



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, June 13, 2007

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ENVIRONMENTALISTS HALT CONSTRUCTION OF COAL PLANT

GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTALISTS LEAD NATION IN QUESTIONING FAILURE TO REGULATE CARBON DIOXIDE

Atlanta, GA – Citizens from around the state demonstrated their opposition today to the building of yet another coal-fired power plant in Georgia. The plant will add to the already high level of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions that pollute the air in this state. The case against this proposed plant is among the first legal challenges to power plant emissions since the historic Supreme Court decision in April requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that are contributing to global warming.

Friends of the Chattahoochee and Sierra Club of Georgia, represented by the Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest, are challenging the legality of the air emissions permit issued by the state Environmental Protection Division to Dynegy-LS Power for its proposal to build a 1200 MW coal-fired power plant in south Georgia's Early County along the Alabama state line at the Chattahoochee River.

“We are very disappointed that EPD has issued a permit for a plant that will only make our air dirtier and our rivers more polluted,” said Patty Durand, Executive Director of the Sierra Club. “We have the technological resources to lead the country in breaking the link between increased economic development and increased pollution, but our state leaders have not yet shown the political will to engage in a future of cleaner energy production.”

The Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest has identified 17 reasons why the permit issued by EPD is leading our state in the wrong direction and should be denied. Among the key reasons are:

- The Permit does not include limitations on CO₂. EPD did not consider whether to regulate this pollutant and should have imposed a CO₂ emissions limit on this plant. This claim is particularly valid given the April 2nd U.S. Supreme Court decision in Massachusetts v. EPA in which several states successfully challenged EPA's failure to regulate CO₂ emissions.
- The Permit fails to impose appropriate emission limits on other pollutants, including sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxide (NO_x), particulate matter & sulfuric acid mist. The emissions limits that EPD permitted are not as restrictive as necessary. The process for establishing emissions limits requires that EPD review all state-of-the-art pollution control technologies used nationwide and base the limits on the performance of these technologies. EPD failed to consider the best available control technologies for establishing regulations.

“This coal plant does not have pollution controls that meet national standards. While Dynegy will save millions by refusing to use the best available pollution controls, Georgia's citizens will pay through increased hospital visits, premature deaths, and damaged crops,” said Justine Thompson, Executive Director of the Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest, whose group will spearhead the legal efforts to challenge the permit for the coal plant.

Commenting on EPD's permitting process, Durand noted that, “Georgia officials have relied on old rules to permit a plant relying on antiquated technology. The EPD ignored the best technology of science and engineering to permit a coal-fired power plant which can emit mercury that causes brain damages in babies, soot that causes heart attacks, and other pollutants that cause smog which, in turn, causes asthma and aggravates lung disease.”

“After breathing smoke from forest fires 250 miles southwest of Atlanta there is no doubt that pollution from Dynegy's coal plant 200 miles away will have an impact on Atlantans,” said Jennette Gayer, policy advocate with Environment Georgia.

Bobby McLendon, President of Friends of the Chattahoochee, a group in Early County opposing the plant, said, “We live here and breathe the air, and our children are going to breathe the air. I just don't think that it's right for an out-of-state company to endanger our community for the sake of a Texas company seeking to increase its profits. It's just wrong to allow this merchant plant to harm the health of Georgians while providing power to Florida and Alabama.”

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