



SNAKE RIVER ALLIANCE

IDAHO'S NUCLEAR WATCHDOG & CLEAN ENERGY ADVOCATE

Summer Newsletter

www.snakeriveralliance.org

Summer 2019

Stop the Dirty Dozen!

Beatrice Brailsford, Nuclear Program Director



For forty years, the Snake River Alliance has fought against nuclear weapons and power projects, particularly those that would harm Idaho and spread nuclear contamination above the Snake River Aquifer. But we've always been mindful that all nuclear projects pose far-reaching peril. Last summer we waged a successful campaign – *Don't Waste Idaho* – to stop the plan to ship plutonium-laden nuclear weapons waste from Hanford, WA, to the Idaho National Laboratory. Now we're going to *Stop the Dirty Dozen* – a proposal to build a 12-nuclear reactor power plants in eastern Idaho.

Nuclear power costs too much money and takes too much time to be an effective counter to climate change, particularly when matched up against renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

The nuclear industry is dying at an accelerating rate, but the federal government wants to ignore market forces and save it. The Department of Energy (DOE) is pouring money into a slate of last gasp efforts at the Idaho National

See "Dirty Dozen" cont. page 5

How the Snake River Alliance Came to Me

Rinda Just, Snake River Alliance Board President

Three and a half years ago, my husband and I did the mid-life, post-retirement downsize. We explored rooftop solar, as I had long believed that using the sun to generate electricity to power a home or business was just common sense.

We heard about *Solarize The Valley*—the clean energy initiative of the Snake River Alliance. Alt-Energy conducted a rooftop suitability analysis to calculate our needs and potential for generation. We signed on, and by late summer, we were on-line. (This spring, we added a few more panels to accommodate a plug-in hybrid car, a shift to an electric heat pump water heater, and a future conversion of our gas furnace to a heat pump.)

We got to know the Alliance staff and the folks at Alt-Energy, as Liz Paul quickly enlisted us as part of the volunteer promotional team. We talked to TV reporters, posed for Alliance promotional materials, hosted open houses, and attended clean energy events to promote the solar initiative.

My first introduction to the Snake River Alliance, however, occurred far earlier in my life. I knew of the Alliance's work as Idaho's nuclear watchdog because I was raised in southeastern Idaho, and my father was employed by the federal nuclear program. When my dad came back from WWII, he went to work at "the site" (then the National Reactor Testing Station) as a guard. When he retired in 1976, he was Chief of Personnel Security for the Idaho Operations Office of the Department of Energy. He was a first responder when the SL-1 reactor accident killed three military workers. He was a part of the Karen Silkwood investigation, and he personally escorted Soviet Bloc leaders on tours of the Idaho facilities.



Rinda and Rick Just going Solar!

See "How SRA Came to Me" cont. on page 4

Happy 40th Anniversary to the Snake River Alliance!

Holly Harris, Executive Director

Roughly six weeks ago I joined the Alliance as the Executive Director and I can't imagine a more exciting time to join the team. This edition of the newsletter celebrates 40 years of Alliance advocacy. I congratulate the Alliance's founders, donors, members, volunteers, staff, and leaders in reaching this extraordinary milestone!

Our challenge is to ensure the Alliance remains sustainable into the future. To meet this challenge, we will rely on four hallmarks of a sustainable nonprofit.

The Alliance's programs must be relevant to a diverse and growing audience. We will educate and mobilize an expanding group of people to advocate against the contemporary threats of the nuclear industry and champion Idaho's efforts to embrace a clean energy future.

The Alliance must be adaptable. We will change to meet new challenges, relying on the very best of the Alliance's history as our foundation into the future.

The Alliance's programs must achieve meaningful impacts for Idaho's communities, especially as they relate to addressing the adverse impacts of climate change.

The Alliance leadership must provide a clear vision and ensure efficient operations.

