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BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**IN THE MATTER OF AVISTA CORPORATION'S)
APPLICATION TO FUND SELECTED RESEARCH))
AND DEVELOPMENT EFFICIENCY PROJECTS.))**

CASE NO. AVU-E-13-08

**COMMENTS OF THE
COMMISSION STAFF**

The Staff of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission comments as follows on Avista Corporation's Application.

BACKGROUND

On August 30, 2013, Avista Corporation applied to the Commission for an Order authorizing the Company to accumulate and account for customer revenues that will fund selected electric energy efficiency research and development ("R&D") projects, proposed and implemented by Idaho's four-year universities. The Company seeks authorization to fund up to \$300,000 per year of R&D from revenue collected through Avista's Schedule 91, "Energy Efficiency Rider Adjustment" (the "Rider") effective November 1, 2013. Application at 1, 9. For a residential customer using 930 kWh per month, the Company's proposal represents about a \$0.08 per month bill increase or approximately \$1.00 annually. *Id.* at 3.

In its Application, the Company notes that the utility industry has the lowest R&D share of net sales among all U.S. industries. The Company explains that the average U.S. industry