

Tuesday, November 4, 2014

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814



Subject: Comment Letter—Once-Through Cooling Policy Special Studies -- Don't Exempt Diablo Canyon from Marine Life Protection. Make Diablo Canyon install modern cooling towers.

Dear California Water Board Chairwoman Marcus,

(cc: Vice Chair Frances Spivy-Weber, Tam Doduc, Steven Moore, Dorene D'Amamo)

I urge you to bring Pacific Gas & Electric Company's Diablo Canyon fully into line with California's landmark coastal protection policy by eliminating once-through cooling (OTC) and requiring that cooling towers be installed at the power plant.

"Our duty to the whole, including to the unborn generations, bids us to restrain an unprincipled present-day minority from wasting the heritage of these unborn generations. The movement for the conservation of wildlife and the larger movement for the conservation of all our natural resources are essentially democratic in spirit, purpose and method."
-- Theodore Roosevelt

Diablo Canyon's outdated OTC system draws an estimated 2.5 billion gallons of water per day and discharges that water back into the ocean 20 degrees hotter, killing more than a billion young fish and other species a year. In 2010, California ordered all power plants on its iconic coastline to modernize their cooling systems in order to stop the damage done to marine life and protect the coastal environment, yet granted the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant an exemption through 2015. As Diablo Canyon is responsible for nearly 80% of OTC ocean water withdrawals in California, to extend the exemption for Diablo Canyon and allow Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) to flout the law would effectively gut the state's OTC policy.

"These temple destroyers, devotees of ravaging commercialism, seem to have a perfect contempt for nature, and, instead of lifting their eyes to the God of the Mountains, lift them to the almighty dollar."
-- John Muir

Several experts, including California's energy regulators, have concluded that cooling towers can be built at Diablo Canyon and that installing them is the only way to significantly reduce the destruction of the marine environment caused by the power plant's OTC system. With California's OTC policy dating back to May 2010, it is long

overdue that PG&E be required to install this modern, readily available solution at the Diablo site.

“As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering for our own ease and convenience the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.”

-- Dwight D. Eisenhower

More and more of the state is feeling the tremendous pressure of this historic drought. We need our energy generation facilities to be just as ambitious in their efforts to conserve water as the rest of us. We need technology that will ensure that the beautiful marine environment off the coast of California is adequately protected. Current policy puts our coastal power plants on track to do just that. Please don't let PG&E undo our coastal protections or the state's efforts to save water.

“Every man who appreciates the majesty and beauty of the wilderness and of wild life, should strike hands with the farsighted men who wish to preserve our material resources, in the effort to keep our forests and our game beasts, game-birds, and game-fish—indeed, all the living creatures of prairie and woodland and seashore—from wanton destruction. Above all, we should realize that the effort toward this end is essentially a democratic movement.”

-- Theodore Roosevelt

I urge the State Water Resource Control Board to reject Diablo Canyon's request for exemption from California's "Once Through Cooling" policy and protect our marine environment. The only way to honor the intent of California's OTC policy and protect the interests of the public and the environment is to require PG&E to build cooling towers at the Diablo Canyon power plant as soon as possible. I urge the Board to take this action before the end of the year.

“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”

-- Aldo Leopold

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Please do NOT add my name to your mailing list. I will learn about future developments on this issue from other sources.

Sincerely,
Christopher Lish
Olema, CA