

Sierra Club News Release

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100 Coal Plants Prevented or Abandoned, Including 3 in Michigan Movement Sparks Shift to Cleaner Energy and Over 400 Million Fewer Tons of CO2

Washington, DC: As of today **100 coal plants have been defeated or abandoned since the beginning of the coal rush this century**, including the **Tondu Northern Lights Plant** proposal in Manistee, the **LS Power MidMichigan Energy** plant proposal, and **Northern Michigan University's** proposed heating plant in Michigan. In their place, a smart mix of clean energy solutions like energy efficiency, wind, solar and geothermal has stepped up to meet America's energy needs. Last year 42 percent of all new power producing capacity came from wind, and for the first time the wind industry created more jobs than mining coal. Despite Michigan's difficult economic situation, wind and solar energy manufacturing has been one of the bright spots for job creation in the state.

Coming just a week after Los Angeles, CA, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced the city would end coal use by 2020, and announced the same day as a decision by Basin Electric Power in South Dakota to pull plans for a new coal-fired power plant, the Intermountain Power coal plant in Utah became the 100th prevented coal plant. The decision marks a significant milestone in the shift to clean energy.

"The shift has clearly started toward a cleaner, healthier, more secure future," said **Tiffany Hartung** of Associate Regional Representative for the Sierra Club in Royal Oak. "The decisions not to pursue three plants in Michigan already have opened the path for our state to be a vital part of a new economy powered by clean energy. But that path could be blocked if Consumers Energy, Wolverine Power Supply and Holland Board of Public Works are allowed to build their proposed plants."

For the past six years the Sierra Club and its allies have been running a hard-hitting campaign to expose the dirty truth about coal. Tremendous grassroots pressure, rising costs, and upcoming federal carbon regulations all contributed to the demise of the 100 plants. In Michigan the **Clean Energy Now** coalition has turned out hundreds of volunteers to public hearings, held rallies and met with officials to push for cleaner alternatives to the eight proposed coal plants proposed during the past two years. Governor Granholm has responded to these concerns by requiring that these plants show whether alternatives to coal, including energy efficiency, would meet Michigan's needs better than building expensive, dirty new coal plants.

The proposed **Consumers Energy Karn Weadock Plant** expansion, the **Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative** proposed Rogers City plant and the **Holland Board of Public Works** proposed plant expansion would add more than 8,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere each year, more than 100 pounds of mercury, and more than 1,500 tons of lung damaging soot. These plants would not only damage the Great Lakes, Michigan's fisheries and the health of young and old living nearby, they would take away funds for investment in energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy sources with job creation in Michigan.

"The growing opposition to the remaining six coal plant proposals* in Michigan is just one part of a growing nationwide movement," said **Lee Sprague**, Sierra Club Michigan Clean Energy Campaign Manager. "It's clear that the American people are ready for a switch to the clean energy technologies that can help repower our economy."

That movement has kept well over 400 million tons of harmful global warming pollution out of the air annually, making significant progress in the fight against global warming. Stopping 100 new coal plants has also kept thousands of tons of asthma causing soot and smog pollution, as well as toxins like mercury out of our air and water.

As the new coal rush ends in many states the Sierra Club is working to replace existing dirty and unreliable coal plants that are large contributors to health harming soot, smog and mercury pollution with cleaner energy options that create more jobs.

"The coal industry right here in Michigan is still pushing forward with plans for a half dozen new plants and pouring money into slick advertising campaigns and lobbying efforts in Lansing and statewide," said **Jan O'Connell**, Sierra Club Energy Issues Organizer in Grand Rapids. "So while the coal rush may be entering a new phase in some parts of the country, it is far from over here."

For more, visit www.sierraclub.org/100coalplants .

For more about what's happening in Michigan visit www.cleanenergynowmi.org and <http://www.michigan.sierraclub.org/issues/cleanenergy/coal-fired-power-plants.html>

* In addition to Consumers Energy Karn Weadock, Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative and Holland Board of Public Works, three other plant proposals have yet to be cancelled: Lansing Board of Water and Light, Alma M&M Energy, and Tondu's Filer Township plant expansion proposal.