

Resolution 13-4

Cherry Point Proposal for Increased Coal Shipments

Adopted on August 21, 2013
By the Clallam County Central Committee

WHEREAS several coal and transportation companies propose to ship millions of tons of coal to Asian markets from the Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point, Washington; and

WHEREAS the proposal could result in more than 400 cape-class ships departing annually from Cherry Point through Washington state waters and on through the narrow Unimak Pass in the Aleutian Islands; and

WHEREAS the proposed shipments would number at least 18 transits a day by trains 125-150 cars long and require up to 100 acres of storage for coal and machinery at the Cherry Point stockyard and an average of 5.3 million gallons of water per day to cool stockpiled coal; and

WHEREAS the Cherry Point stockyard is located on a well documented 3,500-year-old Lummi village site and lies within an 1,100-acre archaeological project area, including a site (45WH1) listed on the Washington Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS environmental risks are unavoidable in shipping coal in open railroad containers and in shipment through adjacent marine waters that are critical for crabbing and for herring and salmon fisheries, not only in the Salish Sea but throughout the Strait of Juan de Fuca; and

WHEREAS vessel routes and associated risks represent unavoidable interference with treaty rights and all fishing in the Salish Sea and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, as well as neighboring Pacific Ocean waters, all involving the existence of more than 60,000 jobs in the commercial and sport fisheries; and

WHEREAS one of the proponent companies, PIT/SSA Marine, agreed to a settlement in a lawsuit that established that the company had engaged in unpermitted bulldozing at the site for the sake of financial gain; and

WHEREAS bunkering coal ships in Port Angeles Harbor would create mitigation expenses and present risks of environmental damage;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Clallam County Democratic Party and Central Committee opposes permitting or siting to allow the transportation of any additional coal through the state of Washington or Cherry Point; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washington State Democratic Central Committee is urged to oppose the Cherry Point proposal and join in urging state and federal elected officials to oppose transporting coal through the state of Washington for export at Cherry Point.