



Case No. IPC-E-16-28

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PUC to hold technical hearing on Idaho Power's plans for new transmission line

BOISE (Aug. 1, 2017) - The Idaho Public Utilities Commission has scheduled a technical hearing regarding Idaho Power Company's proposal to construct a new transmission line in the Wood River Valley.

The hearing is set to begin Aug. 8 at 9:30 am in the Commission Hearing Room at 472 W. Washington St. in Boise. The hearing will continue Aug. 9 if necessary.

A technical hearing provides an opportunity for intervening parties to present testimony and cross-examine witnesses as the Commission considers Idaho Power's application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to build a second high-voltage power line between Hailey and Ketchum. Idaho Code requires a public utility to obtain a CPCN before constructing certain facilities or infrastructure.

Public testimony was taken at a public hearing in Ketchum on July 26. Additional written comments may be submitted to the Commission until the record closes at the conclusion of the technical hearing.

The Wood River Valley is currently served by two substations fed by a single, 138-kilovolt transmission line that spans 12.4 miles to connect substations near Hailey and Ketchum.

Idaho Power contends that a second transmission line is necessary for several reasons, including increased reliability, quicker restoration of power when outages occur and the need to rebuild the existing transmission line without long-term disruption of service to approximately 9,000 customers in the area.

The existing line was built in 1962 on wooden poles, in steep and rugged terrain that can be difficult to access. Structure failure along the line could lead to an extended power outage, but a redundant line would eliminate that risk, Idaho Power said.

The need for a redundant transmission line for the area was identified in the mid-1970s. A previous CPCN issued by the Commission was canceled in 1995 at the company's request because of public opposition related to aesthetic impacts, perceived health and safety concerns, and difficulty in finding an agreed-upon route.

In its current CPCN application, Idaho Power listed four options for the route that range in cost from approximately \$30 million to \$45.9 million.

Each option calls for approximately 7.5 miles to run alongside state Highway 75 from the substation near Hailey north to the area near Owl Rock Road south of St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center.

From there, the options vary in either route or configuration – overhead or underground - for the section that runs into the Ketchum substation on Sun Valley Road.

The company's preferred route is estimated to cost \$30 million and calls for a transition from an overhead configuration to underground at Elkhorn Road, north of the medical center. Its cost is equivalent to all-overhead configuration and is significantly less than the all-underground option.

Intervening parties in the case include the company, commission staff, the city of Ketchum, CoxCom, Idaho Conservation League, Rock Rolling Properties, Sierra Club and two property owners.

Documents related to the case, including public comments and the company's application, can be found at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on the electric icon, then on "Open Electric Cases," and scroll down to Case No. IPC-E-16-28.

To submit comments, go to the website and click on "Case Comment Form," under the "Electric" heading. Fill in the case number (IPC-E-16-28) and enter your comments. Comments can also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074 or faxed to (208) 3343762.