

*The following is a transcript of the presentation given to the Whatcom County Council on Tuesday, 2016.09.27 by Ronald Scott Colson, CFP®, MBA, President, Colson Financial Group, Inc., Registered Investment Advisor. The Council listened to public comment prior to voting to extend a six-month moratorium on accepting new permits for the export of fossil fuels through the Cherry Point deep water port in Whatcom County, WA.*

“My name is Ronald Colson. I am a resident of the Geneva neighborhood in Whatcom County. I’d like to say thank you, Council Members, for your hard work on this very contentious issue.

“Our planet’s climate is changing in dramatic ways. Climate has changed in the past, but

- The speed at which climate change is now occurring is unprecedented in the geological record.
- Half of the planet’s species have already gone extinct in the past 40 years in what is now referred to as the “Sixth Mass Extinction Event.” (<http://news.stanford.edu/news/2014/july/sixth-mass-extinction-072414.html>)

“Scientists around the planet are sounding the alarm.

- Two points upon which they all agree is that the burning of fossil fuels is driving climate change and that we must leave fossil fuels in the ground!

“The fossil fuel industry is actively trying to stall our transition to renewable energy.

- Their only goal is to wring a few more profits from their business model.

“In what can only be described as a brilliant fete of public relations, the fossil fuel industry has somehow framed their business model as being “patriotic.” (“I’m an energy voter.”) But this is how it really works:

- Foreign owned corporations pay fractions of a cent for the right to extract our finite American resources.
- They sell them to China and India where prices are higher.
- Profits are then deposited in offshore accounts to dodge paying American taxes.

“Let’s be realistic. America will always need petroleum to manufacture lubricants, plastics, pharmaceuticals, etc.

- So why is there such a rush to suck America dry?
- Shouldn’t we be conserving it, instead?
- Why are we even considering exporting American oil while we still import millions of barrels of foreign oil for domestic use?
- Why not hire American workers to refine American oil at American refineries for American use?

“We recognize that Whatcom County residents can’t change the world all by ourselves.

- But we can dig in our heels to prevent the export of fossil fuels through our county.
- We can resist allowing the oil companies to ship our refinery jobs overseas right along with our American crude oil.
- We can protect our beautiful and fragile local environment so that our fishing, farming and tourism industries can thrive and prosper.
- We can honor our contractual obligations to the First Nations who lived here long before us, are still our gracious hosts today, and who continue to show an unswerving commitment to protect Mother Earth.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, we are at the crossroads of our very survival. The Whatcom County Council has a unique opportunity to make a fateful choice: Do we make a principled stand against fossil fuel companies? Or do we allow them to destroy much of what makes Whatcom County such a great place to raise children, to work, to live, to love, to breathe? Please make the right choice and block all export of fossil fuels from our shores. Thank you!”