



WALKING THE TALK

ECLIPSING COAL BY ADVOCATING for SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES

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PSR and other sponsors/donors have offered us a wonderful opportunity through the coal minigrants to work within our communities to facilitate change in the way we view our production of energy. In my view there are three aspects to PSR's work in opposition to coal:

1. Coal as an energy source has a plethora of human and environmental health problems as a consequence of every step of it's mining, production and combustion life cycles.
2. Coal is one of the major contributors to global warming and all of the ensuing health and environmental problems.
3. Coal is NOT a renewable energy and realistically has only 20 more years of economically feasible availability in this country.

We have chosen to address each of these concerns in the context of constructive environmental activism in Arizona with some fairly unique opportunities. We feel that **simply speaking about the hazards or working as oppositionists is not enough. We must support the solutions.** This takes beating the community bushes to flush out organizational, community management and legislative activities that can turn the tide of energy production and use to sustainable and renewable resources. And it requires committed, ongoing involvement in the community to make change happen.

We have:

1. **Integrated information about the hazards of coal with any presentations we do on Health Effects of Climate Change, speaking** to groups like the League of Women Voters, Sustainability Organizations, Political Party meetings, House Parties in our homes with friends and neighbors, discussions in media events, and seminars at Medical and Public Health Education Centers. Encouraged these groups to get involved with sustainable change. We collaborate with many other organizations e.g, Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, Audoban Society, AZ Public Health Association, City government
2. **Become political activists for sustainable energy** development, keeping after every political candidate and political group with which we are involved to talk about and work for sustainable change in our energy (in our case for solar energy). We now have several national, state and city elected officials working hard to promote solar power through R & D grants, fostering of business opportunities and public education

classes. Also, we ensure that candidates are hammered with questions about solar energy.

3. **Volunteered to serve as appointed members to government bodies** to educate and participate as agents of change to a more sustainable ways of conducting local government. We as PSR members are represented on:
 - The Climate Change Advisory Committee to the City of Tucson, charged with writing a City climate mitigation and adaptation plan.
 - A Study group on health and environmental hazards of various energy sources (especially coal) for the Arizona Corporation Commission (Arizona's elected energy commission) after achieving a rules change to require the ACC to weigh externalities of human and environmental health and water use for each energy decision.
 - An action group formed by one of Tucson's City Councilmen to move the Tucson business community to make Tucson "The Solar City"
 - City administrative planning groups to streamline solar installations for customers.
 - Strategic planning groups to address the sustainable use of water, recycling, local food production and other sustainable environmental activities.

4. **Developed a network of activists** who find and attend educational activities, share all kinds of literature and calls to activism, keep each other informed about key events, attend and speak at City Council and Board of Supervisor and State legislative session on a variety of environmental issues, **and—most importantly encouraging each other as we move our own homes to renewable energy and sustainable living.**

ALL of which will lead to eclipsing of the use of coal in the long run.