



Docket 07-AFC-6

2/6/10

Ms. Sandy Rogerson

DOCKET

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DATE FEB 06 2010

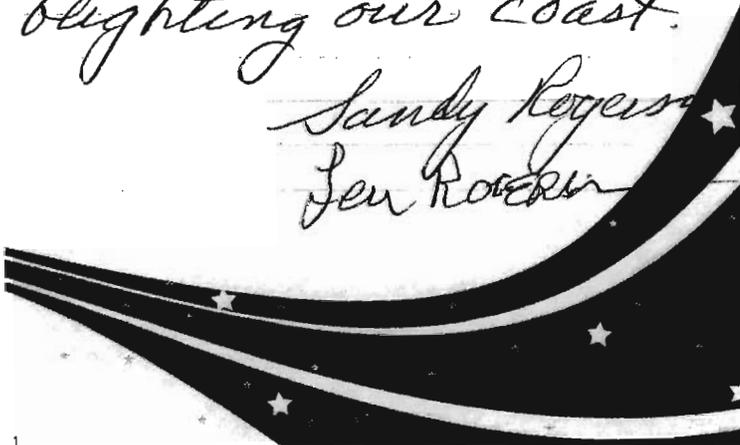
RECD. FEB 10 2010

Dear Energy Committee

Please disapprove the
NRG proposed 2d power
plant.

Attached column says
it better than we can
and the MAJORITY of
Carlsbad residents do
not want this plant
blighting our coast.

Sandy Rogerson
Sen Rogerson



OPINION

Docket 07-AFC-6
nctimes.com/opinion



THOMAS K. ARNOLD

People vs. power plant idea

It's crunch time.

The state Energy Commission is holding a series of public meetings this week about the proposed new power plant on Carlsbad's coast, and opponents who believe our beautiful beach is no place for heavy industry have their hands full.

They're fighting an uphill fight against a state agency that's going to make the final call by the end of this year, with a preliminary ruling, from the two board members conducting the hearings, expected as early as this spring.

At stake is not just an ugly eyesore on the shores of Carlsbad, a city that relies heavily on tourism for its economy. The bigger issue is how much of a say the voting public really has in the mechanisms of government.

While the proposed new power plant will have a detrimental effect on Carlsbad, from a

visual blight to increased air pollution, the citizens of Carlsbad and their elected officials are powerless to stop it from being built.

The fate of the power plant rests squarely in the hands of the Energy Commission, an appointed board that has a history of doing things its way, public sentiment be damned.

Taxation without representation? This is it, baby. This is it.

NRG Energy, the out-of-town power giant that operates the existing plant and is hell-bent on building a new one, certainly has the upper hand.

The company owns the 95-acre Encina Power Station property on the southwestern banks of the Agua Hedionda Lagoon and argues that it should be able to do what it wants with its land, particularly since the site has hosted a power plant for upwards of 50 years.

And yet this truly is a case where the greater, common good trumps private property rights — particularly since the new plant, unlike the old one, doesn't rely on ocean water for cooling and thus does not need to be situated on the coast.

Hopefully, this week's hearings will attract a healthy throng of Carlsbad residents who realize a new plant is bad news for all of us — and who can articulate that point to the Energy Commission.

And hopefully, our state energy commissioners will listen and take to heart their comments and conclusions, their facts and their figures, their passion and their pleas.

Carlsbad should be able to control its own destiny. State energy commissioners need to take the pulse of the city and act accordingly. I realize that's a tall order, but there's always hope.

And besides, isn't that how our government is supposed to work? As Thomas Jefferson once said, "The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government."

THOMAS K. ARNOLD
writes from Carlsbad.
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