

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Case No. PAC-E-05-3, Order No. 29765

April 26, 2005

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Commission approves PacifiCorp renewable power purchase program

Boise – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission has approved an application by PacifiCorp to allow its larger customers an opportunity to buy renewable energy in bulk at a reduced rate.

PacifiCorp, which does business in southeastern Idaho as Utah Power and Light, already has a renewable purchase option called “Blue Sky” for primarily residential customers. However, the purchase price for energy derived from wind, geothermal or solar sources is too expensive for commercial and industrial customers who want to buy renewable energy in much larger quantities. While about 700 residential customers participate in PacifiCorp’s Blue Sky program, only 10 non-residential customers do so.

Under the Blue Sky program, PacifiCorp currently allows customers to buy renewable energy, such as wind, geothermal or solar, for an additional \$1.95 per month for every 100 kilowatt-hours purchased.

Like the residential program, the bulk-purchase option for larger customers is voluntary. Under the bulk-purchase option, customers who agree to enroll for a minimum of one year and agree to purchase at least 101 blocks of 100-kWh of renewable energy will pay 70 cents for every block. That’s down from the \$1.95 per 100-kWh block customers who buy in smaller amounts would pay.

PacifiCorp uses two methods to secure the renewable energy. One is to buy green energy directly and to make arrangements for transmission of that energy to its eastern Idaho territory. The other method is to purchase “green tags,” or tradable renewable credits that allow the company to buy green energy for its use, although the actual kilowatts purchased may not directly go to the customer. However, the energy purchased becomes part of PacifiCorp’s portfolio and eliminates the need for PacifiCorp to acquire that energy from non-renewable sources.

PacifiCorp already offers the bulk-purchase option to customers in Oregon and Utah and recently received approval to offer it in Wyoming and Washington. The Renewable Northwest Project, a coalition of energy companies and consumer and environmental groups, filed comments in the Idaho case and noted that eight large commercial customers in Oregon have increased their renewable energy purchases as a result of the program in that state.

A full text of the commission’s order, along with other documents related to this case, are available on the commission’s Web site at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on “File Room” and then

on "Electric Cases" and scroll down to Case No. PAC-E-05-3. Petitions for reconsideration are due by no later than May 16.