

As you may know our monopoly utility, NorthWestern Energy (NWE), filed an energy procurement plan last summer with Montana's Public Service Commission (PSC). That plan gave short shrift to energy efficiency and renewable energy and committed Montana to a new \$1.3 billion fossil fuel infrastructure.

350 Montana worked hard over the past six months to oppose the plan.

The PSC held hearings on the plan and released its judgment on February 2. Commissioners essentially rejected NWE's plan to build new gas-fired power plants, finding:

- NWE did not properly evaluate alternatives to natural gas plants, including wind, solar, geothermal, energy efficiency, battery storage, and pumped hydro storage.
- The commission specifically agreed that NWE did not properly model the costs and benefits of wind and solar, saying the utility over priced wind and solar and did not accurately evaluate the amount of energy these sources can provide (capacity value).
- The utility did not adequately consider how energy efficiency could be used to help meet peak demand instead of building gas peaker plants.
- The utility has not yet figured out how to optimally integrate the hydro facilities they bought in 2014 with the generation resources they already owned and have since acquired. Without this, we do not have a reliable baseline number for NWE's true future energy needs.

The commission essentially told NWE to go back to the drawing board and gave the company until December 2018 to come up with a new long-term resource plan. They gave NWE specific instructions to make that process much more transparent and have broader participation. From now on, NWE must engage in "a rigorous stakeholder process."

This is a big victory for the climate and proof that public participation works!

What YOU Can Do Next:

1. Support 350Montana.org and/or any of the co-sponsoring organizations.

Contact us at: 350Montana.org and help us with more climate victories!

2. Write a letter to Bob Rowe, CEO, NorthWestern Energy, PO Box 4467, Missoula, MT., 59806.

Ask him to support more renewable energy for Montana, not natural gas facilities.

3. Contact the Public Service Commission at psc.mt.gov. Missoula's commissioner (District 4) is Bob Lake.

Call him at 406-444-6167 and thank him for telling NWE to come back with a plan for more renewable energy for Montana, not natural gas facilities.

4. Contact Your Elected Officials...

- **Governor Bullock** at governor@mt.gov.
- **To reach state legislators** go to leg.mt.gov, then click on "Send a message to a legislator."

- **Senator Daines** can be reached at daines.senate.gov

- **Senator Tester** at tester.senate.gov.

Let them know you support more renewable energy for Montana and the nation, not fossil fuels and not the Keystone XL Pipeline or the Dakota Access Pipeline.

5. Write a Letter to the Editor ...

- **Missoulian:** Online (limit 300 words) missoulian.com/app/opedform/

- **Independent:** Email (limit 400 words) editor@missoulanews.com

Write from your heart and help others learn about the importance of climate change so they can join the movement with us!