

Letter To The Editor – Snowy River Mail

Philip Davis opened the debate on the front page of the Snowy (16 December); I wrote a letter supporting the notion (23 December) and Garry Squires thoughts were front page news (20 January). We were all talking about the employment and environmental positives of biomass power generation utilizing sawmill waste and wood residues.

As proof that some people lack basic comprehension, our views have been attacked by Leonie Chester (30 December, 3 February), Clare Picton (30 December), Barry Jackson (13 January), hysterical alarmist and anti-timber activist Jill Redwood (27 January) and Mark Swarbrick (3 February), who confused the suggestion of a small power station with an attempt to replicate the Latrobe Valley in Orbost!

All of these contributors conspire to deny the Orbost community the option of investigating a potential source of employment in an industry that is tailor made for the district. Ms Chester championed tourism; examples she provided are volunteer operated, not by paid employees. She denies the Marlo Coastal School is a “new industry” – even though education is one of our biggest growth industries.

My letter aimed only at getting Orbost to think with open minds about an emerging, proven, economically and environmentally viable power industry to generate employment in a community desperately in need of new opportunities. Mr Davis and Mr Squires (wrongly branded as consultant to SEFE), I believe, also intended only to get the community thinking about the opportunities.

The irony of Ms Chester’s comment about the PS Curlip last week, given the front page news, was not lost on me. The Curlip is a wonderful community project yet is another in a long line of tourist projects in history that could not be sustained as viable businesses despite the very best efforts of volunteers.

Real communities need real jobs. Orbost is a real community full of real people needing real job opportunities. Give biomass power generation some consideration with an open mind and don’t cave-in to alarmists.

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