

PRESS RELEASE

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Contacts:
Rick Gilliam: 303- 444-1188 x218
Howard Geller: 303-447-0078, x1

TRI-STATE COAL PLANTS NOT NEEDED AND COSTLY ***New report finds \$5 billion investment in new coal-fired power plants and transmission lines unnecessary***

(Boulder, CO) – A report challenging the proposal to build three coal-fired power plants and associated transmission lines by the Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association was issued today by Western Resource Advocates (WRA) and the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET). *Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association's Resource Plan: Analysis and Alternatives* finds that there are less costly and less risky options for meeting the growing energy service requirements in the Tri-State service area, and that the three new power plants are unnecessary. The full report is available at www.westernresourceadvocates.org and www.swenergy.org.

“Tri-State’s customers have already shouldered big rate increases. Tri-State’s proposal to spend \$5 billion on new coal plants and transmission lines is unnecessary, and would further increase rates by over 50%,” stated Rick Gilliam, senior policy analyst at Western Resource Advocates and lead author of the new report. “Tri-state has overestimated power need, and failed to consider the economic and environmental risks associated with conventional coal plants,” Gilliam noted.

“Promoting energy efficiency would be a lot more cost-effective than building new coal-fired power plants and transmission lines,” stated Howard Geller, co-author of the report and Executive Director of SWEET. “Utility-sponsored energy efficiency programs could result in \$760 million in net savings for consumers and businesses served by Tri-State, rather than billions of dollars in net costs,” Geller added.

"Using the vast wind resources in Tri-State’s territory can be less expensive and help struggling agricultural communities," said Kay Lynn Hefley, state board member, District 4, Colorado Farm Bureau. Hefley resides in Walsh, Colorado and represents members of Crowley, Otero, Bent, Prowers, and Baca Counties. These counties are located within Tri-State's service area and contain some of Colorado's best wind resources.

The Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association (Tri-State) is a wholesale electric power supplier to 44 rural electric cooperatives in Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Wyoming. WRA and SWEET are urging these cooperatives to say “Try again, Tri-State” when Tri-State asks its members to pay for the \$5 billion boondoggle.

About SWEET: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. For more information, visit the SWEET website at www.swenergy.org.

About WRA: Western Resource Advocates is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the Interior West’s land, air, and water. For more information, visit WRA’s website at www.westernresourceadvocates.org

