

Conservation Fallout: Nuclear Protest at Diablo Canyon



The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, located on the central coast of California, has been a source of controversy since it was first proposed in the 1960s. Opponents of the plant have raised concerns about its safety, its environmental impact, and its potential to contribute to nuclear proliferation. In 2016, a group of environmental activists and local residents staged a protest at the plant, demanding that it be shut down. The protest was successful in raising awareness of the concerns about Diablo Canyon, and it helped to put pressure on the plant's operator to improve its safety record.



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by John Wills

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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History of Diablo Canyon

The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant is located on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, about 10 miles west of the city of San Luis Obispo. The plant was built in the 1970s and 1980s, and it consists of two nuclear reactors that generate a total of 2,256 megawatts of electricity. Diablo Canyon is one of the largest nuclear power plants in the United States, and it provides about 10% of the electricity used in California.

Opponents of Diablo Canyon have raised concerns about its safety since it was first proposed. The plant is located in a seismically active area, and there have been several earthquakes in the region since the plant was built. In 1983, a magnitude 6.5 earthquake struck near the plant, and it caused some damage to the plant's cooling system. The earthquake also raised concerns about the plant's ability to withstand a larger earthquake.

In addition to concerns about its safety, opponents of Diablo Canyon have also raised concerns about its environmental impact. The plant uses large amounts of water for cooling, and this water is discharged into the ocean.

The discharge water contains radioactive tritium, which can pose a health risk to marine life and to humans who eat seafood.

Finally, opponents of Diablo Canyon have also raised concerns about the plant's potential to contribute to nuclear proliferation. The plant produces plutonium, which can be used to make nuclear weapons. Plutonium is a very dangerous material, and it poses a serious security risk.

The 2016 Protest

In 2016, a group of environmental activists and local residents staged a protest at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant. The protesters demanded that the plant be shut down, and they cited concerns about its safety, its environmental impact, and its potential to contribute to nuclear proliferation.

The protest was successful in raising awareness of the concerns about Diablo Canyon. The protest was also successful in putting pressure on the plant's operator, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), to improve its safety record. In 2017, PG&E announced that it would spend \$1 billion to upgrade the plant's safety systems.

The Future of Diablo Canyon

The future of Diablo Canyon is uncertain. PG&E has said that it plans to keep the plant operating until its operating license expires in 2025. However, there is growing pressure from environmental groups and local residents to shut the plant down sooner.

In 2018, the California State Legislature passed a bill that requires PG&E to develop a plan to close Diablo Canyon by 2025. The bill also requires

PG&E to study the feasibility of replacing Diablo Canyon with renewable energy sources.

PG&E has not yet released its plan to close Diablo Canyon. However, the company has said that it is committed to working with the state to find a solution that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

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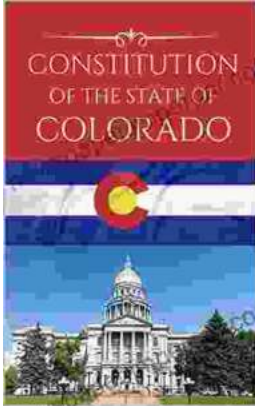
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