

## Now is **Not** the Time to Put Our Heads in the Sand

I love the Central Great Basin. It's beautiful. It's clean. It's open. And it's free. But life in the high deserts of Nevada is not easy. There is very little water. There is very little vegetation. Life here has found a fragile balance in a rugged home. However; it is not inconceivable, that if things get tougher here, the Central Great Basin may become environmentally too harsh to support communities.

We're already starting to see signs here in Nevada of Global warming. Our glacier at Great Basin National Park disappears in the summer. Drought is more common. Wildfires are far more prevalent. Pine beetles have killed a third of the Schell Creek Range White Pine forest near my home.

If it were just Rural Nevada, I suspect that the rest of the country would just ignore our plight. The coal industry doesn't care if we suffer. The only losses they appear to care about are those on their accountants' spreadsheets. But **you** should care. This isn't just happening in Rural Nevada.

Since 1850, Glacier National Park has lost 90% of its glacier ice.

A 2006 Scripps Institute study reports that, because of higher temperatures, four times as many fires burned 6 ½ times more acreage between 1987 and 2003 than in the previous 16 years.

Just in 2006, in Colorado, pine beetles killed 640,000 acres of trees. In British Columbia, where temperatures have risen 4°F in the last century, the largest pine beetle infestation in recorded history has killed 23 million acres of pines. The infestation has reached as far north as Alaska, where 3 million acres have been devastated in the Kenai Peninsula alone.

These catastrophes aren't decades in the future. They've already happened. They're continuing to happen right now. This is humanity's life support system we've put into jeopardy. At this rate, we may be well on our way to a "Hell on Earth" scenario. Need I remind you - nearly every civilization before our own has collapsed.

**Now** is the time to reduce CO2 emissions. If we only reduce particulate emissions, Global Warming could end up twice as devastating because of reduced Global dimming.

I implore you to make the right decision. Let's take the time to get this right.

## Let's Not Take the Extinction Option

On top of all the dangerous chemicals LS Power and Sierra Pacific will emit from coal-fired power plants in White Pine County, they will also emit over **two billion tons** of Global warming pollutants over the next 50 years.

No one knows how bad Global warming could get. Ignoring the possible consequences could be like stepping out in front of traffic without looking. To some extent today, we hold the fate of the world in our hands.

You may not think this is an obvious decision. So, let's simplify this. We have options. Let's weigh the risks of Global Warming. Here are four possible outcomes:

	We go Green	Status Quo
No Global Warming	<p>The over-prepared outcome. We clean up our act environmentally, and it wasn't necessary. America's economy falters because we can't compete with China, and we fall into a recession, or even a depression. But at least we'll breath clean air.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Bad, but survivable</b></p>	<p>The miracle outcome. We continue to pollute the Earth and there are no significant consequences.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OK</b></p>
Global Warming	<p>The outcome we prepare for. We clean up our act, and avert an environmental disaster. It cost more, but it was worth it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OK</b></p>	<p>The Hell on Earth outcome. We continue to pollute everything and ravage our planet's resources. This leads to an environmental collapse, which leads to an economic collapse – or worse. Millions, even billions could die.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO WAY!</b></p>

We **must** avoid that fourth outcome. But, so far, people seem to think it won't happen – at least not right away. They're wrong. For multiple compounding reasons; the planet is heating, and our weather is getting more inhospitable. We may not be able to control all of the causes of Global warming. But the more causes, the more we need to take control of those we can.

Need I remind you that the most resilient systems adapt – quickly. And those that don't adapt eventually cease to exist.

“Clean coal” is hype.

LS Power and Sierra Pacific intend to burn **750 million tons** of coal in White Pine County. That's almost two train loads of coal a day, for the next 50 years. And of course, **none** of the chemical byproducts from burning this mountain of coal will just disappear. What doesn't end up in our skies will be left in Nevada forever – in giant toxic waste piles.

Over the next 50 years, these “clean coal” power plants will release into **our** air:

- 20 tons of mercury
- 880,000 tons of carbon monoxide
- 26,000 tons of sulfuric acid
- 530,000 tons of sulfur oxides
- 470,000 tons of nitrogen oxides
- 230,000 tons of micro particulates
- 190 tons of arsenic
- 600 tons of benzene
- 330 tons of benzyl chloride
- 4,400 tons of hydrogen fluoride
- 270 tons of acetaldehyde
- 250 tons of methyl chloride
- 140 tons of acrolein
- 200 tons of lead
- and many more tons over 50 other chemicals

All of the chemicals just mentioned are dangerous. Some of these chemicals have even been used as weapons in war. Some of these chemicals are the primary components of acid rain. Even the micro particulates are dangerous. Some of these chemicals are poisonous in extremely small amounts. Some of these chemicals can cause learning and language disabilities, and brain damage.

According to an EPA study; 24,000 people die prematurely in the US every year from coal-fired emissions. This should be enough of a reason in itself to generate power by some other means. I don't want to risk people I care for getting sick or dieing. And I definitely don't want to risk the future of our planet so that some ruthless corporation can make an extra billion or two.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Spilsbury', written in a cursive style.

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