

Rosemary Moore

This comment is in response to the Washington Department of Ecology's support for a new "natural" gas power plant on the shuttered coal plant in Centralia by the Canadian TransAlta corporation.

I strongly oppose the plant and urge you to invest in more renewable energy.

2026 is set to be another extremely hot year as a result of our continuing reliance on fossil fuels, the climate change that is already occurring and an El Niño. Years like these are no longer an aberration: they are the new normal, bringing with them unbearable heat waves, uncontained destructive wildfires, droughts, and flooding which all cause devastating injuries and hardship.

It is shocking that our utilities (many of which are for-profit and answerable to shareholders) continue with business as usual and fail to urgently address our greenhouse gas emissions. As a parent and grandparent, I urge you to ensure that we fulfil Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA)'s requirements for the sake of our environment and current and future generations.

It is argued, falsely, that this project is needed because the region faces capacity deficits and reliability risks. However, the SEPA provides a choice of EITHER continuing coal operations OR building a new gas turbine. Neither is acceptable. We must instead properly evaluate other alternatives such as investing in more renewable energy, improving our grid/ transmission upgrades, energy efficiency, long-duration energy storage, and distributed energy resources.

Omitting these alternatives is a false choice, suggesting that gas conversion is the only practical response when these other combinations of resources can also address reliability and sufficiency concerns, without the highly destructive consequences of continuing to rely on fossil fuels.

It is particularly shortsighted to raise the risk of brownouts and blackouts when continued reliance on fossil fuels will have – and is having far worse consequences than occasional blackouts. Further, blackouts are not inevitable; there are other alternatives: better storage, better transmission, and more renewables. The SEPA also uses coal as the comparator and baseline (hardly a convincing argument!), fails to look at the total actual lifetime greenhouse gas emissions that will be emitted from the gas plant, or the comparative absolute health costs and emissions that will result from choosing gas over renewables. Economically, PSE is even seeking a rate hike to pay for this polluting gas plant. If we must pay more, we should be investing in renewables. Finally, when considering future needs we must require data centers to be powered by renewable energy if they are to be allowed in this state. Why should we poison our world to accommodate these when they are well able to be powered by renewables, and should be?

I urge you not to rubber stamp this proposal and to deny it. Thank you for considering this comment.