



Ohio Environmental Council

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[UNLEASHING THE POWER OF GREEN]

For Immediate Release
April 21, 2010
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Anglers and conservationists call for the state to stop the Bayshore coal plant from killing billions of fish in Maumee Bay each year

Groups want the Ohio EPA and Ohio DNR to require utility giant FirstEnergy to install modern cooling towers and to regulate the facility as any angler or commercial fisherman who exceeds their daily catch limit

Statement of the OEC Director of Agricultural & Clean Water Programs Kristy Meyer on the Bayshore coal power plant on the billions of fish killed each year at this killing machine.

The western Lake Erie basin is the shallowest, warmest, and most biologically productive portion of all the Great Lakes. This prime habitat is the primary reason that Lake Erie produces more fish for human consumption than all of the other Great Lakes, combined.

Located smack in the middle of this prime habitat—near the mouth of the Maumee River and the Maumee Bay—is utility giant FirstEnergy’s Bayshore power plant. This coal-fired power plant draws mostly Maumee River water into its intake pipe for cooling and for the past 55 years this plant has operated without employing any technologies that are effective in reducing the massive number of fish killed each year.

As a result, an average of 126,000 fish are killed each day by being caught on intake screens, also known as impingement, and 6 million more are killed by passing through the intake screens, known as entrainment. That’s more than 46 million fish killed each year, due to being slammed against and caught on the coal plant’s intake screens. In addition, more than 14 million juvenile fish and more than 2 billion fish in their larval form are killed each year when they pass through the intake screens and equipment inside the plant. This data is from actual numbers that FirstEnergy has provided to state regulators with the Ohio EPA.

Today, we are renewing our call—made a year ago—for the State of Ohio, particularly the Ohio EPA and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, to require this utility giant to

install modern cooling towers and to regulate this facility the same as it would any angler or commercial fisherman who exceeds their daily catch limit.

The Bayshore coal plant currently is testing reverse louvers to reduce the number of fish killed, but the Ohio EPA's own consultant has found that louvers would not be effective and eliminated them for further consideration.

Therefore we strongly urge that the Ohio EPA require that the coal plant install modern cooling towers and that the cost of best available technology not be shifted to the utility giant's ratepayers. For 55 years the ratepayers have been footing the bill for this failed technology. To add further insult to injury, consumers even have to pay to restock certain prized fish species. Now is time to hold FirstEnergy accountable and require its shareholders to reimburse the citizens of Ohio for the billions of fish killed each year. Since when is a robbery victim forced to reimburse the robber? Let the shareholders shoulder the burden of installing cooling towers, not the captive ratepayers.

The Ohio EPA is currently considering the renewal of this coal plant's Clean Water Act permit. The Agency is holding a public hearing tomorrow night, April 22nd, in Oregon, Ohio where the public can make their views heard on this pending permit. The public hearing is set for 6:30pm at the Clay High School Auditorium, 5665 Seaman Rd in Oregon, Ohio. We invite the public to join us and raise its voice at tomorrow night's hearing.

I would like to wrap it up by saying President Obama and Congress recognize the importance of restoring critical fish habitat. In 2008, Presidential candidate Obama promised to invest \$5 billion in restoring the Great Lakes. Just last year President Obama requested the first allotment and Congress approved \$475 million through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to restore and protect habitat, among other things. This year Great Lakes Congressional members are pushing for another \$475 million. Allowing the FirstEnergy Bayshore coal plant to continue to kill billions of fish flies in the face of these efforts. It is time that the Ohio EPA require this killing machine to install cooling towers and the Ohio DNR to not let it off the hook for its repeated fish kills.

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The mission of the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) is to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. The OEC is Ohio's leading advocate for fresh air, clean water, and sustainable land use. The OEC has a 40-year history of innovation, pragmatism, and success. Using legislative initiatives, legal action, scientific principles, and statewide partnerships, the OEC secures a healthier environment for Ohio's families and communities. For more information, visit www.theOEC.org.