

## The Pitfalls of Nuclear Power

by Beatrice Brailsford



President Trump signed a budget bill for 2019 that includes \$1.3 billion for nuclear energy research and development. That money will fund a whole raft of bad ideas, many right here in Idaho.

\$100 million will go toward 12 small modular reactors (SMRs). A chunk of that will go to the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS) to pay for the engineering, design, and licensing of 12 nuclear power reactors at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). The Nuclear Regulatory Commission could approve the project in 2023 and the first reactor is supposed to go online in 2026. SMRs have all the flaws of typical nuclear power reactors and even make some of them worse! We can and should stop this project.

Nuclear power reactors won't stop GLOBAL WARMING. Claims that nuclear power can play a key role in addressing climate change and that SMRs could be particularly effective do not hold up. Nuclear power simply costs too much and takes too long to

make a difference. A recent study published by the National Academy of Sciences concluded that the "dramatic cost reduction that SMR proponents describe is unlikely to materialize with this first generation of light water SMRs, even at 'nth-of-a-kind' deployment." That means they can't help provide a "new carbon-free wedge on the critical time scale for the next several decades."

Speaking of MONEY, UAMPS's current projection for the cost of its nuclear power plant is \$4.2 billion. Starting with its first research grants, the project has gotten hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. UAMPS management is expecting us to continue to cover about half the cost. Future taxpayer subsidies will include federal nuclear production tax credits and state and local sales and property tax breaks.

See "PITFALLS OF NUCLEAR POWER", cont on page 5

## Solar's Bright Future

by Wendy Wilson

Solar energy in Idaho continues to grow and set new records! Despite uncertainties over trade tariffs, utility fees, and future tax credits, Idahoans are investing in solar power more than ever. The market for rooftop solar in Idaho is hot!

The market for small-scale customer-sited solar in Idaho has grown about 75% (in terms of solar capacity) each year since 2012. As an example, from January 2018 to July 2018, more solar was installed in Idaho than in all of 2017 combined.

When the Alliance planned the first Solarize the Valley campaign three years ago, there were only 500 households and businesses in Idaho with rooftop solar or "grid-tied" solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. All together, that was just 5 Megawatts of generating capacity.

See "SOLAR'S BRIGHT FUTURE", cont on page 3

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## Director's Corner



The Snake River Alliance is fighting to keep 33,000 barrels of Hanford (WA) nuclear waste from coming to Idaho. We have some good news. Perhaps in part because of the safety concerns raised in our Don't Waste Idaho campaign, the Department of Energy's plan now appears to be stuck in internal agency review.

Idaho's next nuclear threat looms large. The one thing the world doesn't need is a proliferation of astronomically expensive and dangerous nuclear power reactors. But 12 of them are now proposed to be built

right here. It is sad to see our tax dollars used to give nuclear power a public facelift.

We can't let Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) take root in Idaho. The truth is harsh. They are worse than current nuclear plants in many ways. They will cost more, require more highly radioactive fuel, use more water per kilowatt and create even more nuclear waste. The energy they make will go primarily for out-of-state energy users but the waste will stay in Idaho.

The Alliance has stopped crazy stuff like this before — bomb factories, coal-fired plants, nuclear waste incinerators, and more. With your help, we will stop SMRs too.

For the last 30 years, we've had a role model of responsible nuclear activism. Beatrice Brailsford, our nuclear program director, has educated us, inspired us and organized us. Beatrice will be cutting back and working towards retirement over the next few months. She is our leading voice on nuclear issues, and we can't thank her enough for her service.

Please help us celebrate the powerful woman who helped stop the shipments, shine light in dark corners, and gives the term "nuclear watchdog" great integrity.

Thank you, Beatrice!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Wilson'.

Wendy Wilson  
Executive Director

# Despite some Pushback, Solar is Growing!

by Leigh Ford

George Michel remembers the moment when Jimmy Carter installed solar panels on the White House, announcing the future of solar energy and inspiring his dream to go solar. Unfortunately, Ronald Reagan removed the solar panels and stalled the momentum to go green. For most people, rooftop solar became a distant dream.

Until now.

After more than forty years of waiting, George was finally able to install his system this year through our Solarize the Valley campaign. With the price of solar panels decreasing, and with tax incentives and rebates in place, many people, including George, can now realize their dream. “[By] going solar, I feel like I’m helping do my part to reduce my carbon footprint. I worry about the future that my children and grandchildren will have. Yes, the economics are great, but for me, doing all I can to slow global warming is paramount.”



