

August 16, 2013

Comments on Puget Sound Energy's Integrated Resource Plan to the UTC.

As a citizen and a small business owner in this state for more than 20 years, I have participated in PSE's green energy program, because it was promoted as a way to increase our use of alternative energy power sources, so that eventually we would only be using only renewable energy sources for our electric needs in the future.

This phase-in plan and program were a way to get the PSE customers educated and on-board with the switch to sustainable, non-polluting energy sources, and also lower the rates on these energy sources.

The whole idea was to phase out non-sustainable energy sources and spend significant funding on new infrastructure for the new alternative energy generating systems.

It makes absolutely no sense for PSE to invest money into a decaying coal-fired electric plant that will continue to impact human and habitat health, and the environment in many negative ways, when we now have enough history and experience with the use of sustainable energy technologies, for such energy production to be cost effective.

My son has just spent a year in Germany as a Bosch Fellow learning about many of the ways that sustainable energies are being integrated in the EU. There is no longer a legitimate reason to continue to invest money in an archaic coal plant, when we should be focused solely on wind, wave, geothermal and other alternative energy technologies, which have already proven their worth and reliability, and cost effectiveness.

This year, the CO2 levels at the monitoring station in Hawaii exceeded 400 ppm for the first time. I happened to be taking a Geology class at the time when it occurred. The subject of the class was natural disasters and touched upon climate change. I learned that over 97% of scientists believe that climate change is real and a significant threat to human activity and the natural world.

It appears that the PSE proposal to spend additional money over the next 20 years to prop up the ailing coal-fired energy plant, does not take into account the CO2 emissions that will continue to pollute the environment, and raise CO2 levels. Scientifically speaking, this would be a recipe for further climate irresponsibility.

It is vital that existing coal-powered energy plants be taken off line as soon as possible, and that no new plants be commissioned ever again. The coast is too great. The only thing we should be focused on from now on is reducing power usage (energy conservation), and implementing sustainable or green technologies in order to reduce CO2 in the atmosphere as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Valdez

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