

Excerpt from Sierra Sun, November 15, 2006

<http://www.sierrasun.com/article/20061115/OPINION/61114008>

Truckee Donner PUD shouldn't bet on coal subsidies for long

Betony Jones My Turn

November 15, 2006 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Print](#) [Email](#) Anyone who paid attention to the results of the election last Tuesday would strongly oppose Truckee entering into a 50-year contract with a Utah-based coal-fired power plant. I'm not talking about the ethical or environmental considerations. I am talking about fiscal and legal responsibility.

Change is in the air The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will be taken over by Barbara Boxer. She and other Democrats (Henry Waxman, etc.) now looking at leadership positions in House and Senate committees have already sponsored half a dozen bills to impose mandatory limits on carbon dioxide emissions.

With control of both the House and Senate, these legislators have vowed to put national climate change legislation at the top of their agendas, and the majority will follow them. Nine of the League of Conservation Voters' "Dirty Dozen" lawmakers were defeated, while eight of Congress's nine strongest environmental advocates held their positions. Both houses of Congress will consider rolling back billions of dollars in giveaways to the oil and coal industries in the 2005 Energy Policy Act and increasing incentives for renewable energy and conservation. There will likely be discussion of imposing carbon taxes on energy production. Coal's apparent lower costs will evaporate if state or national regulations changed to impose taxes or fees on such power.

Wall Street's winners The day after the election, the renewable energy sector was one of the stock market's three biggest winners. PowerShares WilderHill Clean Energy Portfolio (PBW), which tracks stocks developing renewable energy sources, rose 1.4 percent. VeraSun Energy stocks rose 9 percent. The Rand Corporation just released a study concluding that falling costs of ethanol, wind power and other forms of renewable energy predict such sources could furnish as much as 25 percent of America's conventional energy by 2025 at little or no additional expense.

....