

TVA TO IDLE COLBERT COAL-FIRED PLANT IN ALABAMA

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Contact:

Sean Sarah, Sierra Club 330 338-3740 sean.sarah@sierraclub.org

Jenna Garland, Sierra Club 404 281-6398 jenna.garland@sierraclub.org

Tennessee Valley Authority Announces it will Idle Colbert Coal Plant

800 Plus Megawatts of Dirty Coal to Go Offline in Alabama

Chattanooga, TN – Today, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) announced it plans to idle four coal generation units at the Colbert Fossil Plant located on the Tennessee River near Tuscumbia, Alabama by 2016. This announcement comes as part of a massive settlement reached several years ago between TVA, the Environmental Protection Agency, Sierra Club, numerous south eastern states and conservation organizations. Previously, TVA announced that the fifth unit at the plant would idle its 550 megawatts. Today's announcement will idle the final four units at the plant which total 800 megawatts of coal-fired power.

“The Sierra Club applauds TVA for their recognition that coal is a fuel of the past, and that our future lies in investment in renewable energy and efficiency,” said Scott Banbury the Conservation Chair of the Tennessee Chapter of Sierra Club. “I hope today's news signals a shift for TVA: investment in clean 21st century energy solutions, not reliance on biomass or coal as our energy future. The Sierra Club looks forward to working closely with TVA to lead the region in building a clean energy economy that will work for all of us.”

Under the previous settlement TVA agreed to retire many units and to increase clean energy spending across the region. For some units, like Colbert, TVA agreed, instead, to either install pollution controls or announce that the plant would be idled on a defined timetable. Today's letter from the TVA removing Colbert from service was a requirement of that timetable.

“Just this week, President Obama made an historic speech outlining a plan to reduce climate disrupting pollution from coal-fired power plants,” said Jonathan Levenshus, a Senior Campaign Representative for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. “We have a moral imperative to address climate disruption, and TVA can show real leadership by tackling their climate pollution head on. This is a victory for our climate and our health. We urge TVA to commit to taking the same course at the Gallatin, Shawnee and Allen plants as well.”

Pollution from coal-fired power causes serious health effects, especially for those in low income communities. Coal-fired pollution contributes to four of the five leading causes of death in the United

States. A recent report published by Sierra Club and Synapse Energy Economics found that TVA risks billions of dollars by keeping their ageing coal-fired fleet afloat but an alternative energy-efficiency program would cut customers electricity bills, reduce air pollution and move TVA further down a coal-free path.

“TVA has taken a healthy step in the right direction,” said Bruce Nilles, Senior Director of Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign. “In the past they have shown a strong commitment to ensuring a responsible transition for workers at idled or retired plants and we encourage them to show that same leadership here.”

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