The Alliance’s campaign has helped approximately 130 families install solar panels on their homes. By working with local companies like Altenergy and Bluebird Solar, we are keeping a significant amount of CO2 out of the air we all breathe. Thank you so much, George! ●

## “SOLAR’S BRIGHT FUTURE”, from page 1

Now, federal reports show more than 3,000 PV systems in Idaho — making five times as much energy — nearly 25 MW of solar power!

Idaho homeowners and businesses are voting with their wallets. Together, these 3,000 “clean energy pioneers” invested more than \$75 million in their own energy independence. This robust growth has spawned new businesses and attracted dozens more solar companies to the state creating new clean energy jobs in Idaho. The competition has challenged installers, but yielded low prices and competition for customers.

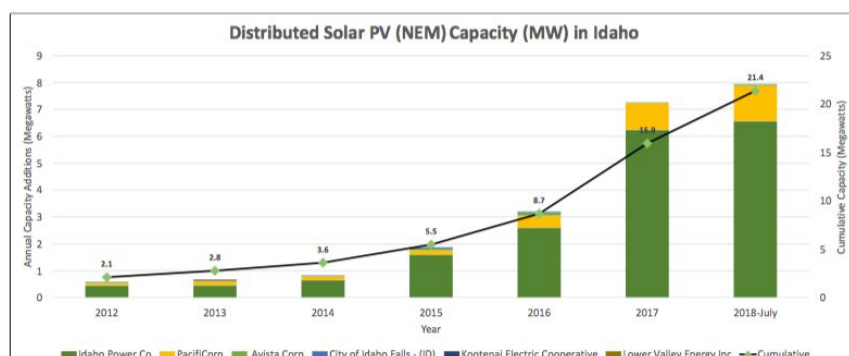
There is still a lot of room in Idaho for solar energy to grow. Idaho is among the top ten states in the nation for sunlight and solar potential. Still, rooftop solar amounts to less than ½ of 1% of Idaho Power’s peak demand.

### Idaho Net Metering Tracking (Solar Only)

Data Source: EIA 861M Monthly Reports

<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/eia861m/index.html>

Total Idaho solar PV systems as of July 31, 2018: 3,049



The Alliance is working towards the day when Idaho is powered entirely by 100% safe, clean and renewable energy. We will get there. Our Solarize the Valley program has helped 130 families “go solar” and educated thousands more Idahoans about the benefits of solar.

There are still major uncertainties in our state’s clean energy policies. The Alliance is part of regulatory proceedings to increase your access to affordable clean energy. As a member, you are helping us build Idaho’s bright future. ●





## No More Out-of-State Nuclear Waste!

by Amy Hilton

Former Governors Phil Batt and Cecil Andrus fought long and hard with the federal government to craft the 1995 Nuclear Settlement Agreement. Today, the Department of Energy still hasn't met many important deadlines, and even worse, there's talk in some places of loosening the Agreement so the DOE can send more out-of-state waste to Idaho.

To stop this from happening, the Snake River Alliance launched the ***Don't Waste Idaho*** campaign. Over the last six months, the Alliance rallied public opposition to DOE's proposal to ship nuclear waste from Hanford, Washington for treatment at the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project in Idaho. The plutonium-laden waste could endanger our roadways and end up stranded in Idaho for decades.

The Alliance thanks our ***Don't Waste Idaho*** advisory committee members for their help, including Gary Richardson, James and Leslee Reed, former State Legislator Donna Pence, Twin Falls Councilman Chris Talkington, Governor Andrus' Chief of Staff Marc Johnson, and Andrus' daughter Tracy Andrus. We also want to thank the marketing firm Oliver Russell of Boise for their help building the campaign plan, launching the ***Don't Waste Idaho*** website, and placing ***Don't Waste Idaho*** billboards in both Boise and Twin Falls.

A really fun part of the campaign was our "Nuclear Waste Roadshow," fake radioactive waste barrels (Thank you, Tim Norton!) that traveled on a trailer donated by Dorian Duffin. The Roadshow got a lot of attention as it went down I-84 to farmer's markets, rallies, educational forums, and other events across Southern Idaho. It was even in Boise's 4th of July Parade alongside a horde of "Nuclearized Zombies"!

