

## Editorial from the January 27, 2006 issue of The Idaho Mountain Express:



### Our View

#### Look-ahead thinking targets real valley goals

Up and down the Wood River Valley, local governments have sprung into action with their eyes on what's good for the future. No more resting on past laurels.

Quick on the heels of Thursday's open house laying out proposed plans for expansion and improvement of State Highway 75, valley residents will have a chance next Wednesday to hear about possible changes in Blaine County zoning. The changes would promote density in populated areas while focusing on protections for environmentally sensitive areas.

The meeting, featuring consultants from Colorado-based Clarion Associates, is scheduled for 6 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 1, in the Distance Learning Center at Wood River High in Hailey in the C Hallway.

Farther north, the small town of Sun Valley is contemplating how to take on a giant. Councilman Nils Ribi has commendably stirred his colleagues into mounting opposition to the planned coal-fired Sempra electric generating plant in Jerome County.

For starters, Mayor Jon Thorsen and the council will send a letter to the mayor of Jerome, indicating concerns about the plant's impact on the Wood River Valley. Sterner action is in abeyance.

The interlocking logic of the county's public hearing on growth issues next week and Sun Valley's concern about the Sempra plant is obvious: Blaine County cannot properly plan for future protections of environmental treasures and population clusters if emissions from a smokestack plant drift over Blaine County.

These concerns are unavoidable. Citizens who value their lifestyles and the future of the area should plan to attend next week's growth discussions, and add whatever weight they can to Sun Valley's grievance about the Sempra power plant.

Not idle, either, is the city of Ketchum, where the new administration of Mayor Randy Hall is grappling with ideas for reinvigorating the downtown area.

Almost as a non sequitur to all this civic energy, the city of Hailey is being confronted again by the eccentric politics of ex-Mayor Al Lindley, who now wants to convert city government from a strong mayor-council form to city manager-council form in a special election.

Hailey remembers Lindley's actions well. He resigned as mayor when accused of sexual harassment, changed his mind and demanded his seat back, which was denied. He then ran for election, and lost.

To Lindley's surprise, Hailey has managed fine without him, which deepens his grudge toward the popular mayor and city council.

Hailey taxpayers should reject spending \$3,000 foolishly for a special election merely to change their form of government for no earthly reason other than to soothe a peevish former mayor's ego.

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