

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	17-IEPR-10
Project Title:	Renewable Gas
TN #:	217202
Document Title:	Article - California needs to develop gas supplies
Description:	Sacramento Bee 4.11.17 article by George Minter
Filer:	Raquel Kravitz
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
Submission Date:	4/20/2017 11:34:48 AM
Docketed Date:	4/20/2017



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George Minter, vice president of external affairs and environmental strategy at Southern California Gas Co., says it's wrong to stop building gas infrastructure to focus on renewable energy, and that California needs to invest more into developing a renewable gas supply. **Randall Benton** Sacramento Bee file

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California needs to develop natural gas supplies

BY GEORGE MINTER. *Special to The Bee*

California has no 100 percent renewable electricity goal. California has a climate change goal of 50 percent lower greenhouse gas emissions than in 1990, and a 50 percent renewable energy goal – both by 2030 (“[Stop building natural gas plants](#)”; Viewpoints, April 4).

One of the ways the state will meet those goals is through the use of natural gas. Why? Because natural gas is often cleaner than alternatives. The direct use of natural gas can have lower emissions than electricity when you consider the full life cycle of emissions from generation.

Gas can be renewable, too. That's what the environmental community seems to be missing in its oft-repeated goal of electrifying all end uses of energy.

We need to deploy energy technology that delivers the lowest emissions as soon as we can. And that's why our air agencies are turning to ultra-low emission heavy duty gas engines to deliver air pollution reductions.

California has another climate change goal – a 40 percent reduction of biomethane emissions by 2030. California has plans to capture that methane and deliver it as renewable energy. The state's [Scoping Plan](#) – which tells us how we are going to get to our climate goals – depends on this.

It's wrong to say that we need to stop building gas infrastructure to focus on renewable energy. We need to invest more into developing the renewable gas supply and infrastructure to deliver this renewable energy to customers.

It's time to acknowledge that natural gas has helped the state drive down GHG emissions – not just by displacing dirtier fuels, but by filling in the gaps when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine.

Integrating renewable electricity sources onto our grid relies on gas plants. Imagine if those plants were powered by renewable gas – we'd be getting twice the emissions reductions.

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