

This is a very good plan, based on my involvement with energy issues and state energy plans.

1. The purpose of the plan is to MINIMIZE impacts on the environment. It may be useful to state that there are no energy strategies that have NO impact. In the heated public discussion, advocates against some sources act as though they expect and can demand perfection – NO impacts from sources they oppose, and that there are none from those they favor. This is most often seen in the nuclear (must be perfect) vs. alternatives (no impacts mentioned).

A growing population and economy make it impossible for things to stay the way they are. (Northern Pass opposition).

It is reasonable to ask everyone and every area to answer the question, “What is your fair share” of the negative impacts that are inevitable when projects benefit a larger public – county, state, region, nation, world. It is reasonable for localities to ask “What compensation will take place

2. The electric generation forecast is flat. It should be noted that there may be “game changers” in both supply and demand. Figure 4-8 is in units of capacity. It should be in units of energy per year, which is capacity multiplied by hours per year the capacity can deliver. Solar and wind generation cannot deliver 90% of the year. Game changers may be: further decreased cost of solar electric power coupled with the invention/development of an economical storage technology; electric vehicles using the new economic storage; modular nuclear reactors (Seabrook station was built with transmission capacity for two plants): etc.
3. Figure 3-2 shows “efficiency” as a very important contributor. Knowing the average age of housing underscores the large opportunity for savings in heating, operating and cooling. Slowing progress is lack of Building Code requirements. Energy Efficiency professionals have found that improvement will only come slowly until housing unit efficiency is required, and measured during and after construction. This is available now. Home builders will complain that this will raise the price of houses, and they are correct when only first cost is considered. When lifetime costs, including first cost, heating, cooling, repair and maintenance are included, and calculated with reasonable projections of future fuel costs, the energy efficient house is economically justified. Commercial firms now offer energy efficiency guarantee contracts. However, homeowners are left holding the bag.

Speaking as a homeowner that needs to make major efficiency improvements, I’m stuck with having to do my own research and there is no one to guarantee results. I would be happy to spend a lot on efficiency improvements, if I could find someone to guarantee the results long term. The discussion on page 44 says that there is now only 1/3 of the investment needed to achieve 2025 goals. This may be a large part of the reason.

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