



Idaho Public Utilities Commission

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Commission taking comments on Idaho Power long-range plan

BOISE -- (Sept.1, 2015) A 20-year planning document Idaho Power Company must file with state regulators does not anticipate any significant new generation resources through the 2020s.

Idaho Power's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), filed every two years with the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, projects customer growth to be about 196,000 from now until 2035, adding about 1.2% to the company's average energy demand and 1.5% to its peak demand.

While not anticipating any new generation beyond that already contracted through the 2020s, the plan does anticipate 60 megawatts in new demand response programs, 20 megawatts from development of an ice storage controlling to reduce air conditioning load and the construction of a 300-MW natural gas plant in about 2031.

The commission requires utilities to file the biennial plans to serve as a status report on a utility's ongoing plans to adequately and reliably serve customers at the lowest system cost and least risk over the next 20 years. Inclusion of projects in the plan does not necessarily mean the projects will be built, but only that they are included in the utility's current plan, which could change as circumstances warrant.

The plan assumes that much of the increased demand in the near future will be met by completion of the 500-kilovolt Boardman (Oregon) to Hemingway transmission line. The line is expected to be operational by 2020 or shortly thereafter.

Idaho Power is anticipating that the 268-megawatt North Valmy coal plant, of which it is a part-owner with Nevada Energy, will be retired by 2025.

While no new generation is anticipated through the 2020s, the company does plan by the early 2030s to acquire 60 megawatts through the expanded demand-response programs, under which customers voluntarily agree to curtail generation during peak periods or shift it another time of day. Idaho Power also plans to add 20 MW in about 2030 through the use of an ice-based thermal energy storage unit. Ice is created during low-load/low-price times and then used to chill air conditioning units in large commercial buildings. Several utilities in California are installing and testing this technology to meet state-mandated energy storage requirements.

Idaho Power's IRP also calls for the addition of a 300-MW combined-cycle natural gas combustion turbine in 2031.

Idaho Power claims that its IRP shields customers from the uncertainty that could be created over 1) whether the 260 megawatts of solar contracts come on line; 2) proposed regulations relating to the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan are enacted; 3) Boardman to Hemingway is completed; and 4) the Valmy coal plant retired.

The commission is taking comments on Idaho Power's IRP through Sept. 21. Comments can be sent via e-mail by accessing the commission's web site at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on "Case Comment Form" under the "Consumers" heading, enter the case number (IPC-E-15-19) and enter your comments. Comments may also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID, 83720-0074 or faxed to 208 334-3762.