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Docket Number:	21-ESR-01
Project Title:	Energy System Reliability
TN #:	244494
Document Title:	Don Eichelberger Comments - Localize the grid with rooftop solar, microgrids, conservation, other
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Don Eichelberger
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	8/10/2022 9:27:27 PM
Docketed Date:	8/11/2022

*Comment Received From: Don Eichelberger
Submitted On: 8/10/2022
Docket Number: 21-ESR-01*

Localize the grid with rooftop solar, microgrids, conservation, other

As we seek to keep energy delivery secure while cutting the energy industries' carbon footprint, the best strategy should be to reduce our overall energy use, regardless of source. The energy grid as it is currently designed encourages large production facilities to push great amounts of electricity, often hundreds of miles through large power lines, during which significant energy is lost. This system is also vulnerable to major outages.

Your plan should aim to reduce and try to eliminate the power going through big lines altogether by unplugging or reducing consumer dependence on the grid through more support for rooftop solar, local microgrids, storage, green hydrogen and other emerging technologies, and conservation. These technologies have evolved and grown in recent years such that their costs of production are below nuclear, and even coal. And the job promise is a Champaign cork ready to pop.

Trying to keep Diablo Canyon operating past its negotiated shutdown date has many problems and barriers. Environmental laws would need to be adjusted to allow DC's heat to keep escaping into the marine environment and degrading it, or billions would need to be spent to rebuild the cooling system; the SLC land use permit needs renegotiation; then, there are all the earthquake faults.

Maintaining its operation also gets in the way of our transition to a more decentralized, solar-centric system. The inability of the reactor to moderate its output does not allow for the variable rate of replacement of DC power with renewables.

But, as daunting as the challenges are to keep the reactors operating, shutting them, as proven by anti-nuke history, is much harder. Reducing use significantly of fossil fuels and nuclear has never been a popular idea among the energy investors who fund and control the mines and wells.

Ask any energy investor what they think of the phrase "leave it in the ground", and you will hear plenty of reasons why Investor-Owned Utilities need, as quickly as possible, to be taken over and municipalized. Only when the profit motive is removed from energy policy will serious headway be made to reduce greenhouse gasses from our environment.