

SKAMANIA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 4

10042 WASHOUGAL RIVER ROAD WASHOUGAL, WASHINGTON 98671

PHONE (360) 837-3420 FAX (360) 837-3167

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Timothy W. Young - Chairman, Board of Commissioners
Skamania County Fire District #4
tyoung@skamaniafd4.org or 201-247-3361

Fire District Calls for Stop of Bakken Oil Train Traffic

Washougal, WA – Concerned over the potential impact of a Bakken Crude Oil Train fire on the residents of Skamania County Fire District #4, the District Board of Commissioners passed a resolution at their July 9 meeting requesting Senators Murray and Cantwell and Representative Herrera Beutler work immediately with The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials & Safety Administration, National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Railroad Administration to stop Bakken Oil Train traffic through the District, Skamania County and the Columbia River Gorge at large. The resolution also calls for the concurrent development of Federal Legislation requiring that railroads, as a condition of transporting Bakken Crude Oil through the Columbia River Gorge, establish and demonstrate the capability to provide required Hazardous Materials Response including Fire Suppression of Bakken Crude Oil fires in the Columbia River Gorge.

BNSF operates a minimum of two Bakken Oil Trains per day through the District. Each train consists of an average of 100 cars. Each car contains 30,000 gallons of Bakken Crude Oil, with Bakken Crude Oil identified as a highly flammable hazard. The District and surrounding agencies do not possess sufficient resources including manpower, Class B Foam and water supply to extinguish Bakken Crude Oil fires resulting from accident or derailment with the exception of the smallest fires. The non-intervention tactic of allowing Bakken Crude Oil fires to burn out on their own presents a clear Fire and Life Safety danger to the residents of the District. This is compounded by the fact that approximately 75% of the BNSF tracks in the District are inaccessible by fire apparatus. Given the region's susceptibility to high winds, this exposes the District, Skamania County and the Columbia River Gorge at large to substantial wild fire risk.

Skamania County Fire District #4 provides Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services to the west end of Skamania County.

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Resolution No. 2015-03
Bakken Oil Train Resolution

WHEREAS, BNSF Railway Company reportedly operates a minimum of two Bakken Oil Trains per day through the District, each train consisting of an average of 100 cars, each car containing 30,000 gallons of Bakken Crude Oil, with Bakken Crude Oil identified as a highly flammable hazard.

WHEREAS, the District and surrounding agencies, do not possess sufficient resources including manpower, Class B Foam and water supply to extinguish Bakken Crude Oil fires resulting from accident or derailment with the exception of the smallest fires.

WHEREAS, the non-intervention tactic of allowing Bakken Crude Oil fires to burn out on their own presents a clear Fire and Life Safety danger to the residents of the District. This, compounded by difficulty accessing wooded areas near the BNSF tracks and the region's susceptibility to high winds exposes the District, Skamania County and the Columbia River Gorge at large to wildland fire risk

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Skamania County Fire Protection District No. 4 hereby requests that Senators Murray and Cantwell and Representative Herrera Beutler work immediately with The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials & Safety Administration, National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Railroad Administration to stop Bakken Oil Train traffic through the District, Skamania County and the Columbia River Gorge at large while concurrently developing Federal Legislation requiring that railroads, as a condition of transporting Bakken Crude Oil through the Columbia River Gorge, establish and demonstrate the capability to provide required Hazardous Materials Response including Fire Suppression of Bakken Crude Oil fires in the Columbia River Gorge.

PASSED IN REGULAR SESSION, this 9th day of July, 2015.

Timothy W. Young – Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Dennis Gogolski – Commissioner

Robert Rohrick – Commissioner

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July 9, 2015

The Honorable Patty Murray – United States Senate
The Honorable Maria Cantwell – United States Senate
The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler – United States House of Representatives

Dear Senators Murray and Cantwell and Representative Herrera Beutler:

Skamania County Fire District #4 has significant concerns regarding the potential impact of a Bakken Crude Oil Train fire on the residents of the District, Skamania County and the Columbia River Gorge at large. The Board of Commissioners has adopted the attached resolution in response to said concerns.

We respectfully request your consideration of the resolution.

Sincerely yours,

Skamania County Fire District #4

Chris Fuller – Fire Chief

Timothy W. Young – Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Dennis Gogolski – Commissioner

Robert Rohrick - Commissioner

Cc:

The Honorable Jay Inslee – Governor of Washington
East County Fire and Rescue
Skamania County Fire District #1
Skamania County Fire District #2
Skamania County Fire District #3
Skamania County Fire District #5
North Bonneville Fire Department
Skamania County Sheriff's Office