

Janet Searles

I am extremely concerned about the effect of the proposed silicon smelter on the quality of life in Pend Oreille County. I am a senior who came here for the unpolluted environment and low cost of living. I am concerned about:

1. I have asthma. When I moved here eleven years ago I needed to use rescue inhalers and medication frequently to protect my lungs from the pollution in the city. After I moved here the clean-air started healing my lungs and I no longer have to use the rescue inhaler daily. The forest fire season has become challenging, and I am unable to leave my house during fire season. If the smelter goes through and the air-quality deteriorates I could become housebound.
2. We have wonderful pure water from our well. It is downstream from the little Spokane River headwaters located just south of Newport. It is also downhill from the proposed smelter site. How will that affect my water quality in the water quality of those downStream From me at the Sasheen lake, Eloika lake, and the rest of the little Spokane waterway?
3. Newport is bisected by the railroad tracks. Currently we have very little rail Road traffic. If trains were to run more frequently it would stop traffic on highway two as it comes through town. This could cause serious traffic problems and depress Tourist interest in the area. The roads from Newport to the Canadian border are not meant for heavy truck traffic, and could not withstand the additional burden.

In short, I moved to Ponderay County eleven years ago in order to escape the conditions in the cities. It seems to me that the proponents of the smelter are suggesting that our air and water quality will be equal to Spokane's. I did not come here to breathe Spokane quality air And drink Spokane quality water. Where can we go when Pend Oreille county no longer has the air and water we need to sustain our lives?