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AIR PROTECTION BRANCH

September 12, 2008

To: Chuck Mueller, Georgia Department of Natural Resources/EPD/Air Protection
Dr. Carol Couch, Director, Environmental Protection Division

Fm: John and Paula Swint
Warthen, Georgia 31094

Re: Proposed Coal-burning Plant: Plant Washington

We have recently become aware that Power4Georgians is seeking permits for a coal-burning plant in Washington County Georgia. This plant would be less than ten miles from our home. We are greatly concerned about the pollution from this plant and its effect on our health, our gardens, and future.

Our community needs time to learn more about this proposal and to hear the truth about its potential impact. The main source of information is from our local paper, The Sandersville Progress. The April 16, 2008 issue reported: At the April 10, 2008 commissioners meeting an Air Quality Improvement Ordinance was adopted. The article also stated that "Although the commissioners did not hold a public hearing on the ordinance, the plan did receive considerable publicity." The article went on to report that "For the past three years Washington County has exceeded federal clean air standards pertaining to fine particulate matter." Just a short time later, another Progress headline announced that a new coal-fired power plant was coming to Washington County, and it would boost our economy. This article about Plant Washington appears to be the only notification we, the citizens, received about this plant. It seems the commissioners followed the same line of thought from their April meeting, again deciding that no public hearings should be held. To my knowledge, no public meetings have been held by our county officials relating to Plant Washington.

How can Washington County be out of compliance with air quality for the past three years; yet our leaders offer our county as a site for a coal-burning plant? This does not make sense. We have asked, but we can't get a straight answer.

As we have read their application from their website, we have found great cause for concern about this proposed plant. Concerned citizens began meeting in June and July. On August 21, 2008, Power4Georgians and our Chamber of Commerce hosted a public information meeting. It turned out to be "their people" giving us their well-rehearsed, press release-type statements. They set up in different rooms throughout the local technical school as a divide and conquer tactic. We did not get real answers to very real questions. We were allowed to "speak", but we were not "heard". We now realize that this was a publicity stunt so they could say they had a public meeting.

I am requesting that by the power and authority from your office,

- You carefully examine the details of this application and its impact on our community....and beyond
- Help us hold a series of public meetings to get real answers to our questions
- Grant a period for public comment and insure that it is well advertised prior to the public meeting
- Representatives from your office be present at the public meetings to help insure that the information presented is fair and balanced

Our community has just started the process of educating itself about coal-buring power plants. The health and environmental impact of this plant is just starting to surface in conversations. People here were lead to believe that the promise of jobs and of economic stimulus to our county were the main factors for discussion. We are trying to help them realize that our air quality was in need of more careful attention prior to the pollution that would be added if this plant is built.

Your help in the careful examination of their application is appreciated. Any period of time you can grant to provide our community more time to become better educated about our air quality and the impact of this plant will be significant.

Thank you for your time and attention to this serious matter, Thank you for the job you do on behalf of all Georgia citizens in protecting our environment and our natural resources,

Sincerely,



John and Paula Swint
2570 Centralia Rachels Road
Warthen, Georgia 31094

We have very personal concerns because we live in northern Washington County. In the last few years, in this area, two gas-fired electrical plants were built within 10 miles of our home. In the last few weeks, we learned that another gas-fueled plant will be built about 3 miles from our home. Just last week, work started on high-voltage power lines which are less than a mile away. Now, to learn of a coal-fired plant less than 10 miles away gives us great cause for concern. Our home, property and our community have gradually been surrounded by these electrical structures... over which we have had no say or control. We wonder how all this could have taken place so rapidly.

My husband and I are retired. He has worked hard to restore his father's home place: cabin, gardens and native woodlands. If this coal-buring plant is allowed to be built, this heritage, as well as our food sources, will be threatened. Our home and gardens are close enough to the proposed plant that we will receive 100% of this pollution.