

## DOCKETED

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## **Project is ecological disaster and economic boondoggle**

As an ecologist, I would normally be arguing against the proposed need for another gas-fueled power plant solely for the environmental impacts of an old technology project sited on sensitive disappearing beach habitat. I know for a fact that plant and animal species and wetland habitats will be adversely affected and the potential of restoring the land if the ancient plant is removed is much diminished by allowing a new plant to be built on the adjacent site. However, I was recently enlightened as to the economic boondoggle additional power plants in California are. Recently the LA Times did a front page Sunday cover story stating that "Californians pay a high price for electricity glut, that the state has little need for its electricity" it is already producing, and that several power plants are facing closure decades ahead of their useful lives. I will continue to quote from the February 5, 2017 article, "The state's power plants are on track to be able to produce at least 21% more electricity than it needs by 2020" and that 861 current plants in the state generate less than a third of their potential. Even the PUC itself only approved a 15% excess to guard against blackouts. This is the only explanation for the proposed Puente Plant: "Utilities can make more money building new plants than by buying and reselling readily available electricity from existing plants run by competitors." Former governor-appointed PUC president Loretta Lynch stated "this [system] is intentionally complex to make money on the ratepayer's back," she was dismissed for telling the truth. The article documents that California's electricity use is leveling off and falling per capita while the energy supply is rising rapidly along with costs to ratepayers to cover building too many plants. The only right thing to do is to remove the old plant, continue service with the peaker plant already there, and restore the ecologically valuable beach habitat for the sensitive species and enjoyment of the public.