Based on these considerations, I am prioritizing the following actions in the next six months:

- Launch a new website! Please contact me if you can make a special donation to support the Alliance in this regard (est. \$2000).
- Solicit feedback to understand what members and donors feel is important and unique about the Alliance and what needs to be improved.
- Adopt best management and programmatic practices to ensure Alliance resources are being used in an accountable and efficient manner.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve as the Alliance's Executive Director. I am eager to lead the Alliance as it serves as Idaho's nuclear watchdog and clean energy champion by inspiring, educating, and advocating for and with our fellow Idahoans!

Cheers!

Holly



p.s. A little more about me ... my family motivated my move to Idaho, as I came to Boise to be a more engaged aunt to my two awesome nephews (humble brag!). For the last 17 plus years, I worked as an environmental and energy litigator. I spent roughly the first half of my career at K&L Gates (formerly Preston Gates & Ellis) in Seattle and the second at Earthjustice in Alaska. I am a die hard sports fan (Go Bears, Bulls, Blackhawks, and Cubs!). And at the end of June, I'll be running the Spartan race in Boise again with my sister - AROO!

A Celebration and Appreciation of the Alliance's Origins of Grassroots Activism



What were the early days of Snake River Alliance like, down in the corner pocket of Southeast Idaho? Well, in those nascent days, we were pretty much a herd of wild-ass hippies who had grown up hiding under our school desks in response to imminent nuclear threat. Then as young adults we realized that same nuclear threat was being injected into our aquifer.

Word was there was an organization called Snake River Alliance coming to the forefront to protect the aquifer, but “they” were vilified as a group of not just naysayers, but loose cannons. The negative feelings were understandable since many Southeast Idahoans depended on the INL site for their livelihood. Then along came Beatrice Brailsford in all of her diplomatic, scholarly, thoughtful, intelligent, yet down-home Idaho manner. It would be many, many years before the Department of Energy and the Idaho National Lab fully grasped what had hit them!

From our point of view, she drew us in, educated us, and raised a community of caring advocates and activists. And as we say, considering the ruffians she had to start with, this wasn't an overnight endeavor!

Our first major hurdle was the SIS. The Special Isotope Separator. It was to be built on the beautiful high desert to our north. Its purpose was to produce weapons-grade plutonium. Well, that thought didn't sit well with the wild ass hippies!! It was this challenge that transformed our motley crew into articulate, fine tuned speakers. We found ourselves giving testimony at DOE hearings, a daunting experience indeed. The auditorium in Idaho Falls was filled beyond capacity for the SIS hearing. There was a sea of INL employees packing the house. Though Snake River Alliance members showed up in force, we were overwhelmingly outnumbered by site workers.

Tim Norton recalls one young fellow testifying that night who described himself as an ex-military man. He told the crowd that he was ashamed of the way the Snake River Alliance was being treated . . . saying that no one should be called unpatriotic for exercising their democratic rights, and participating in the governmental process.

When the SIS went down in defeat, it was an epiphany for many of us . . . that truly one voice CAN make a difference! “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead. Beatrice printed that Margaret Mead quote on bright turquoise cards and placed them on the tables at every Pocatello SRA dinner. She made us believers!

The next thing you know we were off to Washington for DC Days, and soaking up the national grassroots scene with cohorts from the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability. These days the ANA loves to come to southeast Idaho to hold their annual meetings.

Over the years we've stood on the Benton Street overpass bearing witness to the casks of nuclear waste rumbling northward by rail through our community. Oft times this would be a middle of the night affair, in the bitterest of cold and wind chill. Only the stalwart need apply!

In warmer weather we've honored the remembrance of Hiroshima with outdoor picnics. In the fall we have our wonderful community dinners, always with enlightening guest speakers like Arjun Makajani, Liz Paul, and Tom Carpenter to name a few.

One year, Margo Proksa spearheaded a project where we created an enormous papier mache globe, studded with 22,000 farmers matches representing all of the nuclear warheads on our planet. By that point in time our local media had begun to realize that Snake River Alliance wasn't a mere flash in the pan, and began to cover many of our events.

