



## Western Environmental Trade Association

November 19, 2004

Mr. Mark Walker  
Director of Public Affairs  
Northwest Power & Conservation Council  
851 SW Sixth Avenue  
Suite 1100  
Portland, Oregon 97204-1348

Subject: Comments on Draft 5<sup>th</sup> Power Plan

Dear Mr. Walker:

On behalf of the Western Environmental Trade Association, I submit the following comments on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Draft 5<sup>th</sup> Power Plan. WETA, organized in 1976, is a coalition of representatives of agriculture, labor, business, commercial industry, the scientific community, recreation, transportation and twenty-four other trade associations with an interest in promoting the economic well being of the people of Montana while protecting the state's environment. These member associations, companies and other organizations collectively employ or represent thousands of Montanans. The diverse membership of WETA represents the vast majority of those involved in the natural resource industries in the state, all of which have a keen interest in the availability of a stable and affordable supply of energy for their livelihood. An adequate and available supply of electricity is a critical part of that mix and we appreciate the efforts of the Council to address these issues.

However, our members have the following concerns with the *Draft Plan*:

- **The Draft Plan overemphasizes the ability to do conservation.**  
While we agree that stronger conservation efforts should be implemented, conservation in and of itself, is not going to be enough. Since the draft plan is too dependent on conservation, there is also an underestimation of the amount of power that will be needed.
- **The Draft Plan does not adequately address transmission.**  
We believe the cost of transmission has not only been overstated but also not enough attention has been given to the potential integration of generation and transmission resources.
- **The Draft Plan does not fully recognize the potential role that Montana's significant coal resources could play in helping meet the energy needs of the West as well as the rest of the US.** Coal-fired power generation can and should be a valuable component in the overall energy supply equation.

Once again, it is critical to our economy and our communities that our members have an adequate supply of energy at a competitive price. We respectfully urge you to consider making the necessary adjustments in the Draft Plan to address the concerns we have raised.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Allen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Don Allen, Executive Director, WETA