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new progressive alliance

NewProgs.org

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Utilities and Transportation Commission
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Olympia, WA 98504-7250

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Puget Sound Energy Integrating Resource Plan says it will keep using its Rosebud County, Montana, Colstrip coal generating station for at least 20 years. The New Progressive Alliance at <http://newprogs.org/> urges the UTC to consider alternatives because it is bad business, significantly increases pollution, and will reflect badly upon the United States because of the 2015 United Nations Agreement COP21.

I. It is bad business.

Peabody Coal and Arch Coal have declared bankruptcy because of bad business practices, not because of regulatory interference. The economics will just get worse for coal as more and more coal plants are retired and pollution regulatory burdens increase. The price of coal has dropped from 132 to 43 dollars. Arch Coal increased CEO and executive pay so much that the SEC noticed. Their CEO pay went from 3.9 million to 4.3 million in 2013 and 7.3 million in 2014. Why increased pay for a failing company? Coal companies have a long history of leaving behind retirement pay, jobs, and devastated landscapes after fleeing with obscene profits. Relying on a plant in Montana for Washington power operating on a declining fossil fuel whose costs are increasing is simply not wise.

The choice is stark. Either we dump hundreds of millions of dollars in an outdated, out-of-state coal plant or invest that money right here in Washington building energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions that will create thousands of well-paying jobs, improve public health, and significantly cut carbon pollution.

II. It significantly increases pollution.

- There is no such thing as “clean coal.” Smog forming nitrogen oxides, mercury, lead, arsenic, and soot forming sulfur dioxide make coal the dirtiest power by far.

- Medical professionals have attributed an increase in asthma, chronic bronchitis, heart attacks, and premature death from heart and lung disease for transporting and burning coal. Coal also produces more greenhouse gases than any other form of energy.
- Coal is an outdated form of energy that is polluting our air and water, increasing global warming and jeopardizing our children's future.
- Despite all of this, Puget Sound Energy still gets around 30% of its electricity from coal — mostly from an aging coal plant in Colstrip, Montana. Retiring Colstrip is the single largest carbon pollution reduction available in the entire Northwest.
- Burning coal is one of the highest producers of greenhouse gases and other pollutants. Mountain Top Removal for coal - which destroys mountains forever through explosions and destroys thousands of miles of streams - continues unabated. Coal pollution already worsens air quality resulting in more asthma attacks, heat-related deaths, and respiratory complications. Carbon pollution contributes to warmer temperatures which is speeding the spread of infectious diseases. Coal Plants also emit mercury, sulfur, arsenic, cyanide, soot, and lead which have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities. Coal companies are not responsible for these health effects or for clean up when coal ash spills and destroys water supplies.
See references 52, 82, 97, 98, 101, 133, 159, 174, 207, 308, 421, 498, 814, 830, 906, 1024 - 1036, 1156, 1214, 1216, 1292 - 1312, 1422, 1525-1532, 1666, 1708, 1709, 1722-1725, 1897-1905, 1960, 1963, 2016, 2038 2052, 2091-2103, 2224-2226, 2261, 2287, 2308, 2382-2397, 2540-2550 of this article:
http://www.newprogs.org/the_environment_under_the_democratic_republican_uniparty

III. This will hurt United States interests because of the 2015 United Nations Agreement COP21.

Even if COP 21 is not adopted by the United States, the increased carbon output from coal for the United States will be reported. This will surely put us in a poorer position with other countries when it is time for continued negotiations.

Conclusion:

Please take another look at being stuck with Colstrip for two decades because it is a bad business, increases pollution, and will hurt United States interests because of the 2015 United Nations Agreement COP21.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Griffith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "E".

Ed Griffith

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