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## **Save Diablo Canyon!**

Living as I do, relatively close to the Comanche Peak nuclear power station, I am well aware that such a station makes a good neighbor. In fact a better neighbor than practically any other energy production facility, or industrial plant at all. And I'm not just talking about coal-fired power stations, or oil refineries : in Ontario, near the Bruce nuclear power station, one of the largest electrical generating complexes in the world, are many wind turbines. On fences there, you find many signs reading "Stop These Things!" and so on. Farmers in that climate are positively terrorized by masses of ice which build up on blades and are then flung off, traveling long distances and coming down at high speed, potentially damaging buildings or equipment, or killing livestock or even people. The worst thing I heard about Bruce, on the other hand, was that the people who work there seem a bit snobbish.

Diablo Canyon could, if permitted to do so, be an even better neighbor to San Luis Obispo. What do I mean? The plant operates a reverse-osmosis seawater-desalting facility to supply its own freshwater needs. This facility is designed for loads much heavier than those of normal daily operation, so it has plenty of excess capacity most of the time. For years now, there have been proposals to relieve the frequent water shortages in SLO city by running a pipeline from Diablo Canyon to feed into the municipal supply, but they have gotten nowhere, because "everybody knew" that Diablo Canyon was going to be forced to shut down soon, while in full operating condition, with the possibility of a license extension for another 20 years -- just the kind of fate that befell all three units at San Onofre.

Nuclear fission is as benign, in terms of its impacts on the environment and on people, as an energy source can get. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates its lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as half or less those of any other source, for instance. And allowing an existing plant to continue operation is about as cheap as an energy source can get. If California is serious about sustainability, closing down the emissions-free, 24-hour source of almost a tenth of its electricity (soon to be in much higher demand owing to electric cars and electrification of heating and cooling) is about as wrong a step as it is possible to take.