

**Rodney Clark, Project Manager  
Sevier Power Company**

Interviewer-John Howe

Let's start out by talking a little bit about this proposed power plant. What is the process? Tell me about this new technology.

Rodney Clark

The Sevier Power Project was actually conceived about mid-2000 by a group of men, most of them live in or around Bountiful, Utah, and proposed to build a new technology called a circulating, fluidized bed.

Interviewer-John Howe

Tell me why that's clean technology, if you will. Why is that better technology than we've had in the past?

Rodney Clark

Power plants have improved dramatically over the past four years. We now get about a kilowatt hour per pound of coal. Forty years ago it took three pounds of coal. So, the technology at IPP, for example, is much more efficient but a circulating fluidized bed is much cleaner. It qualifies under what the Department of Energy calls, clean coal technology, and I've got a paper I'll give to you that you can look at. You can go to their website if you'd like.

Interviewer-John Howe

Why do you think there's so much concern about the environmental impact of this specific plant, controversy?

Rodney Clark

Well, I don't know that there's any more than there is of any project. The people opposed to the project are certainly better organized here, but in terms of the percentage of people that are opposed to the project; I don't think it's as high as it was over in Delta, for example, when we built the Intermountain Power project.

Interviewer-John Howe

What kind of environmental impact would you expect this plant to have?

Rodney Clark

Actually, very little. The environmental impact from this power project is going to be very small indeed. There will be no visible emissions--there are emissions--but they're not visible to the human eye. This is much cleaner than the Intermountain Power Project over in Delta. Houses, just a couple hundred yards away, will not have noise impacts, light impacts, pollution impacts. This is a very, very clean technology. In fact, the Utah Division of Air Quality has told us that this is the cleanest power plant ever licensed in the United States. It may well be the cleanest in the world.

Interviewer-John Howe

Talk a little bit about clean coal technology and what that means.

Rodney Clark

In 1985, the governments of the United States and Canada actually set about to try and figure out clean coal technology, and through its Department of Energy, the United States identified two technologies that qualify for what they call clean coal. And that is, number one, turning the coal into a gas, gasifying the coal, and then burning and then burning the gas. And number two is this circulating fluidized bed where the coal is actually burned in the presence of limestone, and that chemical reaction that grabs sulfur and other contaminants happens right as its being burned. That's what makes it so clean.

Interviewer-John Howe

What would you say to critics who say there's no such thing as clean coal?

Rodney Clark

Well, you know if you're going to define clean coal as no emissions at all, then this is not clean coal technology, and there never probably ever will be, but the technology that we have is very clean. The way technology generally moves is there are incremental improvements. For example, the Intermountain Power Project near Delta won environmental awards, and it's still doing very well, but we're, this technology we're proposing to use is much cleaner than they have at IPP.

Interviewer-John Howe

Tell me again about this proposed power plant and why it's so controversial.

Rodney Clark

Well, I don't know that it is that controversial. There is a group opposed to it, and this group has become better organized than I've ever seen before. I've been involved with power plants for a long time, but in terms of the numbers and the percent of the population that are opposed, I don't know that there's, I don't think that there's as many opposed as a percentage of the population. I don't think there's as many opposed to this project as there was over in Delta at IPP.

Interviewer-John Howe

Tell me what's new about this technology for this plant that could mitigate these concerns.

Rodney Clark

Well, this circulating, fluidized bed technology was actually developed at the University of Georgetown and the idea is that coal is burned with limestone. Its chunks of coal, it's not fine powder, like in most power plants, and, with a lot of fans it's circulated so that it acts like a fluid, hence the name fluidized bed, but that burning in the presence of limestone is the key, because that chemical reaction happens even as the coal is being burned.

Interviewer-John Howe

What kind of environmental impact would you expect a plant like this to have on the community?

Rodney Clark

This plant will have very little environmental impact. Not only is the burning of the coal very clean, but we're proposing a dry-cooled power plant, so we'll use very little water, unlike other power plants in the area. This will be the largest dry-cooled, coal-fired power plant in the country, and I suspect that to most of the country that doesn't mean anything, but here in Utah, where water is such a precious resource, having this plant being dry-cooled is very important. And, in terms of smoke, dust, I'm sure that a lot of the opposition believes that they're going to see coal dust and coal plumes, but that's not true. There will be emissions coming out of the chimney, but they're not visible to the human eye. So this'll be very, very clean, and other plants like this--we've seen people building houses within 150 yards from the power plant.

Interviewer-John Howe

Talk a little bit about climate change. Is that, in your opinion, a real phenomenon, and what do you think is going to happen?

