From Montana Department of Labor and Industry:

The Governor's Office through the Montana Department of Labor applied for and received $4.6 million in funding to assist the community of Colstrip with workforce planning and worker training, and to ensure the successful transition of the region to a diversified economy. $2.0 million of the grant will be available immediately with the remainder received through application. A starting date of October 1, 2017 is proposed awaiting final federal approval.

In response to the decline in coal mining employment and a lawsuit settlement requiring the partial closure of Colstrip's coal-fired power plant by July 2022, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) applied for and received the POWER grant through the U.S. Department of Labor's Dislocated Worker program.

Most of the funding will go directly towards training workers in 23 eastern and south-central Montana counties for new jobs in a diversified economy. (Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Rosebud, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Sweet Grass, Stillwater, Treasure, Yellowstone, Wibaux, and Wheatland) The funding will be awarded as sub-grants through the competitive RFP process to eligible training providers with a connection to the local community, such as community colleges, tribal colleges, labor unions, or other training organizations.

The application was developed with support and guidance from the local economic development corporations, local worker's unions, and other groups interested in the successful transition of the community's workers. Local economic development organizations will also assist with a regional workforce plan to develop a strategy to take the existing workforce and transition them into occupations needed in the future economy.

Additional funding will go towards sub-grants to local and statewide entities to support curriculum development or innovative workforce training consistent with the Colstrip economic development plan. DLI also anticipates providing additional Job Service support to the region, expanding capacity in the Registered Apprenticeship program to recruit more businesses to be sponsors in the coal-impacted region, and hiring tribal workforce coordinator to work with dislocated workers on the Northern Cheyenne, Crow, and Fort Peck reservations.