

Marina DeMerritt

I am very concerned about the health consequences to me and my family if the smelter is built so close to Newport. I live within a mile of the site. The acid rain that is sure to fall will ruin my garden. I am an avid gardener who raises a lot of my own food. It is organic and the healthiest I can make it. What measurements can be taken to see how much the pollution will affect my kale, broccoli, asparagus, beans, onions, etc.? I just watched hurricane Florence devastate the Carolinas. One of the side effects of that was the overflow of a river into a reservoir holding coal ash. It flooded and forced the ash containing cadmium, mercury, and lead into previously unpolluted areas in the Carolinas. They called it a disaster. These are known carcinogens. Yet we are thinking of purposely harming our water ways by letting those pollutants fall into our river. There is no way the stacks will contain all the particulates that will be emitted from the stacks at the smelter. Who will consistently measure the ash product that falls over Newport? Who will measure the harm to our eagles, ospreys, deer and other wildlife that depend on the rivers and foliage in our area for survival? Who will measure the damage done to young lungs in the students that are practically across the road from this smelter project? Who will measure the down river flow into Spokane from the headwaters of the Little Spokane River which is across the highway from the proposed site. I tried to sell my house this in 2018 so I could move out of this danger zone. Not one person even came to look. Will my property value be completely lost? I understand the county's desire to provide jobs, but to locate the smelter so close to a small town is ludicrous. Find some far distant land in Pend Oreille county where the pollutants will do less harm to human and animals life. They will still get cheap electricity. Please figure out how to assist the people who live here in Newport to maintain healthy, happy, productive lives.