

## **May 4, 2011 Sierra Club Meeting**

Now I will go back to 1999. The agreement settling the Shoreline Hearings Board appeals of PIT's Shoreline Substantial Development Permit SHS 92-0020 was signed by Whatcom County, PIT, Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the five Environmental groups in July 1999. Another agreement outlining more specific terms was signed by PIT and the Environmental Groups. Because the League is a party to this agreement we must be cautious in our statements and our Board has approved the following statement.

### **League statement for Sierra Club meeting with regard to the 1999 Settlement Agreement**

The original Settlement Agreement—which was signed in 1999 by the League of Women Voters of Bellingham-Whatcom County, Washington Environmental Council, People for Puget Sound, Ocean Advocates and North Cascades Audubon Society — anticipates construction of a bulk commodity facility at Cherry Point. A few years ago, the project proponent asked us if we would be willing to modify this Agreement. There were some improvements that could be made for better protections, so we agreed to renegotiate. Settlement negotiations are ongoing and, at this point, we have agreed not to disclose the details of those negotiations. We will fight to ensure that, if there is a modified settlement agreement\*, it contains the most stringent environmental protections possible.

\* It is our understanding that if modifications cannot be agreed to, then the Settlement Agreement will hold as originally written.

Recently, we have learned that the primary commodity to be exported from the proposed facility would likely be coal. The League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County is opposed to the coal train traffic that would travel through Bellingham and contribute to noise and air pollution and create traffic hazards. In addition, the League opposes coal exports on the grounds that such exports will facilitate the burning of coal and will increase greenhouse gas emissions. These coal issues are not a part of the 1999 Settlement Agreement and are not being addressed in the ongoing negotiations.