

Katherine H. Cummings
511 W Church St
Sandersville, GA 31082

July 4, 2010

Longleaf Public Comments
Mr. Eric Cornwall
Air Protection Branch
Environmental Protection Division
4244 International Parkway
Atlanta Tradeport – Suite 120
Atlanta, Georgia 30354

Dear Mr. Cornwall,

My name is Katherine Cummings. I appreciate the opportunity to comment in opposition to the construction of a coal-fired plant in Early County. I have been a resident of rural Georgia for over 22 years and appreciate the fragile natural resources which are part of Georgia. As a rural healthcare professional, I urge you to consider the negative impact a 1200 megawatt coal fired plant would have on the Early County area.

Please reject the permit for Longleaf Energy Station in Blakely, Georgia. This 1200 megawatt dirty coal plant is not a “minor source” of hazardous air pollutants. I ask that you perform your duty and protect Georgia citizens from Longleaf’s air pollution, including damage to agricultural crops from sulfur dioxide, and from the unhealthy toxic mercury deposition that threatens our fish and the families who eat them and the unlimited amounts of dioxin, a well-known carcinogen the plant permit currently allows.

The short and long term economic impacts of a coal-fired plant are also serious concerns. Longleaf Energy Station is holding up new economic development in the area because the local airshed is reserved for coal emission pollution. In the past two months both Laurens and Brantley Counties have announced that they will gain over 400 jobs in renewable energy development. Currently Longleaf stands as a deterrent in attracting new jobs to Early County. In addition, the electric power produced by Longleaf could be purchased by anyone in the Southeast, yet its pollution will remain with us in Georgia. This plant is not the best way to develop the area’s economy or to preserve the way of life in southwest Georgia.

Please honor the public trust with which you are charged and reject the permit for Longleaf Energy Station. This plant will guzzle 20 million gallons of water a day from the Chattahoochee River, whose waters are already imperiled. As Georgia continues to seek resolutions to our water consumption needs and resources, creating additional demands for water will not be beneficial for our state.

A report released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in February of this year ranked Early County as 138 in Health Outcomes (morbidity and mortality in our state, 157 counties were

ranked). Early County ranked 124 in Health Factors. These Health Factors included the number of days of air pollution experienced in the county. Early County's number of days of poor air quality exceeded Georgia's target by more than 100 percent. (Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings, February 2010).

In addition to the large amounts of water required each day to operate this coal-fired plant, 88 pounds of mercury will be emitted each year in the community. Mercury is a neurotoxin that interferes with brain and nervous system. According to the EPA, 1 in 6 babies are born each year having been exposed to excessive mercury in their mother's womb, resulting in brain damage, low IQ and developmental disorders. How can it be acceptable to permit a facility whose emissions endanger the most vulnerable of our community, our children?

How can adding any of the pollutants Longleaf Energy Station will emit be a positive decision in protecting our water resources? The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) estimates that power plant pollution results in:

- 26,442 asthma attacks
- 1,362 heart attacks
- 113 deaths due to lung cancer

MAG has urged the adoption of efficiency programs and conservation of energy before any coal-fired plants are approved in the state. The impact on health will be negative, resulting in increased cases of respiratory conditions, aggravated heart disease, decreased lung growth and capacity in children, and premature death.

In addition to respiratory and cardio-pulmonary risk factors, vision is also impaired and further aggravated by smog and haze resulting from coal-fired plant emissions. Based on the application submitted by LS Power, annual emissions will include 5,647 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and 2,689 tons of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) for the next 50 years. The applicant estimates an additional 194 tons of volatile organic compounds, 5,378 tons of carbon monoxide, and 1,936 pounds of lead will be released every year into the air and water.

Numerous scientific studies have linked particle pollution exposure to a variety of problems, including:

- increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing, for example;
- decreased lung function;
- aggravated asthma;
- development of chronic bronchitis;
- irregular heartbeat;
- nonfatal heart attacks; and
- premature death in people with heart or lung disease

The health and environmental impacts of the proposed coal-fired Longleaf will affect Early

County and surrounding areas negatively in both the immediate and long-term projections. Based on numerous reports and studies conducted by higher educational institutions in Georgia, and across the country, the power which would be generated at Longleaf Energy Station is not needed. These reports also urge employing energy efficiency techniques and conserving energy to further reduce the need for new energy production. Based on the numerous negative impacts that Longleaf would have, and in light of the decreased demand for electricity, I hope that the Environmental Protection Division will deny the permitting of this facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Cummings". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Katherine H. Cummings