

Jean Jewell

From: Watch Man [watchman484@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 03, 2015 9:55 AM
To: Jean Jewell
Subject: COMMENT

IPC-E-15-18

Dear Ms. Jewell, please accept this email as a formal comment to be directed to the Commissioners. As we wean ourselves from harmful energy sources I find it abhorrent that Idaho Power, a monopoly whose purpose is one of communal effort, repeatedly acts in a way that does NOT serve the public. Solar, wind, homeowner energy supplies and other alternative power sources are, in the long term, best for the Public and the Commission should allow these businesses the ability to plan long term (20 years not 5). Idaho Power seems to consider profits to Idacorp as the "public" it serves and as global warming and weather changes like drought continue its base of hydro can be severely diminished which means it would more and more rely on its coal plants. But if it had more back up from alternatives we would not have to suffer the ill effects of coal or, as in the recent scam by Don Gillespie, nuclear (Fukushima). In addition, to follow the example of other nations, the Commission should make homeowner's installations of wind and solar a priority and economically feasible for power generation because as the rest of the nation increases its power needs but falls behind in the building of plants, Idaho Power/the public would be in the catbird's seat to sell them the extra power we generate.

Thank you.

Lee Halper
Hagerman, Idaho

<http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/08/02/3920999/idaho-power-contests-proposed.html>

Idaho Power contests proposed central Idaho solar projects

BY KEITH RIDLER

Associated Press August 2, 2015

Read more here: <http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/08/02/3920999/idaho-power-contests-proposed.html#storylink=cpy>

BOISE, IDAHO — Idaho Power is asking state officials to rule that 10 solar projects proposed for central Idaho are instead one big project and should fall under a different set of regulations more favorable to the energy company.

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission last week opened a case concerning Site Based Energy's project near Bellevue and is taking public comments through Aug. 14.

"These ten projects are all located at the same site, on the same contiguous property, and divided into ten sections," Idaho Power said in its request to the commission.

Site Based Energy officials said they are stand-alone projects with different owners but with common ownership of some connecting equipment to save money.

"The use of a shared location provides economies of scale for construction, purchasing of equipment, and similar design, but it doesn't make it one project," said Site Based Energy Project Manager John Reuter in an email to The Associated Press.

Each of the projects is listed as being able to produce 100 kilowatts. Projects that size receive a rate set by the commission and a 20-year contract. Projects larger than that must negotiate a rate based on Idaho Power's most recent Integrated Resource Plan. The contract length at the most would be five years.

"If the commission sides with Idaho Power, this will kill Site Based Energy's ten projects," Reuter said, noting longer contracts are needed to make capital investments.

For Idaho Power, longer contracts can be burdensome because they might not mesh with the company's Integrated Resource Plan that identifies sources of power, when power is needed and how power can be obtained at the cheapest rate.

"A primary focus is the contract length," Idaho Power spokesman Brad Bowlin said. "That's really the issue."

The solar setup proposed in central Idaho falls under the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act, or PURPA, created in 1978 to promote alternative resources.

In Idaho, a combination of federal regulations and tax incentives under the act, cheaper solar panels, plentiful sunshine in much of the state and a rate-calculating method developed by the commission itself has made solar power economically attractive. Not counting the central Idaho projects, the commission has approved about a dozen solar power projects in the last year.

Reuter said planning, engineering and site testing has been done for the solar projects in central Idaho but construction hasn't started.

Read more here: <http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/08/02/3920999/idaho-power-contests-proposed.html#storylink=cpy>

Jean Jewell

From: Watch Man [watchman484@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 03, 2015 12:16 PM
To: Jean Jewell
Subject: Re: Your Comments Regarding Case No. IPC-E-15-18

Ms. Jewell, please add this to my comment as evidence to my comment below on Case No. IPC-E-15-18 "as global warming and weather changes like drought continue its base of hydro can be severely diminished..."

Thank you.

Lee Halper

<http://www.hcn.org/articles/as-reservoirs-fall-hydropower-at-risk>

Lake Mead watch: As levels fall, hydropower dips

Why Southwest utilities are starting to sweat.