The ***Don't Waste Idaho*** campaign held many successful outreach and educational events that raised the level of public concern about nuclear waste to new heights. There are now more people across Idaho who are educated about nuclear waste - and speaking out about it! We generated dozens of Letters to the Editors, Guest Opinions and newspaper articles. We received TV coverage of one of our rallies and two press conferences, with a clip of one going national.

Enough political pressure was generated by our campaign that many candidates and leaders came out against DOE's proposal or pledged to uphold the 1995 Agreement. In the end, the campaign generated hundreds of calls and letters to Idaho Attorney General Lawrence Wasden in support of Idaho's 1995 Nuclear Settlement Agreement. Volunteers even delivered 3,000 petition signatures and about 40 recorded comments to him personally!



Six months ago, we thought the Department of Energy would not listen to our concerns. It seemed like it was a “done deal” that 33,000 barrels of plutonium-laced waste would come into Idaho (even as early as January 2019!) But the agency has not taken the steps needed to meet that schedule. The DOE has postponed the project, pending an

internal review. We are cautiously optimistic that the Hanford waste is not coming to Idaho, thanks to the many volunteers across the state who worked so hard to make ***Don’t Waste Idaho*** a success! ●

### “PITFALLS OF NUCLEAR POWER”, from page 1

Is there a MARKET? Nearly all the project’s electricity would be sold outside of Idaho. The original assumption was that the buyers would be UAMPS member utilities in surrounding states. So far utilities have only subscribed to 180MWs of the reactors’ 720MWs – and those that signed up still have two more chances to pull out of the project. INL has committed to buying 120MW. That leaves 420MWs without a buyer.

Both of Idaho’s US Senators are sponsors of a bill that would leverage the Pentagon’s buying power to solve this market problem and allow the government to buy more nuclear energy. Here’s how: By law federal agencies can only sign 10-year power purchase agreements. That’s not long enough to cover nuclear power’s sky-high capital costs. If this bill becomes law, federal agencies, including the military (the government’s largest energy consumer), will agree to buy nuclear-generated electricity for 40 years – and pay way above market rates! This bipartisan brainchild is called the Nuclear Energy Leadership Act.

With SMRs, there is more than just money at stake. Nuclear power is a WATER hog. Of all the ways to make electricity, nuclear uses the most. UAMPS’s 12 nuclear reactor power plant would consume 18,000 acre-feet of water per year from the Snake River Aquifer. Per kilowatt, that’s 25% more water than even full-sized nuclear reactors use. The Snake River Aquifer is already over-allocated and remains the sole source of drinking water for 300,000 people. How will SMRs affect water rights in Idaho?

And of course, nuclear power means more NUCLEAR WASTE! UAMPS would use 40% more enriched uranium fuel than regular reactors to produce a kilowatt. That means it would produce more intensely radioactive spent fuel. The spent fuel would contain a higher percentage of plutonium, a key ingredient in nuclear bombs. There is no final repository for spent fuel so the waste would stay right here in Idaho.

Building nuclear power reactors in Idaho is a bad idea. Please join the Snake River Alliance to oppose commercial nuclear power reactors at INL. ●



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# Monthly Donor's Corner: Join me and get RAD!

by Asa Chandler of Ketchum, ID

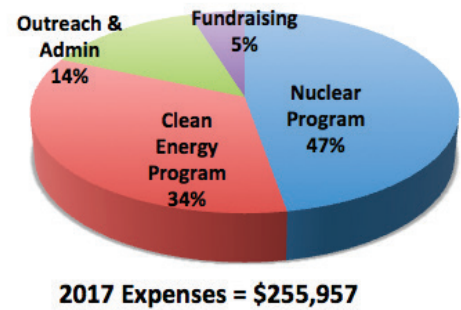
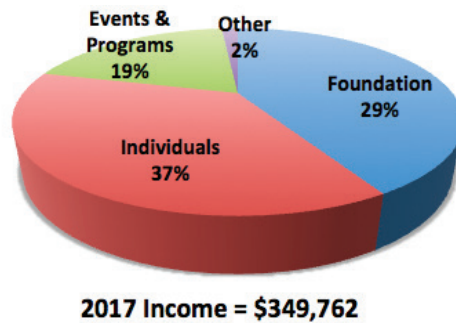


I became a member of the Ground Water Alliance in 1980, which later joined forces with the Snake River Alliance. I joined because of the threat of nuclear war and concern for the future of my children. Now, my concerns are closer to home. We can't allow the Idaho National Laboratory to become a permanent dumping place for nuclear waste.