Rodney Clark

Well, it's obviously got center stage. I'm not certain I believe that man is causing climate change, but that's an opinion. So, we obviously want to do all we can to be a good neighbor to be a good environmental steward. It's hard for me to comprehend how you're going to define carbon dioxide as a pollutant since it's necessary for human life. So, I don't know if that answers your question, but, we obviously are going to have to meet whatever requirements there are, and as we sit here today, there are no requirements to control carbon dioxide.

Interviewer-John Howe

What do you see for the future of energy development in the West?

Rodney Clark

I think that it's going to be tough for coal development anywhere in the country if this so called cap and trade legislation passes. Utah, along with a handful of other states, is highly dependent on coal. Over 90% of the electricity generated in Utah is from coal, and there are a few other states that, so Utah, if this cap and trade legislation passes, will be disproportionately hit. Power rates will go up more here than in other states.

Interviewer-John Howe

Can we have both? Is there a way to have energy development and still protect the environment? How do you bring these competing sides together?

Rodney Clark

The way I look at this, this whole dilemma, is the way technology generally moves, is we have an improvement, then another improvement, and it happens incrementally. And that's what's happening here. This power plant will be the cleanest power plant, according to the Utah Division of Air Quality, that's ever been built in the United States. That's not an insignificant thing. And, I suspect in a few years, if this one gets built, another one will come along that will be cleaner still. It used to take three pounds of coal to generate a kilowatt-hour of electricity. Today, we do it with less than one pound of coal. That's significant improvement and we need to

keep doing that. The United States has, we're the Saudi Arabia of coal. We have more coal than other countries. We have probably a 300-year supply of coal. So it seems foolish to me to take the position that we're not going to use coal. If we don't like the way coal burns, then we need to fix it. We need to come up with the technologies to continue to clean it up. But we need to use the resource that we have.

Interviewer-John Howe

I've heard that before, that Utah's been described as the Saudi Arabia of coal. Just, say that again, and tell me why you think that's accurate.

Rodney Clark

The United States is the Saudi Arabia of coal. We have more coal reserves than other countries. We have enough coal for two or three, probably three hundred years, and probably more if we look for it. So this is a resource that we have. If we don't like the environmental impact that we're getting when we burn the coal, then it seems to me that we need to spend our money and our technology on improving that. We need to use this resource because it's so plentiful and so vital.

Interviewer-John Howe

Tell me about locking up the land from development. Where would, what do you think should happen there? Where, for example, like the Kaiparowits which, supposedly, has a lot of coal. What should happen there?

Rodney Clark

I think that there are a lot of environmentally sensitive areas that probably shouldn't be developed. And I suspect that the Kaiparowits Plateau, per say, is probably one of those, but I think with a little intelligent engineering and give and take, that much of that coal on the Kaiparowits Plateau could be mined and no one would even know it that it's happening. It could be done in an environmentally friendly way.

Interviewer-John Howe

Tell me a little bit about the economic benefit in terms of jobs and the economy for this region.

Rodney Clark

Well, during construction, there will be several hundred construction jobs. That'll have a big impact in this community. Once the power plant is built, there'll only be about seventy full-time employees. There will actually be more additional mining jobs and trucking jobs in the county than there are people, because of the plant, than there will be people actually operating the plant. This will be, by far, the largest tax payer in the county. There was a study done, that we had done by the University of Utah that identifies economic impacts, and, if you'd like, I can make that available to you. Huge economic impact to the government of Sevier County.

Interviewer-John Howe

What would you say to wilderness advocates who are frightened, let's say, about energy development.

Rodney Clark

Well I think, as I said earlier, that reasonable people can find solutions to most of these problems. A little give and take. We need energy development. Energy is what has made our standard of living what it is. Utah is one of the fastest growing states in the nation. It needs a power plant like this about one per year, and so, we need to get on with it, and as long as each time we're doing it, we're using the best technology. And, as technology gets better, the environment will actually improve.

Interviewer-John Howe

Let me ask you this one time, I'm not sure if we got that or not, but we were talking about the future of energy development in the West. What do you think is going to be the future, and how do you think these sides might be able to, these competing interests might be able to come together?

Rodney Clark

Well, there's obviously a lot of people who want to, to stop coal development and some, many, who want to stop development of natural gas, but at some point in time, it's my feeling, my prediction, that unless we're going to have shortages of energy, that we'll find ways to use the coal resource that we have, and we'll continue to improve the technologies that we use to burn it and make it cleaner and cleaner.