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What Should We Study During The Scoping Process?

1. The environmental, infrastructural and noise impact of hundreds of trucks, and trains, traveling daily throughout the region, including Idaho.
2. The impact on the social environment of the sudden increased demand on already under-funded local schools and health care facilities.
3. The impact on the social environment of increased crime and drug use by imported low-wage workers seeking relief from the very demanding physical work environment of a smelter and working rotating shifts.
4. The impact of dramatically increased demand on Newport's water supply system and the regional water table.
5. The impact of sulfur and nitrogen smelter stack byproducts in the form of acid rain and particulate matter falling on regional forests, pastures, lakes and streams. Calculate the amount of reduced fertility of cropland from altered soil structure; calculate the impact of acid rain on fertility and reproductive processes of fish and waterfowl. Calculate the impact on human health, particularly those with existing respiratory ailments.

How Shall We Study It?

As far as 'how shall we study it' goes, I feel that asking this question is patronizing, at best. You are asking simple people, living in an economically depressed region, who collectively don't have a high amount of education, how to conduct a scientific study? Seriously? You are the state EPA. You are the experts. What can we tell you about conducting a study that you don't already know? Asking this implies a degree of contempt for the position that we, who face the prospect of having our pristine Pend Oreille valley filled with pollution, find ourselves in. A project, conceived behind closed doors, illegally using public money and land, which now has the support of big money and big government, is being essentially ramrodded through without local support, and now you ask us how to do the environmental study? Yes, the 'representative' aspect of our government is broken, and the imposition of this proposed smelter on our essentially defenseless community is reprehensible.

What Are Some Project Alternatives?

Considering the complete absence of information about the project, the speculation that has produced, the ill-will conceived by back-room deals and opaque responses from local and state government, and the illegality of the land purchase, the obvious alternative is to build the smelter in Canada.