

Jen and Stephen Fisher-Bradley Women's Food and Water Initiative- Port Alberni, British Columbia

Re: Section 7 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL SOCIAL EFFECTS' is inadequate as it fails to capture WOMEN'S ECONOMIC STATUS in the region.

The proposed Raven mine's coal port may have the effect of changing the direction of the community of Port Alberni and the Alberni Valley as a whole, from being able to target eco-tourism, ethical tourism, and a triple bottom line type of approach, commonly agreed upon by local community members. According to community consultations, supporting the growth of small business to increase diversity, decrease unemployment and maintain the integrity of the community's viability is what local people envision for their futures.

The community expressed that they clearly envision a waterfront that is less industrial rather than more industrial and where the natural assets of the harbour are easily accessed and enjoyed by all members of the community. They envision efforts to detoxify the local ecosystem. They envision a bigger focus on stewarding those assets, in cooperation with local First Nations stewards, who are culturally, economically and environmentally familiar with the waters, the lands and the ecosystems.

It is within this context that we need to address the Statistics Canada evidence of earnings inequity that women living in the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District are forced to cope with. Full time working women earn 38% less than their male counterparts. Part time working women earn 68% less. A UN statistic we cannot ignore, on gender spending habits, is women spend, on average, 90% of their incomes on family; men spend, on average, 40% of their incomes on the family. The damage done to the community as a whole is self-evident when we imagine lessening the income of women in the region.

If the presence of a coal port facility in Port Alberni decreases opportunities for service industries and small to medium sized businesses to either remain integral, or start up, then the impact on women's earning capacity within the community will be disastrous. This, in a region that is already maintaining an unacceptably high earnings inequity ratio will result in more children in state care and an increase in domestic violence. According to the latest RCM police report to the city of Port Alberni the incidence of domestic violence in Port Alberni has risen an alarming 50% over the five-year period of the study.

Women are the primary caregivers of the community. Incapacitating them any further will not only have an overall negative affect on our families but will likely increase domestic violence, within the community, to an even more dangerous level than it already is. This unmanageable state of affairs would be of concern to all members of the community, male or female.

The earnings equity issue is an important human rights issue and adds to Port Alberni's total sustainability score. This number matters, as we refine our responses to climate change and monitor our ability to reduce our GHG emissions, and as we attempt to maintain social, economic and environmental integrity. Human rights are quantifiable targets and the resulting good health and well being that come of acquiring and maintaining them is also quantifiable.

ADULTS STANDING UP FOR CHILDRENS' RIGHTS:

Community members are fighting for the rights of the children and youth within the community whose long-term health; well being and socio-economic outcomes could be affected by an industrial development decision like the proposed coal port in Port Alberni. We need the CEAA funding being spent to present the reality of the issue, the facts, to fellow parents and grandparents in the community who have concerns for our children, those born and those yet to be born.

Children have a right to be protected by their elders. Our inaction on global Climate Change is irresponsible and abusive to the coming generations who will have to live with the results of our refusal to demand the necessary shifts needed to lessen, as much as possible, the whirlwind of consequences that we have unleashed on our children and grandchildren.

Parents, grandparents, and government bodies, all will need to do everything possible to push the world economy away from further coal burning. Our refusal to participate acts as a price signal, raising the cost of continuing to use coal as an energy source.

OVERALL HEALTH, STRESS AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS REGARDING POTENTIAL INVALIDATION OF CANADA'S APOLOGY TO FIRST NATIONS BY THREATENING SALMON AS AN INHERENT, CULTURAL RIGHT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC FOOD-SOURCE:

The added stress of a variety of unnecessary, yet totally valid fears, based on science, experience and data: the fear of a spill of either coal or fuel or both, the fear of spontaneous combustion or ignited explosion, the fear of toxin-caused disease, fear of more toxic industrial

products entering and or leaving Port Alberni's deep sea port. The fear of losing the Salmon resource, possibly forever. Remembering that if temperatures in the Somass River reach 24 degrees Celsius the fish will not enter the estuary and the species will soon die off. Responsibility to lower GHG emissions cannot be overstated in this. The fear of not being able to realize a sustainable future for Port Alberni.

STATEMENT - JEN FISHER-BRADLEY
PRESIDENT WOMEN'S FOOD AND WATER INITIATIVE

Women's Food and Water Initiative does not accept that any industry sector has the right to put these kinds of burdens, fears and stresses described in this document, upon any of the families of Vancouver Island. Families who are already struggling with economic meltdown, climate change and the prospect of peak oil in the context of a faltering health care system. Based on these realities we invoke the precautionary principle for all of its evident values and oppose this proposal and any like it that propose to ship coal or other dangerous toxic goods through the Port of Alberni.

Nothing should be allowed to impair the sustainable development of the Port of Alberni with its bright, prosperous and diverse future. Through consensus, many in the community have chosen agriculture for their futures. They don't see the coal industry's presence in our harbour, or on our Island, providing the quality of life, or the food and water security, that we need, deserve and have worked hard to protect, stewarding it from just such exploitations as the proposed Raven coal-shipping project. We have seen no believable evidence that clean-coal exists. The body of proof is just not there.

We accept, in principle, that saying no to coal, especially because it is the ethical thing to do in the face of rapid climate change, means we have to alter our own expectations of the amount of energy the fossil-fuel sector can provide to us. We agree to commit to the dialogue on how we, as a community, acting together, can wind down our energy consumption, in effect transitioning our town, and shift our focus towards our current GHG reality.

Women's Food and Water Initiative will continue to prioritize food and water security in a rapidly changing climate where there is absolutely no room for a coal port in Alberni's future. Whereas there is plenty of room for a very active, and diverse, developing and future use of the deep sea port and the estuary. A sustainable vision points towards this defined use of the publicly owned

facilities and infrastructure in the port as well as the natural resources we are committed to stewarding, together. This is the vision that WFWI promotes and supports.