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PSC POSTPONES PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION ON COLSTRIP UNIT 4 ACQUISITION

Third public listening session will be rescheduled after Washington regulators issue decision on proposed transaction.

HELENA, Montana — Following developments in Washington that could stall NorthWestern Energy’s effort to buy a greater stake in Colstrip Unit 4, the Montana Public Service Commission announced Tuesday that it will postpone its third scheduled listening session on the proposed transaction.

On December 9, 2019, NorthWestern signed an agreement with Puget Sound Energy, Inc. to buy Puget’s 25% interest in Colstrip Unit 4, including real estate, equipment, facilities, and energy production, for \$1.00. That agreement was renegotiated after Talen Montana, LLC, exercised a right of first refusal to buy half of Puget’s interest. As a result, NorthWestern applied for Commission approval to buy a 12.5% interest in Colstrip from Puget, including 92.5 megawatts of energy production, for \$0.50.

Puget, meanwhile, sought pre-approval of the transaction from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. On October 2, staff for the Washington Commission [recommended denying Puget’s request](#). If regulators in Washington deny the proposed sale, NorthWestern’s application for pre-approval from the Montana Public Service Commission could be rendered moot.

Because Washington’s pre-approval decision could alter or stop the proposed transaction, the Commission on Tuesday postponed the third in its series of listening sessions on NorthWestern’s application. If Washington grants pre-approval, the Commission will reschedule the listening session and consider scheduling additional sessions so Montanans can provide comments informed by Washington’s decision.

NorthWestern’s application has already generated significant interest from the public. The Commission has received more than 500 comments on NorthWestern’s application,

including input from more than 40 Montanans who spoke at the Commission's listening sessions on October 13 and 20. The Commission intends to provide ample opportunity for Montanans to provide fully-informed comments on NorthWestern's application, and will continue to accept written comments, which can be submitted by email to pschelp@mt.gov or through the Commission's website, psc.mt.gov.

The Commission regulates private investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, water, and sewer companies, certain motor carriers, and oversees natural gas pipeline safety and intrastate railroad safety. The Commission works to ensure that Montanans receive safe and reliable service from regulated public utilities while paying reasonable rates. For more information, visit psc.mt.gov or contact the Commission at 1-800-646-6150. Follow the Commission at [Twitter.com/@MT_PSC](https://twitter.com/MT_PSC) or visit [Facebook.com/MontanaPSC](https://facebook.com/MontanaPSC).

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