

For Immediate Release
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Bishops urge comprehensive coal project review

The Catholic bishops of Washington state are calling on public agencies responsible for reviewing a proposed coal terminal operation in Longview to consider the full range of potential environmental effects from the project.

In a [statement](#) submitted to governmental agencies responsible for drafting the environmental impact statement, the bishops said the review agencies must consider a broad spectrum of effects to determine the potential risks and benefits of the proposed project.

A project of this size and scope requires “exhaustive and independent review, including: the environmental consequences of transporting coal in our region; the impact on jobs and the economy; the effect that burning coal has on climate change; the impact on regional transportation; the effect on regional fish and wildlife and Native American treaty rights,” the statement said.

The comment period on the Millennium Bulk Terminal – Longview coal export facility, which began Aug. 16, ends Nov. 18. A similar process conducted last fall and winter on the Gateway Pacific Terminal project proposed for Cherry Point in Whatcom County determined that the environmental impact statement should evaluate a broad range of impacts within and beyond Washington.

“We urge Catholics, people of every faith and all people of goodwill to join us in calling for a full review of the Millennium Bulk Terminal - Longview coal export project similar to the study already underway for the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point,” the bishops said in their [statement](#).

The statement said the Catholic Church has carefully considered the “connections between human and environmental ecology” over the past three decades. The bishops expressed particular concern about the harm adverse environmental impacts have on those who are poor.

“Catholic social teaching, which affirms a special concern for the poor, has long held that people living in poverty are most at risk if we fail in our responsibility to care for creation,” the statement said.

The Catholic Bishops of Washington State are: Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of the Archdiocese of Seattle; Bishop Blase J. Cupich of the Diocese of Spokane; Bishop Joseph J. Tyson of the Diocese of Yakima; and Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Seattle.

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