



News for Immediate Release

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Coal-Fired Power Plant Permit Puts Georgians' Lives and Health at Risk

GreenLaw's closing arguments urge court to force EPD to protect citizens, not corporate interests

Atlanta, GA – GreenLaw attorneys representing the Friends of the Chattahoochee and the Sierra Club delivered closing arguments today urging the court to force the Environmental Protection Division to protect citizens, not corporate interests in their challenge to the Dynegy/Longleaf permit allowing a 1200 megawatt coal-fired power to be built in Early County on the banks of the Chattahoochee River south of Columbus. Judge Stephanie Howells is expected to hand down her decision before the end of the year.

“By building this plant, state leaders are ensuring that Georgians will be forced to breathe more polluted air and our fish will be contaminated by mercury for decades to come,” said Justine Thompson, Executive Director of GreenLaw. “The state agency charged with protecting our environment has failed every man, woman and child in Georgia by abdicating its responsibility to scrutinize the Dynegy/Longleaf application and require that the company use the best available pollution control technologies.”

GreenLaw's challenge of the permit centers on the EPD's failure to include any limitations for carbon dioxide and failure to impose appropriate emission limits for sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and sulfuric acid mist. Coal-fired power plants are a leading cause of smog, acid rain and global warming.

Healthcare providers and patient advocacy groups around the state have lined up against the proposed plant. The Medical Association of Georgia issued a strong resolution opposing any new coal-fired plants.

“Particulate pollution is the most lethal of air pollutants. It can get deep into the lungs and trigger asthma attacks, increase hospital admissions and cause people to die early. Tiny particles are the most dangerous as they penetrate deep into the lungs and remain there. Both short-term and long-term exposure are harmful,” said June Deen, Vice President of Public Affairs for the American Lung Association, Southeast Region.

Dr. Sam Prim, a retired radiologist who lives near the proposed site, has been battling the Dynegy plant for months. “Particulate matter causes sudden death, premature birth, heart disease, heart attacks, and the list could go on and on.” said Dr. Prim. Currently Georgians have an estimated 26,442 asthma attacks and 1362 heart attacks annually.

Deen explained that children especially face great risk, “When it comes to air pollution, children are more vulnerable than adults. Their lungs are still developing, so they can be easily damaged. Because they are active and outdoors more often, they can end up breathing more air pollution per pound than adults.”

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If the permit stands, the coal-fire power plant would generate the following (typical power plant comparisons are according to the Union of Concerned Scientists):

- This plant would produce 9 million tons of global warming carbon dioxide pollution annually—equal to adding 1.3 million cars on Georgia’s roads every year. A typical plant produces 3.7 million tons annually.
- The plant will unnecessarily emit 4,700 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) every year.
- This plant will violate EPA’s standards for safe air by exceeding ambient air quality standards for fine particulate matter where the plant is located.
- The plant will emit nitrogen oxide (NO_x), causing smog, acid rain, and health problems (EPD is allowing Dynegy to save money by capturing only 67% of these emissions).
- This plant will be allowed to take more than 20 million gallons (net) per day from the Chattahoochee River—the permit allows intake of 27 M gallons, of which roughly 5 M are supposed to be returned.

“Georgia already has 10 coal plants,” said Patty Durand, Georgia Chapter Director of the Sierra Club. “We do not need another coal plant. No elected officials at the Public Service Commission or Legislature have determined that Georgia needs this new dirty energy. And if the energy goes out-of-state, we sure don’t want to be left with the pollution.”

Dynegy has hired King & Spalding to “intervene” on its behalf as part of the legal team helping EPD and the Attorney General summarize their position on Thursday. GreenLaw attorney George Hays will start closing arguments around 9:30 a.m. at the Office of State Administrative Hearings, 230 Peachtree Street, 8th floor.

For more information, news releases, and legal documents visit www.green-law.org (coal article contains final proceedings document as well as original public comments and filing of the case in June).

GreenLaw is dedicated to preventing air and water pollution that endangers human health and degrades Georgia’s natural resources. GreenLaw achieves these goals by providing free high quality legal and technical assistance to environmental organizations and community groups throughout Georgia.
www.green-law.org

The **Sierra Club** works to protect our communities and the planet. Inspired by nature to contribute and participate, our members and supporters number more than 1.3 million friends and neighbors. The Club is America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. For more information visit:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/> .

Friends of the Chattahoochee seek to protect the Chattahoochee River and the environment. A multi-state, non-profit organization that opposes any new industry that will adversely impact the Chattahoochee River watershed, it monitors existing industry to ensure that all environmental regulations and safeguards are being adhered to.

For more information about coal-fired power plants visit www.NoNewCoal.org.

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