

August 17, 2013

Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission  
1300 S Evergreen Park Dr SW  
Olympia, WA 98504

To whom it may concern:

Please reject the Integrated Resource Plan that Puget Sound Energy submitted to you several weeks ago. In failing to include any plans for transitioning away from coal-fired power, this plan is grossly irresponsible to ratepayers, to Washington State's environmental policies, and to the future of our planet.

Scientists have determined that in order to keep global warming under the internationally agreed two-degree limit, we must not burn more than 20% of remaining proven worldwide fossil-fuel reserves. Most of those reserves consist of coal, and there are no economically viable uses for coal that don't involve burning it. Therefore, in order to meaningfully address the global climate crisis, humanity must halt most of our extraction of coal from large formations such as the Powder River Basin.

The coal-fired power plant in Colstrip, Montana that supplies most of PSE's coal-based electricity is among the largest and dirtiest power plants in America. Only seven other coal-fired plants in the country emit more carbon dioxide than Colstrip, and the damage to local air and water quality in the region surrounding Colstrip is well documented. Shutting down this dirty plant will ultimately provide a large net benefit to both Montana residents and Washington's climate goals. It will also be a meaningful step toward halting extraction of coal from the vast reserves under Montana and Wyoming that provide most of America's coal supply.

I urge you to reject PSE's current IRP, as well as any future IRP that does not, at a bare minimum, provide for the retirement of the two oldest and dirtiest units at Colstrip. Replacement power sources other than natural gas are necessary as well, since recent evidence strongly suggests that the full-life-cycle greenhouse emissions of natural gas likely exceed those of coal. PSE claims to be an environmentally responsible utility, but they can't fully live up to that claim as long as they continue to burn large quantities of fossil fuels.

Sincerely,

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\* The views expressed in this letter are my own and not those of my employer.

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