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Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Puget Sound Energy's Least Cost Plan.

First, I would like to commend PSE for their commitment to renewable energy. The 10% goal in ten years is achievable and will benefit both the ratepayers by diversifying our energy sources and the environment by reducing air pollution from fossil fuel plants. But it's important that the basket of renewables does not include dirty sources such as burning municipal waste or sources that do not increase system reliability during drought years like qualified hydro. By calling these sources renewable PSE is weakening the green energy program that otherwise will aid in achieving the 10% goal. I for one would cancel my participation in the program if I thought that it included burning municipal waste. One of the barriers to adoption of the green energy program is concern that the money may not be spent in ways that the consumer feels is sufficiently green.

In my eyes the largest deficiency of the LCP is the unnecessarily vague role of energy efficiency measures. While details are not possible until the study is completed later this summer, the plan could and should make a clear commitment to capturing all of the cost-effective measures available inside the PSE service area. The UTC should put in place incentives to encourage all utilities to capture all cost effective efficiency measures. For instance, utilities will be more efficient if their profits are based on the number of households they serve, rather than the amount of electricity and gas they sell,

The overriding goal of the plan should be no new fossil fuel plants, for both economic and environmental reasons. It is abundantly clear that the prediction of stability for natural gas prices was wildly optimistic. When the economy picks up or the snow pack drops there is every reason to expect natural gas prices to go even higher. Coal does not provide a reasonable alternative. In addition to the health and environmental damage from the mining and burning of coal, there is the inevitable cost of any future CO2 reduction program, whether it's a carbon tax or an emissions trading scheme. Climate change is real and it's only a matter of time before our government reaches the same conclusion as almost every other industrial nation on Earth. At that time coal plants will be seen as a liability. The cheapest way for us to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions is to direct our capital expenditures to those source of electricity that do not release green house gases. Even by signing long term contracts with new fossil fuel plants PSE will be adding to the problem.

Thank you,

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