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To:
Whatcom County Council
Subject:
Continuation of Cherry Point Moratorium

This weekend a friend forwarded a well researched article from the New York Times Magazine by Nathaniel Rich, "Losing Earth: The Decade We Almost Stopped Climate Change" New York Times.html, Aug 1, 2018. I recommend that everyone at this meeting read as much of it as time permits. It details the missed chances for reversing climate change between 1979 and 1989. It becomes clear that politicians, bureaucrats, fossil fuel producers, and environmental organizations, for various reasons, were all contributors to a host of lost opportunities. In short, "Almost nothing stood in our way--except ourselves."

That is the way I view the need to preserve Cherry Point and its aquatic reserve from destruction: Almost nothing stands in our way except ourselves.

Newspapers carry the image of Orca J35 carrying her dead baby and the world mourns. Why? An emergency effort is under way to save the baby's dying sibling. Why?

Salmon is the major food of Orcas, and we have known for years that Salmon are dependent on herring and their eelgrass spawning areas such as the aquatic reserve at Cherry point, clean water and the absence ship noise, at a minimum, and that they are on the verge of extinction.

Almost nothing stands in our way but ourselves.

Orcas are not the only species threatened by current proposals for infrastructure for increased shipping of unrefined fossil fuels by train and pipeline which would increase tanker traffic in the narrow passages of the Salish Sea sevenfold. A major tanker leak would devastate our already threatened sea and estuaries, and burning oil trains are not an unheard of problem. What is also at risk?

\$4 billion fish and shellfish industry (the fishing fleet which used to light up the bay from Chuckanut to Lummi Island is no more, and last week a fisherman told me about Dropping a crab pot near Post Point and pulling up a pot full of sludge)
Our growing \$2 billion tourist industry based on Orca watching, fishing, and boating
Human life and health

Having lost three children who were playing and/or fishing in Whatcom Falls Park along the creek, we know better than most communities that a pipeline leak can be devastating. If the leak had occurred about 1/2 mile away, an entire middle school (it happens to be the one my granddaughter attended) might have been wiped out. Please do not allow this pipeline route to be used for new shipments.

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The problem is not only fossil fuel burning, or poor sewage and manure lagoon construction or industrial dumping or careless or illegal water usage. It is everything we do to degrade the environment. But these are ALL things the Council can do something about to protect our environment.

Almost nothing stands in our way but us.

Although this county council has the ability to make a difference in a lot of ways, and tonight, by extending the current Moratorium and thereby preserving the Cherry Point estuary until language can be adopted that ensures that new jobs at Cherry point will be good jobs that will contribute to LIFE, you can make a start.

At a minimum this means that all bulk fossil fuels storage and transport be prohibited and that thorough environmental impact and public safety studies be done before any new permits for infrastructure (including new or modified piers) or use be granted. And the commitment to working with Native American governments must be maintained.

I used to hear about grain shipment and storage facilities, and clean energy manufacture and distribution at Cherry Point. There is no reason a deep water port can only be used by fossil fuel industries.

Almost nothing stands in our way but us.

Norway has recently been mentioned as a desirable country for increased immigration. Since 98% of its energy is generated through renewables, maybe they can be our model. Or China--not withstanding terrible smog caused by coal burning in major cities--has a province the size of Texas entirely powered by renewable energy.