



Otter Tail Power Company President Meets with President Bush

Otter Tail Power Company President Chuck MacFarlane participated on a small advisory council that met with President George W. Bush on Tuesday. The handpicked group convened at the White House to discuss the Clear Skies Initiative. MacFarlane was the only utility representative invited to participate in the group of 12 mayors, labor leaders, manufacturers, and chamber of commerce and environmental group representatives.

"As part of the selection process we believe that our company was reviewed for compliance with Environmental Protection Agency and Securities and Exchange Commission rules," said MacFarlane. Otter Tail Power Company's being asked to provide advice to the President on this issue also may have been a result of the company's environmental efforts. In October 2002 Big Stone Plant became a test site for Advanced Hybrid Technologies, which is a newly developed particulate collector that removes 99.99 percent of the fly ash from coal plant emissions. Otter Tail Power Company has been a leader in developing processes for burning alternate fuels as well.

At the White House meeting President Bush asked each of the participants about the likely impact of the proposed Clear Skies legislation on their constituents. MacFarlane told the President, "We, along with the electric power industry, support the scope and framework of Clear Skies because it will reduce emissions of three pollutants by 70 percent during the next 15 years. It's a much more aggressive and understandable plan than the current Clean Air Act. And, unlike other proposals, the cap-and-trade process is a proven method of reducing emissions at the lowest cost to customers."

Clear Skies is a Bush Administration proposal that would phase in caps on the emission of nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxides, and mercury beginning in 2010. Opponents claim the plan weakens the 1977 Clean Air Act and doesn't limit emissions of carbon dioxide. Proponents argue that allowing emission-producing companies to trade credits for reductions will allow market forces to achieve overall emissions reductions faster than the Clean Air Act at the lowest overall cost.

President Bush commended Otter Tail Power Company for evaluating and understanding the environmental and economic impacts of the legislation in the area the company serves and for supporting the Clear Skies Initiative.

Otter Tail Power Company Senior Vice President Ward Uggerud joined MacFarlane at a reception with President Bush in the East Garden following the meeting. A number of United States Senators and Representatives, including Senator James Inhofe, chair, Environment and Public Works Committee; Senator Joe Barton, chair, Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee; Senator George Voinovich, chair, Clean Air and Climate Change Committee; and Representatives Charles Norwood and Fred Upton, who serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, also attended the reception.

In Bush's East Garden speech he reviewed the highlights of his environmental plan, which include reducing diesel vehicle emissions, simplifying the New Source Review regulations, and passing the Clear Skies Initiative. Bush said each of these would make significant environmental improvements while creating jobs for Americans. Bush said that Otter Tail Power Company and utilities like it are important to ensuring that rural America gets a chance to succeed economically. "Otter Tail Power Company's viability, the capacity to bring electricity to our citizens," he said, "is an important part of any economic plan."

Otter Tail Power Company, a division of Otter Tail Corporation, is headquartered in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. It provides electricity and energy services to nearly a quarter million people in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. To learn more about Otter Tail Power Company visit www.otpc.com. To learn more about Otter Tail Corporation visit www.ottertail.com.