

CARD #04 EMERGING SAFETY CONCERNS

- Undesired emergencies [UDE's]; trains break apart
- Soil slides becoming more frequent
- Rising ocean levels lapping rails
- Mechanical issues

DETAIL SCRIPT FOR #04 EMERGING SAFETY CONCERNS

An 'Undesired Emergency' [UDE] or 'Emergency Application' occurs when a train comes to an abrupt stop caused by the activation of the emergency brake. In some cases, this application is engaged by the locomotive engineer to prevent collisions or accidents. In other cases, the emergency application originates with a train occurrence, such as a broken pipeline, itself caused by events such as extreme cold, slack action from poor car positioning or undulating territory. The UDE can be without incident, or it can be disastrous. For elaboration, including two videos please see the May 2019 discussion paper by Mary-Jane Bennett, transportation consultant at UDE link.

Soil Slides of the steep hillside on the west side of the Peninsula facing the ocean, are becoming more frequent. We have yet to secure an official report on all contributing factors; one can speculate that the effects of climate change, occurring slowly, are an important part of these occurrences; we advocates have documented 17 such slides along this 24th Ave curve during the years 2015 to 2019; whether this is cause to become alarmed may well depend on whether a future slide causes a rail derailment; see graphic to left to fully illustrate this important point.

Rising ocean levels are an inevitable outcome of climate change. This is an increasing concern for low-lying ocean cities and municipalities around the world. The Province of BC has mandated that all municipalities bordering the ocean create strategic plans into the future as to how to physically handle such concerns and occurrences. In response the City of Surrey has initiated over the past two years, their 'Coastal Flood Adaption Strategy' [CFAS] The focus has been on the Mud Bay area, Crescent Beach, and Semiahmoo First Nation. It has been reported, but not observed, that parts of the BNSF rail line north of Crescent Beach are now experiencing water lapping over the rails during high winds and storms.

Mechanical issues remain an ongoing area of concern for railroads including BNSF. One can discuss and comment about the levels of safety oversight by BNSF and the Transportation Safety Board [TSB]; rail safety hearings were conducted in Ottawa in 2016 by our federal MP at the time, Diane Watts; see TSB Data link here;

Recent examples of rail derailments close to home are the following:

August 2nd near Irvine AB ...

September 2nd, near Barons AB ...

And to drive home the fact that derailments do in fact frequently happen in Canada, here is a July 16th New York Times story (Yes, from USA)... View Story. ... and then a blast from the past ... "The explosion launched a rail car into the air; it landed a kilometer away."; on the 40th anniversary of the Mississauga Miracle, the G & M recently talked to those who fought, fled and reported on the fiery derailment... the miracle was that no one was killed... read the story and marvel at this unbelievable story...