These days there are tours of the INL with Snake River Alliance being welcomed and well received. We attribute this to our fearless Beatrice. Her masterful understanding of not only the science, but the politics of DOE, INL , and the nuclear complex is beyond compare. Her respect for the site employees, and their expertise and knowledge has in turn gained her their respect. It has gained the Snake River Alliance a share of respect that was not evident in the past. Knowing Beatrice, she wouldn't take all the credit. She'd attribute it to all of us - her grassroots activists, the environmental wild-ass hippies, now in their 60s and 70s!

The Alliance Celebrates Idaho Power's Clean Energy Milestone



The Snake River Alliance welcomed Idaho Power's announced plans to abandon coal and natural gas and go 100 percent "clean" energy by 2045.

Just 10 years ago, the state's largest utility argued its customers favored cheaper coal power over other, cleaner alternatives. The company planned to stick with coal-fired generation as its second largest source of electricity after its legacy hydropower.

The Snake River Alliance became Idaho's first clean energy, anti-coal advocate when it created its Clean Energy Program in May 2007 and has been dedicated to a coal and natural gas-free energy future for Idaho ever since. The past 10 years have seen a remarkable transition for Idaho Power, the Snake River Alliance, and our clean energy partners. There have been frustrations and missed opportunities along the way, but Idaho Power's announcement was a milestone.

The Snake River Alliance was an early environmental member of Idaho Power's Integrated Resource Plan Advisory Council (IRPAC), which works with the company to develop a long range energy plan every two years. The persistence of the Alliance, our clean energy colleagues, like-minded individuals, and influential customers like Simplot Company and the City of Boise moved Idaho Power to adopt many of our recommendations that are now the foundation for the company's new carbon free goal.

Make no mistake, we want Idaho Power to achieve an earlier target year than 2045, and we'll keep tabs on the company's incremental progress. We remain concerned that hydropower, a large component of Idaho Power's energy mix, has increasingly visible adverse effects on salmon, leading Rep. Mike Simpson and Governor Brad Little to evaluate hydropower's impact on Idaho's iconic salmon. Finally, we will continue to engage with Idaho Power to reiterate that "clean energy" does not include nuclear power. In March, the Alliance confirmed with Idaho Power that it is not actively pursuing an investment in the early stage small modular reactor proposed project in Eastern Idaho.

That said, we welcome Idaho Power's far-sighted planning goal. We look forward to working with Idaho Power to achieve this goal, hopefully years ahead of schedule.

"How SRA Came to Me" from page 1

In 1979, when the Alliance was founded, I was in law school at the University of Washington and my dad and I already had diverging views about nuclear energy. He was a veteran who believed in the federal government. I was a child of the Vietnam conflict and Watergate. He believed the government would not harm its citizens; I thought injecting nuclear waste into the Snake River Aquifer was beyond the pale. He believed that nuclear energy would be the panacea that would get civilization off carbon-based fuels, and I witnessed Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. He thought that nuclear waste could be safely handled; I saw nothing but failed attempts to store what couldn't be made safe. He viewed the Alliance as a bunch of hippy rabble-rousers who didn't know what they were talking about, throwing up obstacles to the good work being done on nuclear energy. Until his death in 2009, the nuclear industry remained a touchy subject for my dad and me.

"I considered it my obligation to try and contain, in some small way, the nuclear genie whose promise of abundant, carbon-free energy and national security has proven to be this century's fairytale nightmare."
~ Rinda Just

Thus, when I was asked to serve on the board of the Snake River Alliance, I had to stop and think. I agreed to serve—motivated in part by my dedication to clean energy. But more importantly, I considered it my obligation to try and contain, in some small way, the nuclear genie whose promise of abundant, carbon-free energy and national security has proven to be this century's fairytale nightmare.

