

Grand Forks Gazette - Letters

Letter: Run of the river facts

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Editor:

Re: Power brokers (Feb. 2 issue of the Grand Forks Gazette)

Gordon Planedin's letter of Feb. 2 contains many inaccurate claims and statements, notably his claim that "IPPs can only generate power during the spring run-off."

Run-of-river projects are capable of generating electricity throughout the year, whenever there is sufficient water available.

This varies considerably in different parts of the province. Mr. Planedin is also very wrong in assuming that run-of-river projects are built to absorb the full flow of the spring run-off; they are not.

Run-of-river projects are built to absorb an average water flow across several seasons.

This is partially due to the fact that BC Hydro contractually restricts run-of-river projects from delivering more than one-quarter of their firm electricity production during the spring run-off.

The remaining three-quarters must be delivered across the other three seasons.

Mr. Planedin is also very wrong in claiming that the need for additional electricity in B.C. "is total BS."

A recent analysis by Professor George Hoberg of UBC's Department of Forest Resources Management shows that B.C. has become a net importer of electricity in recent years with a "declining trade balance" in electricity.

Worse yet, much of that imported electricity comes from coal-fired power plants.

BC Hydro has become particularly reliant on electricity imports, something easily seen in the Crown corporation's annual reports. In fact, 2009 was the ninth year out of 10 in which BC Hydro ended up being a net importer of electricity.

Mr. Planedin's definition of an IPP is also completely inaccurate. Mr. Planedin erroneously equates the term "IPP" with run-of-river projects. IPPs encompass many different renewable energy types including wind power, biomass, geothermal, solar, wave and tidal, not just run-of-river.

I can agree with Mr. Planedin on one point, however. Apathy is indeed a great enemy and it's on par with misinformation and falsehood.

I therefore invite readers of the *Grand Forks Gazette* to dig deeper, ask questions and consider some of the information our group, B.C. Citizens for Green Energy, has gathered on our website at www.greenenergybc.ca and on our BCCGE Livewire blog.

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