I became a RAD (Radically Awesome Donor) and started giving monthly to the Alliance because we can't allow Idaho to become a permanent nuclear dump. INL is sitting on top of the gigantic Snake River Aquifer, the size of Lake Erie. We forget that it is less than 60 miles as a crow flies from Hailey and those of us who live in the Wood River Valley. We need to stick to the 1995 Nuclear Waste Settlement Agreement and get the waste out of here. Please join me and become a RAD to help the Alliance continue its tireless work to protect Idaho. ●

## 2017 Financial Review

Full financials are available upon request



## A Magical Night to Remember

By Eilen Jewell of Boise, Idaho

On September 8, my band and I performed a backyard benefit concert for the Snake River Alliance. Patricia and Liz Young, along with their neighbor Sarah Lunstrum of Dream Farm Flowers, were kind enough to host us in their homes and their beautiful backyards. The weather was perfect, the flowers were divine, and the food, beer and wine were delightful. (Thank you Three Girls Catering, Lost Grove Brewing, and Indian Creek Winery!)



Yet, what struck me most about that evening was the audience. Each and every individual who attended the concert brought a spirit of cooperation and optimism to the atmosphere. That evening, we raised a sizable sum and I realized just how much the Snake River Alliance is embraced by a community of thoughtful, big-hearted people. As a new board member, I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but this shouldn't have come as a surprise. I've known many of our members all my life, attending Alliance dinners since I was knee-high to a grasshopper. For me, the concert was the end of a long and exhausting summer tour and I couldn't imagine a more suitable Idaho homecoming.

Thanks so very much to all who attended and to all who donated items and services. To those who couldn't make it this time around, let's hope for next time! I'm already looking forward to doing it again soon and to getting to know more of this lovely community of amazing individuals. ●

## Beyond the Volunteer Curtain

### Why I love Volunteering with the Snake River Alliance *Luma Rose of Hagerman, Idaho.*

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” - Elizabeth Andrew

I have a very personal reason why I am involved with the Snake River Alliance. I lost my partner of 18 years to cancer when — unbeknownst to us — uranium testing came to our watershed (not in Idaho). We lost 14 of the 17 people who lived on our creek, including some children and thousands of local wildlife. From these experiences, I have developed a deep scar in my heart and a new passion in my soul to do whatever I can to stop the nuclear madness.

To me, Idaho is too valuable to risk a nuclear mishap and I am called to do whatever I can to defend my home. I am honored to be a part of the Snake River Alliance, a trusted organization that keeps my faith strong. I hope my story inspires others to help the Alliance and be a part of this important cause.

**Thank you, Luma, for being an outstanding volunteer in the *Don't Waste Idaho* campaign and petition drive, and thank you to all of our amazing volunteers at the Snake River Alliance! ●**



### Amy Hilton Assistant Director of Communications 2018

Please welcome Amy Hilton to the Snake River Alliance Team! Amy joined our staff in May as our Assistant Director of Communications, an important new job at the Alliance. Since May, Amy has done an amazing job coordinating several Don't Waste Idaho events in communities across the state, the Eilen Jewell Benefit Concert and the 2018 Fall Dinner!

Amy has a B.A. in both Environmental Engineering and Managerial Studies from Rice University and graduated from Boise State University in May with a Master of Public Policy and Administration.

Originally from Los Angeles, Amy has lived in Boise for two years and resides on the Boise Bench. She's looking forward to a bright and exciting future working for the Alliance! Next time you get an email or phone call from Amy asking you to volunteer, please say YES! ●



### Sarah Wanless Fall Intern 2018

The Snake River Alliance welcomes our 2018 Fall intern, Sarah Wanless. Sarah is in her last semester at Boise State University, finishing a degree in Environmental Studies with a Minor in Sustainability. She developed her passion for environmental justice after taking a class called Global Environmental Health during her freshman year. In the future, Sarah hopes to be able to do more to promote clean and renewable energy.

Sarah has been very helpful during the Don't Waste Idaho campaign, volunteering for a number of events like Eilen Jewell's Backyard Benefit Concert in Boise and the Don't Waste Idaho Educational Forum in Twin Falls. Please take a moment to say hello to Sarah! ●

