

# To meaningfully address climate change, we must reject nuclear power

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You've probably heard the argument from nuclear proponents that we need nuclear power to solve the global climate crisis. The premise of this argument – that the relative lack of greenhouse gas emissions compensates for the negative consequences associated with the nuclear power industry – is false.

No energy source is entirely environmentally benign, so a responsible energy policy requires weighing the environmental, economic, and social costs against the benefits. One cannot celebrate nuclear's greenhouse gas benefits without mourning the harms from the pollution

and social injustice associated with uranium mines and the rest of the nuclear power fuel chain; the billions of private and tax dollars required to construct, maintain, and decommission nuclear power plants; the catastrophe that occurs when a nuclear plant fails; and the unsolved issues of radioactive waste generation and storage.

The only method the industry has developed to deal with deadly radioactive waste is to isolate it and bury it, hopefully so deep and for so long that humans never have to come in contact with it again. Emphasis on “hopefully”. Taxpayers are financing the cleanup of old dumpsites

while new nuclear waste is being generated every day at power plants across the country. Unless and until there is safe and affordable waste treatment and permanent disposal, the nuclear industry cannot justify increasing production of new waste, even under the auspices of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Snake River Alliance is dedicated to a nuclear-free approach to climate change. Imagine the possibilities if every dollar spent developing nuclear power and dealing with its consequences was instead used to improve and implement renewable energy and energy efficiency technology!