

As a Puget Sound Energy (PSE) customer, I want PSE to move beyond coal and to invest in clean energy. PSE owns 32% of the Colstrip Generating Facility in Eastern Montana. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ranks this old (1975/1985) coal plant as the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions West of the Mississippi.

In its latest Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) PSE wants to continue to operate Colstrip for the next 20 years. The analysis used by PSE excludes many environmental and public health costs associated with Colstrip. PSE has not considered many environmental costs of the Colstrip plant including cleanup of contaminated groundwater, disposal of coal ash, and installation of new equipment to reduce haze, sulfur dioxide and other toxic air pollutants.

PSE would need to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in order to operate Colstrip safely and legally. As a PSE ratepayer I believe that this is an unwise investment. Spending more money to keep this dangerous and dirty coal plant operating for 20 years is not a reasonable use of my money paid for electricity to PSE.

PSE has already committed to a better future by investing in renewable energy in its wind and solar farms. It is time for PSE to recognize that the environmental and health costs of burning coal are making it a very expensive way to provide electricity to its customers. PSE needs to be realistic by making plans now to phase out coal as an energy source over the next 20 years. An additional benefit is that changing to green power will create many clean energy and energy efficiency jobs.