After reviewing the pros and cons of building the Pac West Silicon smelter in Newport WA, it is apparent that it is a very bad idea and should be abandoned. PacWest is a Canadian company that should build the smelter in Canada or elsewhere. The devastating consequences to the surrounding communities, the environment, wildlife and the local economies far exceeds the few jobs that would be created at the smelter.

The generation of an estimated 320,000 tons/year of toxic greenhouse gases containing mercury, arsenic, lead and other toxic chemicals, as well as 760 tons of sulfur dioxide and 700 tons of nitrogen oxide that are estimated to be expelled into the environment each year by the smelter will significantly adversely impact the surrounding environment and communities in Washington, Idaho and beyond, including Montana. Previously, the Pacific Northwest had the most ideal summer weather in the USA. However, because of global warming, over the past 3 summers our skies and atmosphere has been smoke filled from fires in the surrounding areas. This is expected to continue and possibly get worse. Additional pollutants, such as those that would be generated by the proposed smelter, would only enhance this problem and further negatively impact our activities of daily living, our recreation, the environment and the local economy.

In addition, the generation of crystalline silica dust, which when breathed can cause a devastating and life threatening lung condition called silicosis. Workers, people in the surrounding community, and wildlife may not know that they are being exposed to it and not experience symptom until years later, when nothing can be done about it. There is no cure for silicosis and it is irreversible (Please see below for a discussion about silicosis).

The use of water from the aquafer and the surrounding lakes and rivers by the smelter will negatively impact the water that is used by the local communities for daily activities, recreation and by the wildlife. It is also a major source of income for tourism all year round. In addition, the polluted and contaminated water generated by the smelter will adversely affect the water quality in the area. (Please see below for a discussion about the water supplies).

The local economies and lifestyle in Newport and the surrounding areas will likely be decimated by the environmental and noise pollution of the smelter, as well as the increased truck and rail traffic.

The consequences of the smelter will be detrimental to the people, the communities, the pristine surrounding lakes, rivers, mountains and wildlife. The property values of the residents will in all likelihood be adversely affected, as well as the schools and life style that the local communities enjoy. While the majority of the profits from the smelter will go to the Canadian owned company the local communities and pristine natural surroundings will be the recipients of the negative consequences.

I strongly encourage that the proposal for the smelter be abandoned. If not, and the governmental boards disregard the potential health and environmental consequences and the desire of the majority of the citizens in the region, and it is built, I and others would be very supportive of any future legal action against PacWest, the smelter and government agencies for any adverse health or environmental impart that it creates.

PacWest should build it elsewhere, where it will have less environmental and health effects. I recommend that it be built in Canada, preferably next to the neighborhood where the CEO and other administrators at PacWest live. Since they would reap the vast majority of the financial benefits of the smelter, he and his family, friends and neighbors should also reap the detrimental effects of being exposed to the toxic gases, silica dust and the environmental devastation that is will create.

The Newport smelter is a bad idea and should be abandoned.

William W. Faloon Jr., M.D.

Silicosis:

The detrimental health effects of silica dust are well documented in the medical literature and OSHA. The smelter, in all likelihood, will run continuously; 24hours/day, 7 days/week, and 365 days/year. Workers in the smelter and members of the surrounding communities will be exposed to the breathable silica dust continuously. Silica dust is frequently not visible and therefore people (and wildlife) do not know that they are being exposed to hazardous levels. The detrimental health risks of breathable silica include an increased risk of developing cancer, tuberculosis and autoimmune diseases as well as developing a very serious, disabling lung disease called silicosis. The symptoms of silicosis may not become apparent for years during which the lungs become inflamed and scar tissue forms. Eventually symptoms may develop but by then it is too late as the lung damage has already occurred. The symptoms include coughing, difficulty breathing, getting tired easily and in advanced stages can be fatal.

There are 3 categories of silicosis: Chronic, accelerated and acute silicosis.

The most common form is chronic silicosis which takes 10-20 years to develop and occurs when exposed to low amounts of silica over a long period of time.

Accelerated silicosis, also known as progressive massive fibrosis, occurs when people are exposed to higher levels of silica over typically 5-10 years.

Acute silicosis occurs when exposed to very high level of silica within a few months. The lungs literally drown in fluid.

THERE IS NO CURE FOR SILICOSIS.

Also if someone smokes, it is recommended that they quit because smoking can contribute to further lung damage caused by inhaling silica. The detrimental effects of silicosis may not be seen for years and once lung damage occurs, it is irreversible.

Are the CEO and high level administrators of Pac West going to live in Newport and send their children to school there? Do they want their loved ones or themselves to be exposed to these toxins??

For information about silica and silicosis please contact: WA State Dept. of Labor and Industry, PO Box 44607, Olympia, WA 98504-4607 and

Water supply concerns:

It is estimated that the plant will use 10,000 gallons of water/day. This will be detrimental to the surrounding aquafer that is used by people in the communities for daily activities and recreation and by the wildlife. The smelter will require this amount of water to control the silica that will be created and minimize it from becoming airborne. When airborne silica is breathed in it can create devastating health problems. In addition the contaminated water from the smelter will have to be disposed of , which will pollute and damage the environment and the surrounding communities. The smelter will have multiple detrimental effects on the water supply in the area:

1. Depleting the aquafer of an estimated 10,000 gallons of water/day

2. The contaminated and polluted water created in the smelter will have to be disposed of and will contaminate the surrounding environment.

3. The detrimental greenhouse gases that will be generated will pollute the air, creating acid rains which will further devastate the environment and the water supply.