

## **Energy Northwest adds “Regional Value” page to Columbia Generating Station tab on website**

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Northwest consumers can now access factual information about Columbia Generating Station through a “Regional Value” page on the Energy Northwest public website. To keep the public fully informed, the page provides information on Columbia’s economic and environmental benefits to the region. Launched today, the page is available from the “Our Energy Projects” tab at the top of the site, followed by the “Columbia Generating Station” link, located at:

<http://www.energy-northwest.com/ourenergyprojects/Columbia/Pages/Regional-Value.aspx>.

“Columbia’s continued operation is the most socially and fiscally cost-effective option for consumers,” said Brent Ridge, Energy Northwest vice president and chief financial & risk officer.

Energy Northwest is a state joint operating agency comprised of 27 Washington public utilities, serving 1.5 million ratepayers, and is the owner and operator of Columbia. Columbia Generating Station – the Pacific Northwest’s only nuclear facility – has been criticized by anti-nuclear energy activists who have made numerous attempts to discredit the facility.

Last year an activist group claimed the facility was unsafe and posed a threat to employees and the community. That attempt faded as Energy Northwest was honored with an American Public Power Association Safety Award of Excellence during a year in which Columbia also achieved its highest ever annual production of electricity.

Earlier this year, activists approached several of Energy Northwest’s member utilities to alert them to what they claimed were Fukushima-like safety dangers at Columbia.

Utility representatives provided the group with information clearly distinguishing Columbia from the affected, older Fukushima reactors, and the effort also failed to gain traction.

Earlier this year, activists approached several of Energy Northwest's member utilities to alert them to what they claimed were Fukushima-like safety dangers at Columbia. Utility representatives provided the group with information clearly distinguishing Columbia from the affected, older Fukushima reactors, and the effort also failed to gain traction.

Last month, a group distributed copies of a document claiming Columbia was seismically unsafe. This prompted Energy Northwest to post a seismic safety public resource Web page with information detailing Columbia's construction. The page includes several safety endorsements by the independent Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and a photograph of the various types of seismic bracing that can be found throughout the facility.

Activists now claim that Columbia is not an economically-viable option for the region. In late 2012, however, the Bonneville Power Administration and Energy Northwest came together to analyze the financial value of Columbia in light of low energy prices in the wholesale electricity market and historic low fuel costs for natural gas-fired power plants. The agencies overwhelmingly concluded that Columbia's continued operation is the most cost-effective option for regional ratepayers – to the sum of billions of dollars. Details of options considered during this study are available on the new Regional Value Web page.

"Columbia continues to operate safely and economically," said Energy Northwest CEO Mark Reddemann.

"BPA credits Columbia's safe, reliable and cost-effective operation with saving regional ratepayers tens of millions of dollars in the 2013-15 rate case," said Reddemann.

“Studies demonstrate that continued operation of Columbia saves the region billions of dollars through the end of its license in 2043,” he said.

The new “Regional Value” page is divided into four main sections: Value Study, Economic Assessment, Environmental Benefits and Economic Impact. Energy Northwest announced the launch of its newly-designed website – an energy education destination – in July, which is located at: [www.energy-northwest.com](http://www.energy-northwest.com). The website is updated on a regular basis in response to agency and industry news, and includes information on a diverse-mix of energy resources.

**About Energy Northwest:**

Energy Northwest develops, owns and operates a diverse mix of electricity generating resources, including hydro, solar and wind projects – and the Northwest’s only nuclear generating facility. These projects provide enough reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy to power more than a million homes each year, and that carbon-free electricity is provided at the cost of generation. As a Washington state, not-for-profit joint operating agency, Energy Northwest comprises 27 public power member utilities from across the state serving more than 1.5 million ratepayers. The agency continually explores new generation projects to meet its members’ needs. Energy Northwest – [www.energy-northwest.com](http://www.energy-northwest.com).



# # #