

Daniel Brasher

As a visitor who comes to Pend Oreille County frequently, I am not in favor of the construction of a silicon smelter in Newport and ask you to stop this project. I understand your wanting the economic benefits of this project but I believe other economic and environmental costs will outweigh the employment this community will gain. I grew up in Wyoming and know the downside to heavy industry. I also know that companies like these are not always forthright and honest with the damage their project will inflict on the area and residents.

Remember the battle over grass burning in Eastern Washington. That pollution didn't carry the harmful chemical that will be released from this project.

My reasons include:

- The smelter's emissions will degrade the air quality and cause health problems for children, the elderly of this area, those of us who visit, and adversely affect the entire population.
- Not only that but the smelter's emissions will damage the pristine natural beauty that brings people like us to Pend Oreille. As a visitor, I patronize local businesses. If I quit coming up to enjoy your beautiful country those local businesses will suffer from the loss of my dollars.
- This damage is compounded by the noise level of an average of ten rail cars per day and 250 vehicles per day to the smelter, plus the noise from the smelter's equipment and processes would destroy the quiet that attracts visitors to Newport, further damaging local businesses. This in itself may discourage people from moving to the area and encourage some residents to leave, further damaging the economy of the area.
- Blue gem coal needed for the smelting process will be brought in by rail either from Kentucky or shipped from Colombia and then by rail from a seaport to Newport. The transport of coal is hazardous and accidents are well documented. We in Spokane already deal with coal trains and oil trains passing through our area daily. No amount of prevention will stop a derailment. All it takes is one accident to destroy a river or valley.
- The silicon smelter will contribute to greenhouse gases, accelerating the onset of climate change. Emissions data recently disclosed in PacWest's Draft PSD Modeling state that at least one air pollutant is expected to exceed the Prevention of Significant Deterioration major source threshold.
- Light pollution is another factor to consider. This impacts not only the human population but wildlife as well.
- PacWest states that there is the possibility of accidents and accidental spills that could be hazardous to people and environment.
- Pend Oreille County is on a watch list of counties in the western United States at the highest risk of exposure to dangerous levels of pollution from wildfires in the coming decades. The amount of pollution released by a fire at the silicon smelter would be disastrous for the residents of the county.
- PacWest is not being forthcoming with how much water the smelter needs daily, where that water will come from, and how that will affect the people and wildlife in the area

In short, it is counter intuitive to imagine such a facility in our area that has such natural beauty; a place that families move to, to raise their children, a place where people wish to retire, a place where people come to enjoy the wonderfully rich and varied year round outdoor opportunities that the surrounding area provides. I request that you reject the construction of a silicon smelter by a foreign company in Pend Oreille County. I believe Pend Oreille County can find better economic opportunities that blend into the ethos of what North Idaho is.

Sincerely yours,

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