



Contact:
Lee Boughey
720-670-6696
lboughey@tristategt.org

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Agreement reached to amend state visibility plan

DENVER –Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., has reached an agreement regarding the Craig Station generating station it operates in northwest Colorado and the state plan for federally required visibility protection in national parks and wilderness areas.

The agreement with WildEarth Guardians, National Parks Conservation Association, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would amend the Colorado Visibility and Regional Haze State Implementation Plan emissions limits for Tri-State’s Craig Station Unit 1. Under the agreement, emissions of nitrogen oxides would be further reduced from the generating unit by August 2021.

“With increasingly stringent enforcement of visibility regulations by the EPA, it was prudent to continue our work towards a Colorado state plan that positions Craig Station to meet long-term federal compliance requirements,” said Mike McInnes, executive vice president and general manager of Tri-State.

Colorado regulators, industry and the environmental community worked together to develop a stringent state plan. In 2011, the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission approved the plan and submitted it to the EPA. Tri-State and other utilities, several environmental organizations, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Colorado Governor’s Office, the Colorado General Assembly and the entire Colorado Congressional delegation supported the plan. In January 2013, the state plan was approved by the EPA. In several other states, the EPA has substituted Federal Implementation Plans for state plans.

Several state and federal procedural steps are required to implement the terms of the agreement, which includes review by the Air Quality Control Commission and the EPA.

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., is the not-for-profit wholesale power supplier to 44 electric cooperatives and public power districts serving approximately 1.5 million consumers throughout a 200,000 square-mile service territory across Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico and Wyoming.

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