When I told my 93-year-old mother about my election to the Alliance board, she said that my father would be spinning in his grave. I told her that he was a thoughtful man of integrity and always told me he didn't care what I worked at, so long as I did the best I could and was happy. I reminded my mom of his words, and opined that in light of what we had learned over the past 70 years, he would be proud of my service.

“Dirty Dozen” from page 1

Laboratory (INL). The early stages of the Dirty Dozen proposal have already cost federal taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Dirty Dozen’s proposed reactors would be part of the new “small modular” category, all of which are supposed to produce less than 300 megawatts of electricity, though none have ever come on line.



Big Southern Butte near INL, courtesy of US Department of State

The country’s earliest scheduled “small modular” reactor proposal comes from the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems, a political subdivision of the State of Utah. The Utah proposal is based on plans to build a dozen “small modular” NuScale-designed reactors totaling 720 megawatts on the federal land at INL.

To be clear, the Dirty Dozen nuclear power plant is not small! At 720 MW, it would be the largest power plant in Idaho and would produce more electricity annually than

the entire Hells Canyon complex (the dams at Hells Canyon, Oxbow, and Brownlee combined).

The whole array is scheduled to be on line by 2027. But that won’t happen without billions more in direct payments and subsidies. The Utah group expects taxpayers to cover at least 50% of the construction costs, now pegged at \$4.2 billion.

But even with taxpayer funding for construction, the electricity from these reactors is too expensive, compared with solar and wind. The Utah group has only been able to convince its own member utilities to sign up for 124 MW of the expensive nuclear electricity, reflecting the electricity from only two of the 12 planned modules. As a result, the federal government plans to buy the remaining power – with our taxpayer money.

Currently federal agencies are only allowed to sign 10-year contracts for power. Now, as the costs of renewable power and battery storage continue to fall, Congress wants to abandon that rule. Federal agencies might have to sign contracts that lock them into paying the Utah group inflated nuclear costs for the next 40 years. The group is already eyeing 11 DOE and Department of Defense sites in the west. Who pays the Pentagon’s power bill? We do.

Here’s how the nuclear power bailout would play out in Idaho. INL has already put dibs on two of the new nuclear modules, which together would produce 120 MW – more than four times as much electricity as INL uses in an average year. One module would be for research and the other for electricity. The power that could be generated by the Dirty Dozen reactors however, will cost more than INL currently pays. What will INL be doing with our money?

It’s not just money. There are steep environmental costs as well. The Dirty Dozen nuclear reactors would use 40% more enriched uranium fuel than regular reactors to produce a megawatt of electricity. That means the reactors would produce more intensely radioactive spent fuel for which there is no final repository. And the waste would stay



Courtesy of Zable, Dunston & Civil -

Giving Thanks to Our Donors and Supporters!

Leigh Ford

Thank you for all your generous support. Because of you, we **stopped shipments of Hanford's nuclear waste** from getting dumped in Idaho and endangering communities along the route. And because of you, we recently met two matching grants, putting us in a stronger position to fight the proposal to construct **12 nuclear reactors over our precious fresh water** - the Snake River Aquifer. We can and will continue to protect our water and future generations from nuclear energy and waste with your support.



Winston, our volunteer nuclear watchdog

I extend a special note of gratitude to those of you who became monthly donors. Your regular gifts make it easier for us to plan and help to further our mission -- raising community awareness about the dangers of nuclear waste, weapons and power while promoting sustainable alternatives.

My deep appreciation goes to all of you who support our work - whether that's with a gift, through activism, by helping out as a volunteer - we really couldn't do our work without each and every one of you.



Julie Hoefnagels and Leigh Ford

We Want to Learn About Your Community!

Holly Harris

The Alliance needs updated information about the communities we serve (and I want to learn more about Idaho)! We're hoping you can help us by sharing highlights of your community.

- What are the best public events or cool spots in your town to host events (e.g., annual BBQ, music festivals, funky bookstore, great pub, community center, hip coffee shop)?

