



## **ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS OF NORTHWEST COLORADO (AGNC) SECURES \$100,000 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR REPURPOSING ENERGY ASSETS GRANT**

*DOE grant aids energy communities in enhancing technical capacity, retaining a skilled workforce, and revitalizing energy systems, addressing environmental impacts and challenges tied to retiring energy assets.*

**RIFLE, COLORADO** (January 11, 2024) – The Northwest Colorado Energy Initiative (NCEI), a division of the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC), has successfully obtained funding from the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Technology Transitions (OTT) and Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) known as the **Capacity Building for Repurposing Energy Assets** grant to support Northwest Colorado energy impact communities. This collaboration includes the newly established Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) known as ENERGYWERX. The funds, \$100,000, are expected to be disbursed in 2024.

"We at AGNC are immensely proud to have been awarded the '*Capacity Building for Repurposing Energy Assets*' grant by the Department of Energy," stated Tiffany Dickenson, Executive Director of AGNC. "This grant is not just a recognition of our efforts, but a crucial catalyst for the evolution of Craig, Colorado, as the community transitions away from coal. It empowers us to explore and implement innovative strategies that will redefine the community's energy infrastructure, promoting sustainable and economic growth. Recognizing the challenges posed by the coal mine and power plant closures, this grant bolsters our commitment, as the Economic Development District for the region, to driving robust economic development in Craig, ensuring a resilient and prosperous future for the community."

Considering the impending closure of the Craig Power Station by January 1, 2028, AGNC sought to secure this sustainable funding source to assist in the ongoing efforts to aid the City of Craig and Moffat County, Colorado communities.

The grant aims to empower energy communities by enhancing technical capabilities and retaining a workforce to revive energy systems. This initiative addresses environmental impacts and challenges associated with retiring or soon-to-be-retired energy assets (power plants, coal mines, oil/gas well lands) from 2009 to 2032. The grant timeline is now in Phase 3 – Path Forward (December 2023 to October 2024), where selected communities engage in discussions with DOE SMEs, leading to potential Business-to-Business (B2B) Research and Development Agreements. Looking ahead to Phase 4 – Effort Underway (December 14, 2023, to September 30, 2024) involves collaborative efforts with the DOE team, emphasizing knowledge sharing and rapid

content production for key decision points. Email check-ins are encouraged for feedback and guidance throughout this highly collaborative engagement model.

The mission of this grant is to repurpose existing energy assets with a focus on collaboration and a pragmatic working style. The following nine proposed objectives were outlined in the grant to accomplish the mission of this funding cycle:

1. Community-Centric Approach
2. Facilitating Collaboration and Partnerships
3. Data-Driven and Evidence-Based Planning
4. Focus on Workforce Development
5. Sustainability and Long-term Viability
6. Iterative and Adaptive Planning
7. Engaging Expertise and Best Practices
8. Clear Communication and Reporting
9. Policy Advocacy and Support

This grant addresses the significant challenges stemming from the economic repercussions of the power plant closure. The coal industry's overall economic impact in Northwest Colorado, encompassing both coal mining and coal power, is substantial, comprising 2,862 jobs, \$228,392,532 in labor income, and \$621,433,561 in regional GDP. To provide context, this constitutes 21.7% of the three-county regional GDP and 8.2% of the jobs in the region. The impact is particularly pronounced in Moffat County, where coal contributes 47% to regional GDP and 19.8% to jobs.

[Link](#) will take you to *ENERGYWERX Opportunity Website*.

“We are excited to begin our surveys and educational outreach,” stated Matt Solomon, Project Manager for the Northwest Colorado Energy Initiative. “Together, we are creating a non-partisan educational outreach to help set a foundation for fact-based discussions that will engage our communities and support the upcoming HB23-1247 feasibility study.”

AGNC would like to extend gratitude for the letters of support received for this grant from the following organizations: United States Senator Michael Bennet, United States Senator John Hickenlooper, United States Congresswoman Lauren Boebert, Colorado State Senator Dylan Roberts, Colorado State Senator Perry Will, Colorado State Representative Meghan Lukens, Moffat County Board of County Commissioners, Rio Blanco County Board of County Commissioners, City of Craig, Town of Hayden, Town of Meeker, Town of Rangely, Town of Yampa, Town of Oak Creek, and the Joint Organization Leading Transition (JOLT).

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**About AGNC** ([www.agnc.org](http://www.agnc.org)) Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado is a council of governments and designated Economic Development District, representing the counties of Garfield, Mesa, Moffat, and Rio Blanco and all the municipalities therein. Their mission is to advocate, inform, and reflect the needs of its members by promoting the values, industries, and economies of Northwest Colorado.

**About NCEI** ([www.agnc.org/ncei](http://www.agnc.org/ncei)) The Northwest Colorado Energy Initiative operates under the purview of AGNC and Executive Director, Tiffany Dickenson. The advisory board members are former state House Majority Leader and former CMU President Tim Foster, former state Sen. Bob Rankin, Mesa County Commissioner Cody Davis, Garfield County Commissioner Mike Samson, Rio Blanco County Commissioner Doug Overton and former Moffatt County Commissioner Ray Beck. Former Eagle Town Council member Matt Solomon is the project manager.