



September 7, 2026

RE: Strong Support for the TransAlta Centralia Conversion Project

Dear Washington State Leaders and Decision-Makers:

On behalf of the **Economic Alliance of Lewis County**, I am writing to express our strong support for TransAlta's **Centralia Conversion Project** and the continued productive use of the Centralia energy facility as a critical component of Washington's energy and economic infrastructure.

Reliable, sufficient, and competitively priced energy is one of Washington State's most important economic development priorities. As communities compete for advanced manufacturing, technology, clean-energy industries, data-intensive businesses, and other major employers, access to dependable electrical capacity is increasingly a determining factor in where companies invest and create jobs. Washington cannot achieve its economic development objectives without ensuring that adequate generation and transmission resources are available to support both existing employers and future growth.

The Centralia Conversion Project can play an important role in meeting that need. The project would convert Centralia Unit 2 from coal to natural gas and provide up to **723 MW of firm, dispatchable generating capacity** from an existing strategic energy site. Regional forecasts indicate significant capacity needs beginning as early as 2028. Maintaining dispatchable resources is particularly important during periods of high demand, low hydroelectric generation, extreme weather, or when wind and solar resources are limited.

For Lewis County, this project is also about **jobs, investment, and economic opportunity**. The conversion is expected to support approximately **700 construction jobs**, preserve more than **40 permanent positions**, and extend productive operation of the Centralia facility through 2044. It will also continue generating economic activity for local contractors, suppliers, service businesses, and communities throughout the region.

Importantly, this investment utilizes existing generation, transmission, utility, and industrial infrastructure rather than developing an entirely new site. Preserving and modernizing this infrastructure strengthens one of Lewis County's most significant industrial assets and provides Washington with a resource that would be extremely difficult and costly to replicate.

The project also represents substantial environmental progress compared with historic coal generation. At the proposed operating profile, greenhouse gas emissions are projected to decline approximately **51 percent**, sulfur dioxide approximately **99 percent**, with significant reductions in other major pollutants. The converted facility can complement Washington's continued development of renewable generation and energy storage by providing reliability when those resources cannot fully meet system demand.

Lewis County has experienced firsthand the economic impacts of Washington's changing energy landscape. Our community has worked hard to diversify its economy following the closure of coal mining and the retirement of coal generation. We believe the next phase of Washington's energy transition must recognize an equally important principle: **energy reliability and energy capacity are economic development infrastructure.**



Washington's ability to attract major private investment, expand manufacturing, create family-wage jobs, and remain economically competitive will increasingly depend upon having sufficient power available when and where businesses need it. The Centralia site is uniquely positioned to contribute to that objective.

The **Economic Alliance of Lewis County strongly supports the TransAlta Centralia Conversion Project** and encourages Washington State agencies and decision-makers to provide a thorough, coordinated, and timely review of the permits and approvals necessary for the project to proceed toward its anticipated 2028 operation.

Washington needs a clean energy future—but it must also be a **reliable, affordable, and economically competitive energy future**. We believe the Centralia Conversion Project can help Washington achieve both.

Sincerely,

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