- Do you know of places Alliance staff and board members can stay when we visit your town?

- Are you willing to serve as an informal volunteer coordinator for your community to answer Alliance staff questions, distribute information, help organize events and follow-up, etc.? We really need you!



Volunteer representing in McCall



Citizens speak out for solar at the Idaho PUC meeting, Pocatello



Scott Pruitt Welcoming Committee, Boise



Rocking out at our annual Fall dinner, Boise

Our Snake River Alliance Team is Changing

Holly Harris

The 40th Anniversary brings a time of change, celebration and renewal for Snake River Alliance!

Beatrice Brailsford will conclude her time as an Alliance employee at the end of June and I am reminded of a statement by Nelson Mandela: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we lived. It is the difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead." Beatrice, we are forever stronger, more knowledgeable, and committed to a nuclear-free future because of your work. Thank you!



Earlier this month, the Board welcomed several new board members and elected new officers. The Board of Directors reflects a strong balance of experiences, interests, and perspectives.

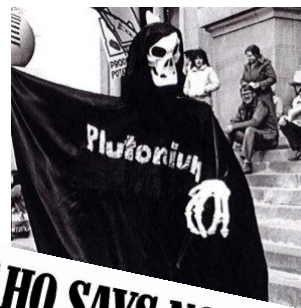
Rinda Just – President	Julie Hoefnagles
Jeremy Maxand – Vice President	Phil Gordon
Chad Worth – Treasurer	Eilen Jewell
Terry Kaufmann – Secretary	Bryant Kusy
Tim Andreae	Amy O'Brien
Sharon Harrigfeld	Vicki Watson

(Due to scheduling conflicts, Tim, Eilen and Vicki are not in the picture).

Finally, Amy Hilton left the Alliance to pursue a new opportunity. The Alliance appreciates her inspired work on the *Don't Waste Idaho* campaign and we wish her well in her future endeavors.

Please join me in celebrating these talented people and thanking them all for their service to the Snake River Alliance!

Celebrating 40 years of Advocacy



IDAHO SAYS NO

The nuclear weapons industry has been torn out is welcome.



You can't hug your kids with nuclear arms.



But you can help stop the arms race.

SNAKE RIVER ALLIANCE

Secretive, 'ironclad' pact is full of holes

IS 6-30-96
Lockheed Martin, a multinational defense contractor, is pouring the state, shilling for its best customer — the federal government — and its best source of Idaho income — nuclear waste.



Beatrice Brailsford

At a recent tour stop in Ketchikan, a Snake River Alliance representative asked the president of Lockheed Martin Idaho why there was no public involvement in negotiating the deal to accept over a thousand

There are loopholes on the trip out, too. High-level waste is among the most dangerous nuclear waste and 1.8 million gallons of it is stored in Idaho in the most dangerous form — liquid. But there are no deadlines guiding stabilization and removal of high-level waste. There are only "non-enforceable target dates." May happen, may not.

Idaho has a lot of the waste, now slated to go to the Waste

Tens of thousands of Idahoans who weren't in the back room either have signed a petition to let all of us decide this fall whether or not we want to live next to more radioactive trash. After all, we are the ones who are paying the price — with our tax dollars and with our land, people and future.

The waste from the nuclear age will pose physical risks until the end of time. But there's one





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40th Anniversary Swag

Leigh Ford

Become a monthly donor or increase your monthly donation, and you can sport this retro shirt!

Julie Scott created the design in the 80's and Deadwood Designs of Garden City printed and generously donated the shirts to help support our work.

Super soft and hip with a great fit, one can be yours by joining our monthly donor club.

Hurry while supplies last!

Available in women's V-neck and men's regular collar.



Email Leigh (lford@snakeriveralliance.org) or call 208-344-9161 to increase your gifts or go to www.SnakeRiverAlliance.org to start giving monthly today and I will contact you about your new shirt!
I increased my monthly gift today. Join me!