

CURE Challenges Corporate Water Grab

July 11, 2007 Milbank, South Dakota

"Coal Aide" was served to attendees at public hearing on a permit to allow Big Stone II partners to draw off 3.26 billion gallons of ground water annually from the Veblen Aquifer in northeastern South Dakota.



Free "Coal Aide" containing mercury, carbon dioxide and sulfur was offered to the coal industry reps who attended the hearing for the ground water draw down permit. Precious ground water was also available—the value: "priceless".

All photos by Izaac Holt



"Big Coal Man" (a.k.a. Patrick Moore) jawboned with Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services PR reps next to pitchers of "Coal Aide" and "Precious Community-Owned Groundwater."



CURE student volunteers and interns passed out information and greeted attendees to the hearing, politely offering each person a glass of "coal-aide". No one accepted the offer.



CURE was told by Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) PR rep Doug Krouse that if we wanted renewable energy, we should "build our own plant" and that MRES customers were not calling on them to invest more in renewable energy.



Much of the discussion centered around information presented in the book: *"Big Coal — the Dirty Secret Behind America's Energy Future,"* by best selling author Jeff Goodell. The book recently came out in paperback and is being read widely by concerned citizens nationwide.



Members of the Sisseton Wahpeton Tribe and residents of the Lake Traverse Reservation under which the Veblen Aquifer flows, were at the hearing asking for a delay in granting the permit to allow for further study concerning the impact of the water draw down on Tribal Lands. Their request was denied.

Despite our protest, the South Dakota Water Management Board unanimously granted the permit to the Big Stone II Partners for the Veblen Aquifer groundwater. They will now go ahead with plans to sink 14 wells that are supposed to be used as a back up in the event of a drought affecting Big Stone Lake, where the Big Stone II partners already have another permit to draw off 3.2 billion gallons of water annually. How much did it cost the Big Stone II Partners to get access to this water over the projected 70 year life of the Big Stone II plant?

The cost for the permit for the July 11, 2007 hearing was \$2,260.

Does this Seem Right to You? Get Involved: Call CURE 1-877-269-2873