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To: [PDS Planning Commission](mailto:PDS.Planning.Commission)
Subject: Fwd: The Future of Whatcom County?
Date: Wednesday, October 02, 2019 3:10:25 PM

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From: **Dennis Withner** <hebedw@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Oct 1, 2019 at 3:12 PM
Subject: The Future of Whatcom County?
To: <writepds_planning_commission@whatcomcounty.us>
Cherry Point Development and Specifically the Refineries

Do we not, all, at the present state of scientific and technological development rely heavily of fossil fuels for the successful, pleasurable, comfortable and relatively economical continuance of our daily lives? Are we not all highly susceptible to the siren call of nimbyism? Do we not, at least generally understand that the world is not a perfect place and that some level of risk is always at hand?

BP and the other oil companies are huge multinational businesses that have a great capacity in generating an income stream from their refineries, bountiful compensation for their employees and an irreplaceable contribution to the tax base. These companies are fully aware of their liabilities from the production and transporting process. It is very likely that these companies, in the interest of limiting their exposure to these liabilities do a very reasonable job of taking due care in their business activities. Why kill the golden goose by creating even more ever increasing restrictions, limitations and financial and logistical hoops for them to have to jump through in continuing to provide products we cannot reasonably live without and bountiful employment opportunities for our citizens?

Coal Terminal & Graving Dock

In my time here I have seen two industrial proposals that were shot down that did no service to our county's economy.

A good while back a company submitted plans to build a huge graving dock at Cherry Point for the construction of off shore oil rigs. As I recall the plan was to allow public access to the perimeters of the dock as a park space. Not only would this have brought many well paying jobs to the county, but the park aspect would have created unique recreational opportunities to the area. For one, it would have created one of the best easily accessible SCUBA diving opportunities in the state. Nope. We had to protect the eel grass beds. Eel grass for the benefit of a few or jobs and recreation/tourist opportunities for years? The grass won of course.

The proposed coal terminal was even put up for public vote and defeated. So happens I live about a half mile from the main train tracks to Canada. I see coal trains frequently on the tracks heading to the coal terminal at Tsawwassen B.C. In my 30 years of residence I have never seen any evidence of coal dust, which as I recall was one of the primary reasons the proposed development was voted down. What coal dust? So, the trains still run through Whatcom County, taking all those jobs to our good neighbors to the north. Meaningless ecological feel good at the expense of the local economy and tax base. Pity.

BTW, section J of the Whereases, the "Reasonable Worst Case Scenarios", left out the possibility of a terrorist act and meteor or aircraft strike, all "reasonable". The train tracks run right by the end of the runway at Bellingham International Airport. If an aircraft was to hit an oil train, who would bear the liability and need for insurance in that situation? Better get with amending those oversights! Lets not strangle that golden goose!

Regards,
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