people in Newport and Priest River and my husband and me and many of our neighbors are on Medicare. There is a huge home going up for the fragile elderly across from our church also a mile from the smelter and even the areas only hospital. Most of the people who go to our church are retired and fragile and on Medicare. Ecology to me is not just plants, soil and people it is the people who live here. In the summer tourists come to enjoy our air and water and ecological beauty--they are a large part of the economy and fairly nonpolluting compared to a polluting smelter. Unfortunately all this follows the same cycle -- industry gets away with it and destroys the environment and kills the people and then they finally study it and sue the polluter and spend a generation trying to clean it up. We watched that with the Ponderay river which was totally a dead river thanks to copper mining now coming back oh! let's put a smelter next to it and start over.....Ask the citizens of Libby Montana how the asbestos mining was a good business for their community. Ask the people of Hanford how nuclear power totally safe on paper was a boon to their community--the night of one of the meetings, local news reported 70% of the workers at Hanford have some sort of radiation poisoning. Ask the people of 3 mile Island. And those places were at least producing electricity

which people use. This place is just destined to make a Canadian company rich at our expense. Ask the sick who have been poisoned by manufacturing were the few jobs created really worth it. I could go on.....especially about all the children who go to school in Newport one mile from the smelter, Elementary school, middle school and high school. What type of government agency would allow all this pollution next to a small town of two thousand people with a flyway of polluting ten thousand more all the way to Sandpoint and beyond. This plant if you must allow it should be built at least in an uninhabited area miles from farms, towns, schools, hospitals and pristine sites like Priest River, Priest Lake and our beautiful environment. Like most people here now our property value has dropped dramatically at least twenty five percent. No one will buy an organic farm six miles from a smelter. All of us are at your mercy. We can't afford to leave. So your decision really is life or death to us. Please don't tell us how good it looks on paper. We won't believe you.....We have heard this plant will have great filters on the stacks. They will trap everything. OK but as Laura said to me the problem is these filters are so expensive that it is easier for the business to pay the fines then change the filters---How many businesses do this? How is this monitored??? And what about the clear gasses that escape. The UN has warned us that the next 12 years is critical in regard to CO2 emissions. How much would this contribute to global warming? How many other poisonous clear gases escape even assuming that we don't have to sue to get them to change the filters?? The constitution says we have government of the people, by the people and for the people. The people voted by going to those meetings with their feet and they were poorly advertised most of our residents who would have been there, didn't even know..... We are about to be ruined by a company which isn't American come into our country and ruin our air water and life by making a deal with the state next to us--they get the tax dollars and we in Priest River get their emissions and pollution.... Please help us your fellow citizensKathleen and Peter Freeman