

BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF IDAHO POWER) CASE NO. IPC-E-21-17
COMPANY’S APPLICATION FOR)
AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS RATES) NOTICE OF SUSPENSION OF
FOR ELECTRIC SERVICE TO RECOVER) PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE AND
COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE JIM) DISCOVERY
BRIDGER POWER PLANT)
) NOTICE OF SUSPENSION OF
) EFFECTIVE DATE
)
) ORDER NO. 35222
)

This matter comes before the Commission on Idaho Power Company’s (“Company”) and Commission Staff’s (“Staff”) Joint Motion to Suspend Procedural Schedule (“Joint Motion”) filed October 1, 2021. On October 1, 2021, intervenors Idaho Conservation League (“ICL”) and Sierra Club responded by filing their Response to Joint Motion to Suspend Schedule (“Response”). Thereafter, on October 7, 2021, the Company replied to the Response by filing their Reply to Joint Motion Response (“Company Reply”).

Having reviewed the record, including the Joint Motion, Response, and Company Reply, the Commission issues this Order suspending the procedural schedule and discovery until the Company files an update or requests to set the procedural schedule once more information is known but in no event later than December 31, 2021. The Commission’s decision is further explained below. The Commission also suspends the proposed effective date that the Company requested in its Application.

BACKGROUND

The Company and PacifiCorp jointly own the Jim Bridger Power Plant (“Bridger”) plant located in Wyoming. Application at 2. Bridger is comprised of four coal-fired units built in the 1970s. *Id.* PacifiCorp owns two-thirds of Bridger and is the plant operator. *Id.* The Company owns one-third. *Id.* On June 3, 2021, the Company applied to the Commission for authorization to accelerate the depreciation schedule for Bridger to allow the plant to be fully depreciated and recovered by December 31, 2030. *Id.* at 1.

In its Application, the Company also asked to establish a balancing account and the necessary regulatory accounting to track the incremental costs and benefits associated with the

Company's cessation of participation in coal-fired operations at Bridger. *Id.* The Company also asked that customer rates be adjusted to recover the associated incremental annual levelized revenue requirement of \$30,825,729 with an effective date of December 1, 2021, which equates to an overall increase of 2.53 %. *Id.* The Company separately proposed rate changes associated with the Depreciation Application in Case No. IPC-E-21-18 in addition to this Application. *Id.* at 1-2. The Company is also filing one set of proposed tariff sheets specifying the proposed rates for providing retail electric service to customers in the state of Idaho for both proposed rate changes. *Id.* at 8. The Company requested its Application be processed under Modified Procedure. *Id.* at 9.

On June 24, 2021, the Commission issued a Notice of Application and set a deadline for intervention. Order No. 35088. The Commission granted intervention into this matter to the Industrial Customers of Idaho Power ("ICIP"); ICL; the City of Boise ("Boise City"); Sierra Club; Clean Energy Opportunities, Inc., d/b/a Clean Energy Opportunities for Idaho ("CEO"); and Micron Technology, Inc. ("Micron"). Order Nos. 35094, 35102, and 35119. On July 28, 2021, the Commission issued a Notice of Parties.

THE JOINT MOTION, RESPONSE, AND COMPANY REPLY

In the Joint Motion the Company and Staff asked the Commission "to suspend responses to discovery requests and further processing of this docket to address new developments, namely PacifiCorp's proposal to convert Bridger Units 1 and 2 from burning coal to burning gas and the ongoing negotiation over the Wyoming State Implementation Plan ("Wyoming SIP"). Joint Motion at 3-4.

The Company and Staff argued in summary, that it was not possible to substantively respond to discovery requests in this matter until greater clarity was achieved concerning Bridger emission limits and possible coal-to-gas unit conversion. *Id.* at 4. The Company and Staff did not put any time limits on how long it would take until the Company made a filing recommending next steps in this matter. *Id.*

In their Response, ICL and Sierra Club in summary, argued that they were not opposed to a short delay in the matter, but that uncertainties surrounding PacifiCorp's proposal to amend the existing Wyoming SIP and the Company's independent analysis of whether to change plans from exiting Bridger would likely be resolved by the end of 2021. Response at 5. ICL and Sierra Club argued that delaying this matter until more information is known is unreasonably vague and fails to provide the Company's customers with certainty regarding the future of the Bridger plant

and any associated rate changes. *Id.* ICL and Sierra Club requested that the Company be ordered to work with parties to establish a procedural schedule that reflects the likely resolution of the Wyoming SIP process and the Company's resource planning by the end of 2021. *Id.* They also requested that discovery not be suspended regarding coal-related costs at Bridger. *Id.* Lastly, they requested that the Company file monthly updates on the Wyoming SIP negotiations and the Company's independent assessment of the options for Bridger. *Id.*

The Company in its Company's Reply argued, in summary, that it did not expect a need for the requested suspension to extend beyond calendar year 2021 and so ICL and Sierra Club's recommended actions were unnecessary. Company's Reply at 2. The Company committed to filing an update or request to set the procedural schedule once more information is known, but in no event later than December 31, 2021. *Id.*

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND DECISION

Having reviewed the Joint Motion, Response, and Company's Reply, we find that good cause exists to suspend the procedural schedule and discovery in this matter until the Company files an update or requests to set the procedural schedule once more information is known, but no later than December 31, 2021. We note that the parties who filed the Joint Motion and Response agree that uncertainties exist as to the coal-to-gas conversion of the Bridger plant and the Wyoming SIP process. The Company, ICL, and Sierra Club agree that those uncertainties should be resolved by the end of this year. We thus find it reasonable to suspend the procedural schedule and discovery as discussed herein.

The Company's requested proposed effective date is December 1, 2021. This matter will take additional time to process after the procedural schedule and discovery suspension discussed herein and we find it necessary to suspend the proposed effective date. We find that no party will be prejudiced by the suspension of the effective date, and no harm will come to ratepayers as a result. Accordingly, pursuant to the Commission's authority under *Idaho Code* § 61-622(4), we suspend the proposed effective date for 30 days and 5 months, or until May 31, 2022, unless the Commission issues an earlier order accepting, rejecting, or modifying the Company's Application.

ORDER

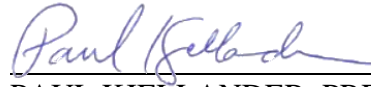
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Joint Motion is granted in part and denied in part consistent with our discussion above. The procedural schedule and discovery in this matter is

suspended until the Company files an update or requests to set the procedural schedule once more information is known, but no later than December 31, 2021.

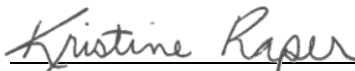
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the proposed effective date is suspended for 30 days and 5 months, or until May 31, 2022, unless the Commission issues an earlier order accepting, rejecting, or modifying the Company's Application.

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DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 17th
day of November, 2021.



PAUL KJELLANDER, PRESIDENT

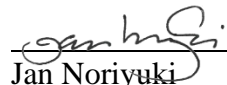


KRISTINE RAPER, COMMISSIONER



ERIC ANDERSON, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



Jan Noriyuki
Commission Secretary

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