

Money key to closing last Nev. coal plant

By Scott Sonner, AP

Sierra Club lawyers who've preached against the environmental evils of coal-burning power plants for decades are trying to force the closure of the last significant one in renewable energy-rich Nevada with arguments based on a different sort of green: money.

"It used to be that we had to come in and say closing these plants might cost us a bit more, but it's the right thing to do because of the social and environmental impacts – kids with asthma, dirty air and dirty water," said Travis Ritchie, a lawyer for the club's environmental law program in Oakland.

Critics of the Valmy coal plant scored a key victory last month when state regulators formally ordered Nevada's largest utility to reassess its economic efficiency after experts projected it will cost ratepayers \$30 million or more under current plans to keep it open until 2025.

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