

SUN EDITORIAL:

Coal is not the future

New report says Nevada can meet energy needs without coal-fired plants

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The name Carl Linvill may not be familiar to most Nevadans, but it is well-known among energy experts in the state. Linvill served from 2001 to 2003 as then-Gov. Kenny Guinn's energy adviser, and for the next three years he served as a commissioner on the Nevada Public Utilities Commission.

Linvill is now a consultant for the Aspen Environmental Group, which has offices in Northern and Southern California as well as in Phoenix. In this capacity he was commissioned by the San Francisco-based Energy Foundation to analyze what Nevada's energy needs would be over the next few years.

Linvill's assignment arose out of concern about plans by Sierra Pacific Resources to build large coal-fired power plants near Ely to meet the state's near-term energy needs. Sierra Pacific Resources is the parent company of Nevada's two largest utilities, Nevada Power, serving Southern Nevada, and Sierra Pacific Power Co., in Northern Nevada.

The overriding question is whether Nevada can meet its energy needs without new coal plants, whose emissions heavily contribute to global warming, acid rain and air pollution, which lead to health hazards.

Linvill, whose report was released last week by the Energy Foundation, concluded that more coal-fired plants would not be needed if other steps soon get under way.

Among those steps are development of the state's vast potential for renewable energy and increased attention to energy efficiency. Also, Linvill's report advises that Sierra Pacific Resources build a \$600 million transmission line connecting power grids in the northern and southern regions of the state.

The new transmission line, he wrote, could carry power from out-of-state sources as well as from in-state renewable sources such as wind, geothermal and solar.

The bottom line is that Linvill thinks Nevada could meet its growing energy demand without new coal-fired plants.

Our view is that Linvill is right. Coal should represent Nevada's past, not its future.

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