Sarah Tory June 24, 2015 *Web Exclusive*

When the Hoover Dam was built in 1936, it was the largest concrete structure — and the largest hydropower plant — in the world, a massive plug in the Colorado River, as high as a 60-story building. For nearly 80 years, the dam has been producing dependable, cheap electricity for millions of people in the Southwest, but as water levels in Lake Mead continue to drop, the future of “the greatest dam in the world” is more precarious than it ever has been, and utilities across the desert are taking notice.

This month, Lake Mead, the 112-mile reservoir created by the dam, is projected to hit 1,074.73 feet above sea level, the lowest it has been since it was filled in 1937. Thanks to a 16-year drought and serious over-allocation, Lake Mead is now just 37 percent full. Although a “miracle May” of rain means the water level will rise again, the longer term prognosis is more worrisome: If water levels continue their downward trend, the amount of energy generated by the Hoover Dam will fall, leading to higher electricity costs for 29 million people in the desert Southwest.

That's because a shallower reservoir means less water pressure against the turbines, generating less electricity. A recent report by graduate students at the University of California, Santa Barbara in conjunction with the Western Water

Policy Program, examines the economic and physical impacts as Lake Mead's elevation falls: With each 25-foot drop, total energy costs increase by roughly 100 percent, compared to a full reservoir. The costs paid by contractors for hydropower double at 1,075 feet, triple at 1,050 feet, quadruple at 1,025 feet. At 895 feet, the turbines won't run, a level they call "dead-pool."



Drought in the southwest is challenging operations at the Hoover Dam, the nation's largest hydropower plant.

Airwolfhound/Flickr

Dead pool is still a ways off and in the short term, less generation at Hoover won't translate into soaring electrical bills, says Frank Wolak, an economics professor at Stanford. That's because utilities buy "futures" contracts for energy, which guarantee a certain price for a period of time. It's like buying a plane ticket in advance: The price is significantly less than one bought on the same day as a flight. In the case of Hoover, many of those contracts span up to 10 years and were negotiated before low water levels became a significant concern.

Still, Hoover's power capacity has dropped nearly 25 percent since 2000, and the 53 hydropower facilities run by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation across the West are producing 10 percent less power than a few years ago, despite rising demand.

So when those futures contracts run out and continued low water levels appear likely, bottom-barrel prices for hydropower will likely be a thing of the past.

That means that utilities currently relying on Hoover's power, such as the Overton Power District No. 5, which serves 15,000 people in Nevada on the southern end of Lake Mead, are wary. Overton buys 20 percent of its power from the Hoover Dam, 5 percent from other hydro projects, and 75 percent on the spot market (where energy is traded on day-by-day basis). The utility anticipates having to replace 5 percent of its hydropower with another, more expensive, energy source, says Mendis Cooper, Overton's general manager. That switch won't translate into sky-high energy bills, likely just a 1 to 2 percent increase. But if Lake Mead continues to fall and shortages become routine, his customers could see more dramatic increases in their electricity bills.

"We've been having those discussions," Cooper says, noting that the major topic is moving to more renewables, like solar, as well as improving efficiency.

Luckily, the West has ambitious renewable goals, says Wolak, which will likely make up more of the region's energy mix and help mitigate the loss of hydropower in the future.

Still, renewables aren't a panacea. Wind and solar are far more volatile and require back-up power sources, such as gas-fired power plants. And though the prices for renewables have come down in recent years, they're still no match for cheap, federally subsidized hydropower. "They solve the resource issue," Cooper says, "but not the price issue."

Jean Jewell

From: markcausey1@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, August 02, 2015 3:12 PM
To: Beverly Barker; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness
Cc: markcausey1@gmail.com
Subject: Case Comment Form: Gerald Causey

Name: Gerald Causey
Case Number: IPC-E-15-18
Email: markcausey1@gmail.com
Telephone: 2084753860
Address: 485 Meadowbrook Dr
Nampa Idaho, 83686

Name of Utility Company: Mr.
Acknowledge public record: True

Comment: I strongly urge the Commission to rule that the Site Based Energy's project near Bellevue is a project consisting of 10 completely separate projects with 10 completely separate owners. Idaho Power's contention that this is one solar utility project is wrong and was done only to to maintain Idaho Power's monopoly. Please do not become Idaho Power's State Owned Guardians.

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