

State commission approves new power plant in Oxnard

By [Chris O'Neal](#) 06/02/2016

The California Public Utilities Commission approved on Thursday, May 26, a contract for a new power plant on the Oxnard coast; a final decision on the project won't be made until 2017.

The 262-megawatt Puente Power Project would be headed by NRG Power Inc. and constructed adjacent to the 560-megawatt Mandalay Generating Station on Harbor Boulevard, should it be approved by the California Energy Commission, which has ultimate authority over the decision. The Energy Commission won't be voting on the project until next year.

The plant has been opposed by the city of Oxnard, which says that the three existing power plants on the Oxnard coastline overburden and unfairly affect local communities and that the plant's location could be affected by rising sea levels in the future.

The Sierra Club says that the commission has been the subject of "relentless industry lobbying" to "put industry interests before the health and well-being of residents."

"We are deeply disappointed that the CPUC authorized another dirty power plant in Oxnard and ignored environmental justice," said Strela Cervas, co-director of the California Environmental Justice Alliance. "This is a significant rollback on environmental justice protections and sets a dangerous precedent in CPUC decision-making for environmental justice communities across California."

NRG spokesman David Knox said that the group "appreciates the unanimous vote of confidence" from the commission. NRG last year agreed to take down two of the existing power plants at the Mandalay site, should the Puente project be approved and the new plant constructed.