



Idaho Public Utilities Commission

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Case No. AVU-E-15-08, Order No. 33385

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Avista Utilities plans to meet load growth with energy efficiency, natural gas plants

Idaho commission taking comment on Avista long-range plan

BOISE (November 25, 2015) – Avista Utilities is counting on energy efficiency measures to offset more than half its projected load growth over the next 20 years.

The utility, which serves about 125,000 electric customers in northern Idaho, is asking the Idaho Public Utilities Commission to accept its Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which outlines how the utility plans to meet load growth over the next two decades. The utility must file an updated IRP with the commission every two years.

While population and employment growth are starting to recover from the Great Recession, the utility nonetheless revised downward – from 1% to 0.6% -- its annual load growth projection from its 2013 IRP.

Efforts in energy efficiency have reduced Avista's load requirement by 127 average megawatts, which was about 11% of the utility's total load in 2014. Energy efficiency and market purchases push out the first anticipated long-term capacity deficit to 2021 at the earliest.

The first anticipated resource addition is a 96-megawatt natural gas-fired peaking plant at the end of 2020 to replace expiring contracts and serve load growth. In 2026, the company anticipates building a 286-MW combined-cycle combustion turbine natural gas plant.

In total, the utility plans on adding about 565 MW of new natural gas generation through 2035 and acquiring another 193 MW winter peak reduction through energy efficiency programs (132 MW annual average).

Avista's plan continues to rely on coal-fired generation, primarily through its 15% share in each of two Colstrip coal plant units in Montana, from where it gets about 222 MW. Coal comprises about 13% of Avista's annual generation.

Most of Avista's generation (51% in the winter and 38% annual average) comes from hydroelectric resources. Natural gas provides about 37% in the winter and 42% of annual generation.

Acceptance of the plan by the commission does not mean the anticipated plants or projects will be completed, but only that the utility has met its long-range planning requirements. The IRP is updated every two years to account for changing circumstances.

The commission is taking comments on the plan through Dec. 18. Comments are accepted via e-mail through by accessing the commission's Website at www.puc.idaho.gov and clicking on "Case Comment Form," under the "Consumers" heading. Fill in the case number (AVU-E-15-08) and enter your comments. Comments can also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074 or faxed to (208) 334-3762.

The commission's order and other documents related to this case are available on the commission's Website. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Electric" heading and scroll down to the case number above.

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