



IOWA CHAPTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2009

Contact: Neila Seaman, 515-277-8868 or 515-778-5573

IOWANS CAN BREATHE EASIER: Alliant Energy Abandons Marshalltown Coal Plant Proposal

Des Moines, IA: Today, Alliant Energy pulled the plug on its plans to build a massive new coal-fired power plant in Marshalltown.

“We are pleased that Alliant Energy has decided not to pursue constructing yet another coal plant in Iowa. Given that the Marshalltown proposal would have added more pollution to our state for the next 40-50 years, this is a tremendous victory for public health and Iowa’s growing clean energy economy,” said Sierra Club’s Neila Seaman. “Alliant made the right call in bringing this project to a halt.”

Sierra Club and many other environmental organizations across the state worked to oppose the Marshalltown project since it was first announced by Alliant in 2007. Following setbacks in the form of siting certificate conditions and disappointing ratemaking principles before the Iowa Utilities Board, Alliant was now facing the prospect of a long and uncertain public comment process on its draft air permit. Just last week, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) responded to a grassroots effort spearheaded by the Sierra Club and other organizations by extending the comment period from 30 to 90 days and adding five hearing sites to the two sites originally required. IDNR received over 700 requests for greater public participation opportunities in the permitting process.

“Environmental organizations were poised to encourage all Iowans to attend hearings and make informed comments on the damage a new coal plant could have on our state,” said Sierra Club’s Seaman. “The public demanded the opportunity to voice their concerns and IDNR responded,” added Seaman.

The expanded comment period would have proceeded at the same time the federal government is taking steps to address carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. Last month, President Obama’s Environmental Protection Agency announced that it was granting a request by Sierra Club and other groups to reconsider a memo issued by the Bush Administration’s EPA chief. That memo attempted to overrule a key legal victory won by Sierra Club ordering EPA to do more to address carbon dioxide emissions from a proposed coal plant. “We believe Alliant saw the writing on the wall that the time has come for new coal plants to finally account for their global warming pollution,” said James Gignac, Midwest Director for Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign.

The Marshalltown project joins Alliant’s proposed plant in Cassville, Wisconsin, as the second new coal plant proposed by the company to be defeated or abandoned in recent months. Last year, Wisconsin regulators rejected the Cassville proposal due in large part to global warming concerns and the massive cost of the project. Coupled with LS Power’s decision in January not to build its 750-megawatt Elk Run merchant power coal plant in Waterloo, Alliant’s decision means that the rush to build new coal-fired power plants in Iowa is over.

“Now that Iowa has no more coal-plant proposals on the table, we welcome an opportunity to work with Iowa’s utilities to develop a clean energy economy that will provide good jobs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help all Iowans breathe easier,” said Seaman.

###