

**For Immediate release: February 15, 2012**

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## **Port of Coos Bay Continues to Stonewall Public Information about Dirty Coal Export Plans**

### ***Sierra Club files Public Records Appeal to Uncover Details***

**Coos Bay, OR** —Today, the Sierra Club filed an appeal under the Oregon Public Records Act requesting information from the Port of Coos Bay about development plans that could pave the way for the export of dirty coal. The appeal to the Coos County District Attorney addresses the Port's effective denial of the Sierra Club's public records request, because the Port has demanded and has refused to waive an excessive fee — nearly \$20,000 — to access just 2,500 pages of public information. Under Oregon law, such fees are ordinarily waived when the public interest will be served by the release of the information, but the Port has refused to waive the exorbitant fee

"The people of Oregon have a right to know the truth about a project that could contaminate waterways, endanger the local economy and threaten public health by opening Coos Bay to dirty fossil fuel exports," said Laura Stevens, Sierra Club organizing representative in Oregon. "We can't let the Port of Coos Bay make their coal export plans through closed-door meetings and back-room deals when the stakes are so high for Oregon families."

The details of the Port of Coos Bay's plans to develop for coal and liquefied natural gas exports are unclear. The Port previously entered into a confidentiality agreement with an undisclosed coal export company seeking to ship between 6 and 10 million tons of coal overseas annually. News reports indicate that the Port was considering four coal proposals code-named Versatile, Mainstay, Clover and Glory. The Port is also supporting efforts by the Jordan Cove LNG project to obtain approval to export gas to Asia. In recent months, public records requests from other community groups and individuals have been unsuccessful in their attempts to access details of the Port of Coos Bay's coal and liquefied natural gas development plans.

"The lack of transparency surrounding Coos Bay coal exports development is frightening," said David Petrie, Coos Waterkeeper. "Just as Governor Kitzhaber said, this process should not happen under a cloud of secrecy. It is time for the Port of Coos Bay to tell the truth to those who would be most threatened if we open up Coos Bay to dirty coal and LNG."

Opening Coos Bay to coal and liquefied natural gas exports poses severe public health, environmental, and economic threats to communities statewide. Communities bisected by rail lines in the Portland area, Eugene, the Columbia River Gorge and along the coast would be recklessly exposed to mile-long coal trains, toxic coal dust, and the increased threat of derailments and accidents. Exporting fossil fuels could also harm Coos Bay waterways and the local economy by destroying salmon and oyster habitat that commercial and recreational fisheries depend on.

"The Port of Coos Bay has refused to provide information to the public about proposed projects that threaten our water and air," said Joe Serres, Friends of Living Oregon Waters (FLOW) president. "The rush to approve dirty, dangerous coal and LNG export facilities in backroom deals goes against Oregon's commitment to transparency in government and shows just what bad actors these industries are. "

On January 18, 2012, the Sierra Club and a coalition of citizens groups, including Coos Waterkeeper and FLOW, filed an appeal of the Oregon Department of State Lands' decision to

issue a dredging permit to the Port of Coos Bay that could facilitate coal or liquefied natural gas exports, and which would be the largest dredging project in an estuary in the State's history.

***The Sierra Club is represented by David Bahr, Bahr Law Offices, Eugene, OR, and Jessica Yarnall Loarie, Sierra Club Law Program.***

***For more information, visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/coal/nw/>***  
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