

Alachua County Chapter

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Florida League of Conservation Voters

Comments Presented at the City Commission Meeting

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In this day and age of scientific advancement it is anachronistic to embrace past technologies that have been proven to jeopardize the health of human and other living populations. Over many decades, scientific studies have demonstrated that effluents of Coal-fired Plant pollutants include sulfur, lead, cadmium and mercury and that these by-products of burning coal adversely affect our lungs, nervous systems, immune systems and more. These reasons, among others, ~~add~~ ^{are} why the preponderance of our citizens rejects an additional coal-burning plant.

The other alternatives offered in the ICF Report include Integrated Gasification which is an expansion of electrical generation and combines the use of gas and coal. While it is claimed that most of the coal-generated pollutants would be eliminated, the downside includes the unanticipated problems of a new and minimally-demonstrated technology. Further, there are higher start-up costs and greater risks for GRU.

The third alternative, Natural Gas, is a fuel that is subject to volatile pricing and may well prove to be an economic drain on our economy.

We therefore support the fourth alternative proffered in the ICF Report: Conservation and Energy Efficiency involving reduction of energy consumption through aggressive education of the public. Alternative energy sources such as solar, among others, need to be vigorously pursued. The countries of Europe are investing broadly and prosperously in alternative energies.

The following organizations oppose, as policy, the construction of new coal-fired plants: The American Lung Association, the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Florida League of Conservation Voters, and our local Green-space Preservation Association and Glen Springs Preservation Association. These organizations support strong conservation policies, and the combined use of alternative technologies such as solar.

Whatever amount of time that it takes for community discussion of this issue, it is time that is not only well-invested, but essential. Every citizen has a stake in the outcome. We all will be breathing the air and paying the costs: *economic, environmental and medical.*