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## **Coalition Demands PGE Clean Up Boardman Coal Plant**

*Plant is Oregon's Largest Contributor to Global Warming, Major Source of Harmful Air Pollution*

**Portland, Ore**— A coalition of environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Northwest Environmental Defense Center (NEDC), Columbia Riverkeeper, and Hells Canyon Preservation Council, took action today to force Portland General Electric (PGE) to clean up its Boardman coal-fired power plant. The plant is the largest stationary source of air and global warming pollution in Oregon, emitting carbon dioxide, mercury, soot, smog and other harmful pollution.

The coalition, represented by the Pacific Environmental Advocacy Center (PEAC) gave notice today of its intent to file suit to force PGE to install modern pollution controls at the Boardman plant as required under the Clean Air Act.

“By law PGE was required to update the Boardman plant’s pollution controls when it upgraded other parts of the facility,” said PEAC attorney Allison LaPlante. “PGE failed to do so and as a result the plant has been pouring illegally high levels of harmful pollution into our air for years. The company also has been violating the terms of its state-issued air quality permit for the Boardman plant.”

Nat Parker, Regional Manager for the Sierra Club in Oregon stated that “PGE’s plan to burn coal until the year 2040 takes our state in the wrong direction. We need to look beyond coal. We already have cleaner, safer, readily available ways to power our future through efficiency and renewable energy. Oregonians deserve a coal free, clean energy future.”

PGE’s Boardman plant pollutes more than 10 protected National Parks and Wilderness Areas, including the Columbia River Gorge, Mount Hood, Mount Rainier, and Hells Canyon. Pollution from the plant causes acid rain and fog in the Columbia River Gorge and reduces visibility, clouding the spectacular vistas that make the Gorge famous.

“Our parks and wilderness areas are an important part of our heritage, and our economy. We need to clean up the Boardman plant now to protect our national scenic treasure, the Columbia River Gorge, and our other special places so that future generations can enjoy and explore these

magnificent areas too,” said Michael Lang, Conservation Director for Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

In addition to its effects on natural areas, coal plant pollution causes approximately 30,000 premature deaths nationwide each year. According to a 2004 report by Abt Associates, coal plant pollution in Oregon is responsible for an estimated seven deaths, eleven heart attacks, five cases of chronic bronchitis, 163 asthma attacks, and two emergency room asthma visits per year. The Boardman plant is the only coal-fired power plant in Oregon. (For more information, see <http://cta.policy.net/dirtypower/map.html>.)

“With respect to PGE Boardman’s emissions, our environmental agencies have failed us,” said Mark Riskedahl, Executive Director of NEDC. “The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality have given this outmoded dinosaur a free pass for over a quarter of a century, and concerned citizens have decided that enough is enough.”

Pollution in the Columbia River Basin from the Boardman plant was raised as a key concern by the coalition. “Detriment to the Columbia River Basin from the plant includes excessive nitrogen deposition, and acid rain and fog that harm native plants and sensitive aquatic species,” said Brent Foster, Executive Director of Columbia Riverkeeper.

Brian Kelly, Restoration Coordinator for Hells Canyon Preservation Council, said, “Continuing to burn coal at the Boardman plant without installing the best controls to protect Oregonians and our environment isn’t right. Hells Canyon and the alpine peaks of the Wallowa Mountains deserve clean air—not pollution and haze. PGE needs to clean up its act.”

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