

7/18/03

WUTC Reps,

I have several comments concerning the PSE Draft Least Cost Plan. First, thank you for encouraging public involvement in this process. Although I am unable to attend this coming Monday's meeting, scheduling it in an area where affected consumers reside is prudent and should be continued in the future possibly at a time of day later than 4-6 PM.

While it is prudent to develop a diverse energy source portfolio, I feel strongly that coal and nuclear-based electricity generation cannot be part of the long term energy resource strategy for the Pacific Northwest during the next 20 years. Even low-sulfur coal combustion gases contain greenhouse gases and mercury fume, and the mining of coal is devastating to the environment. For every unit of energy generated from a nuclear source at least three units are expended in fuel enrichment, plant construction, and spent fuel rod management and containment.

Obtaining 5% of the electricity load from renewable sources is a step in the right direction, and hopefully power contracts will be made with the wind generation facilities proposed in Kittitas County.

The definition of the 'renewable energy' in Appendix L needs to be revised in order to exclude municipal solid waste, waste tires, and industrial by-products. These combustion sources can produce toxic byproducts similar to those of coal and contain a significant percentage of constituents that are fossil fuel-derived, a "non-renewable energy" source. A new category (e.g. 'recycled energy') could be created for these combustion sources.

An annual target of 15 aMW in conservation savings appears to be pessimistically low. How does this forecast compare with the conservation savings projected by the Tellus study?

The natural gas portion of the draft LCP appears to have been written by a member of the Bush Regime. PSE predicts natural gas rates to increase at less than 2% per year, lower than the long-term rate of inflation. Recent history on the East Coast suggests that this prediction is a sugar-coated fairytale. Is this the forecast that PSE will use to justify construction of natural gas-fueled electricity generation facilities? The draft LCP views impending pipeline capacity contract expirations as fortuitous though new contracts may be a source of higher costs. These new contracts and "proposed new pipelines" (read: expensive and a political quagmire) may tack a Brothers Grimm ending onto the rosy NG rate forecast.

Thank you for reading these comments.

Trent Elwing
4033 NE 58th St.
Seattle, WA 98105