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Footnotes Issue #76: June 27th, 2013

## What Does #ActOnClimate Mean for Georgia?

It's been a whirlwind of a news week! Did you catch [President Obama's climate speech](#) on Tuesday? If not, you should take a few minutes and watch it! You can read the Sierra Club's official statement on it [here](#), and send your thanks to the President [here](#), but what will it mean for Georgia? The President's plan to reduce climate pollution from existing coal-fired power plants underscores the arguments GreenLaw and Sierra Club made during the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) that the Public Service Commission will vote on July 11th.



Public Service Commissioners should give careful consideration to the [coal-biased assumptions](#) that went into the economic models that showed Plants McIntosh and Plant Hammond only "marginally" economic to operate, because both existing pressures on Georgia's air and water plus the pressure to reduce carbon that is now on the horizon mean that it's not going to take much to go from "marginal" to "uneconomic." Commissioners need to make certain that cheaper and cleaner sources of air pollution-free power are scaled up to meet Georgia's energy needs. Georgia can get 20% of its energy from solar, wind and energy efficiency by 2020 and grow Georgia's economy if Commissioners have the will and provide leadership.

Georgia Power's Plant Bowen is one of the biggest power plants in the country and the third largest emitter of carbon dioxide. In April, Unit 2 exploded, and has been offline since then. Georgia Power has indicated that it intends to fix the unit as soon as possible. We think that a "wait and see" approach would make more sense. Georgia Power has nearly double the amount of necessary reserve capacity, and this decision about spending ratepayer money to fix Unit 2 should be deferred until more accurate economic inputs are available.

Finally, it's time for Dean Alford to abandon his dirty coal dreams. The monumental effort he exerted to avoid his proposed Plant Washington subject carbon dioxide limits for new coal-fired power plants were for naught. One way or another, Plant Washington is going to need to limit its carbon dioxide pollution, but Plant Washington has been designed with old technology that's not capable of capturing carbon. Georgia electric cooperatives that are considering signing contracts for this power because they worry about natural gas price volatility should bet on clean solar, wind and energy efficiency instead.

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## Quick Links - Protect Jekyll Island!



Our Attorney General Sam Olens has been busy reacting to Supreme Court decisions all week, so there's still time to weigh in on Jekyll Island. A committee of specialists and JIA staff members working on a new Master Plan for Jekyll Island State Park recommended that tidal marsh should not be counted as part of Jekyll's land area when applying the 65/35 law. That recommendation, which is based on the 65/35 law and the legal distinction between tidal marsh and land that's stated in Georgia's Coastal Marshlands Protection Act (CMPA), was condemned by the JIA in its letter to the AG's office requesting a ruling on the land vs. marsh issue.

**[TAKE ACTION: Tell Attorney General Sam Olens to protect Jekyll Island!](#)**

## Sierra Club Meetings

**Smart Energy Team Meeting**, Monday, July 1, 7:00 p.m.  
Seth Gunning, [seth.gunning@sierraclub.org](mailto:seth.gunning@sierraclub.org)

**Wildlands Committee Meeting**, Monday, August 19, 7:00 p.m.  
Mike Murdock - Chair, [murdock1@mindspring.com](mailto:murdock1@mindspring.com)

**RAIL**, Monday, July 22, 7:00 p.m.  
David Emory - Chair, [david.emory@gmail.com](mailto:david.emory@gmail.com)

## Other Events

**June 27 - TOD3 Transit Oriented Development Discussion+Drinks** - The Atlanta Chapter of New Rail~volutionaries is excited to host our first TOD Event! [Come join Atlanta New Rail~volutionaries](#), city officials, local and regional transit experts, real estate developers, and interested transiters as we visit, compare, contrast, discuss, and vision the impending future of Transit Oriented Development in Atlanta.



**June 27 - Greenspace Forum** - The Atlanta Forward Community Forum, fourth in a series, will focus on public green spaces as sought-after commodities that can improve communities while also sparking controversy. Who decides whether a property becomes a park or a condo development? Who pays for the creation and maintenance of green space? Who decides what kinds of amenities a public green space should have? Event is sponsored by the AJC and PNC Bank and will be held at Georgia Public Broadcasting in Midtown Atlanta at 6:30. Event is free and parking is complimentary, but you must register [here](#).

**Save the Date! Semi-Annual Chapter Retreat Oct. 4-6** - Every other year, the Georgia Chapter hosts a retreat with workshops, outings, wine tasting and all things Sierra Club! This year we'll be at Camp Wahsega near Dahlonega. Look for more details and registration information soon!



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