

Dr Mark Jaccard, Canada's leading energy-environment economist, released the following public statement today in support of the citizen action to stop BNSF coal trains at White Rock BC this Saturday, May 5.

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This Saturday, May 5, at dawn I'm joining other British Columbians in White Rock at the pier to stop Burlington Northern Santa Fe coal trains from reaching our ports. Like others, I'm willing to engage in civil disobedience and risk arrest on Saturday to emphasize how important it is that we take urgent action to stop the actions that cause climate change.

The window of opportunity for avoiding a high risk of runaway, irreversible climate change is closing quickly. Within this decade we will either have steered away from disaster, or have locked ourselves onto a dangerous course. Our governments continue to ignore the warnings of scientists and push forward with policies that will accelerate the burning of fossil fuels. Private interests -- coal, rail, oil, pipeline companies and the rest -- continue to push their profit driven agenda, heedless of the impact on the rest of us.

This has to stop. We can't comfort ourselves by thinking "if it were really that bad, government would do something about it." It is that bad, and what government is doing in response is entirely inadequate.

Putting myself in a situation where I may be accused of civil disobedience is not something I have ever done before. It is not something I ever expected to be doing or wanted to do. But the current willingness of especially our federal government to brazenly take actions that ensure we cannot meet scientifically and economically sound greenhouse gas reduction targets for Canada and the planet leaves me with no alternative. I now ask myself how our children, when they look back decades from now, will have expected us to have acted today. When I think about that, I conclude that every sensible and sincere person, who cares about this planet and can see through lies and delusion motivated by money, should be doing what I and others are now prepared to do.

I pledge, along with everyone else taking part on Saturday, that my actions will be peaceful, non-violent and respectful of others. There will be no property damage. We will conduct ourselves in a safe, open and transparent manner. We are putting ourselves on the line Saturday because our future is at risk and we have to stand up for it.

Dr Jaccard is a professor of sustainable energy in the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University. He has won the Nobel Peace Prize as a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Donner Prize for top policy book in Canada with his book Sustainable Fossil Fuels and the BC Academic of the Year Prize. He is Convening Lead Author for Sustainable Energy Policy with the upcoming Global Energy Assessment, an initiative of the world's leading experts in sustainable energy. He is the former Chair and CEO of the BC Utilities Commission.

For more information on the citizen action to stop coal trains on Saturday, and to find out how you can take part, visit <http://stopcoal.ca/Action>