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IDAHO PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the matter of the Application of)
Rocky Mountain Power for a Certificate)
of Convenience and Necessity Authorizing)
Construction of the Populus to Terminal)
345 kV Transmission Line Project)

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF
SHARON L. SEPPI

CASE NO. PAC-E-08-03

Direct Testimony of Sharon L. Seppi

APRIL 2008

1 **Q. Please state your name, business address and present position.**

2 A. My name is Sharon L. Seppi. My business address is 1407 West North Temple,
3 Salt Lake City, Utah 84116. My present position is Managing Director of
4 Construction Services.

5 **Q. How long have you been in your present position?**

6 A. I have been in my present position since June 2005.

7 **Q. Please describe your education and business experience.**

8 A. I received a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Utah State
9 University in 1985, a Masters of Business Administration from Utah State
10 University in 2003 and Project Management Professional certification in 1998. I
11 was first employed by Utah Power in 1982 and have held various positions in
12 engineering and asset management, project management and construction
13 services.

14 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

15 A. The purpose of my testimony is to describe the route for the Populus to Terminal
16 Transmission Line, the analysis used to determine the route, the permitting
17 requirements and the schedule and estimated cost of the Transmission Line and
18 associated substation outside Downey, Idaho (collectively referred to in this
19 testimony as the "Transmission Project.")

20 **Q. Please describe the beginning and termination points for the Transmission
21 Project.**

22 A. The route commences from the existing Terminal Substation southwest of the Salt
23 Lake International Airport and extends along an existing transmission line

1 corridor to the existing Ben Lomond Substation in southern Box Elder County,
2 Utah. The transmission line then proceeds from the Ben Lomond Substation to a
3 point near Downey, Idaho, where it will terminate at the new Populus Substation.
4 The segment of the Transmission Line between the Ben Lomond and Populus
5 substations will be sited in a new transmission line corridor. A map showing the
6 route that was selected for the Transmission Line is provided by Mr. Cupparo as
7 Exhibit No. A.

8 **Q. What factors were considered in identifying the route for the Transmission**
9 **Line Project?**

10 A. Reliability, engineering, constructability, environmental impacts, schedule,
11 impacts on local communities and landowners, and overall project efficiency were
12 the primary factors considered in determining the route for the Transmission
13 Project.

14 **Q. How were these factors applied in selecting the route?**

15 A. When analyzing the feasibility of various potential routes between the existing
16 Terminal Substation and the Populus Substation, the Company considered a set of
17 criteria that included safety, reliability and overall efficiency, which encompasses
18 cost and meeting the goals for the Transmission Line Project. The Company
19 excluded various potential routes that were in proximity to the Company's
20 existing 345 kV transmission lines to reduce potential reliability problems and
21 impacts to the overall transmission system caused by natural events such as fire,
22 windstorms, earthquake, and human-caused damages. The Company also
23 considered the cost and constructability of each potential route through analyses

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2 Utah. The transmission line then proceeds from the Ben Lomond Substation to a
3 point near Downey, Idaho, where it will terminate at the new Populus Substation.
4 The segment of the Transmission Line between the Ben Lomond and Populus
5 substations will be sited in a new transmission line corridor. A map showing the
6 route that was selected for the Transmission Line is provided by Mr. Cupparo as
7 Exhibit No. A.

8 **Q. What factors were considered in identifying the route for the Transmission**
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11 impacts on local communities and landowners, and overall project efficiency were
12 the primary factors considered in determining the route for the Transmission
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15 A. When analyzing the feasibility of various potential routes between the existing
16 Terminal Substation and the Populus Substation, the Company considered a set of
17 criteria that included safety, reliability and overall efficiency, which encompasses
18 cost and meeting the goals for the Transmission Line Project. The Company
19 excluded various potential routes that were in proximity to the Company's
20 existing 345 kV transmission lines to reduce potential reliability problems and
21 impacts to the overall transmission system caused by natural events such as fire,
22 windstorms, earthquake, and human-caused damages. The Company also
23 considered the cost and constructability of each potential route through analyses

1 of geographic and geologic considerations; environmental constraints; existing
2 and expected future development; potential for utilizing existing linear corridors
3 where feasible, such as major arterial roadways and rail lines; and avoidance of
4 sensitive areas that had cultural and local governmental agency planning and land
5 use standards and criteria that would be problematic. Generally, these factors are
6 balanced, with no single factor being determinative as to whether a particular
7 route should be selected.

8 **Q. Please describe the public involvement in selecting the route for the**
9 **Transmission Project.**

10 A. Early in the planning process the Company conducted initial briefings with
11 stakeholders and agencies throughout the study area to introduce the project and
12 gather feedback. Following the selection of the transmission line route, the
13 Company conducted another round of briefings with potentially impacted
14 stakeholders and agencies to inform them about the Transmission Project and
15 gather additional information. These meetings were conducted at various
16 locations along the selected Transmission Line route. The briefings presented
17 information about the Transmission Project specific to each local governmental
18 jurisdiction and addressed land use, zoning, and general plan information, along
19 with clarifications of the permitting process. A project newsletter was mailed in
20 December 2007 to community leaders/stakeholders and property owners located
21 within 600 feet on either side of the Transmission Line corridor. The mailing list
22 was generated using information from the county tax assessor database. The
23 newsletter provided information about the Transmission Project, including the

1 purpose and need, overall project description, planning process and schedule, and
2 public involvement opportunities such as open house meetings that were
3 conducted in Downey, Idaho; Malad City, Idaho; Garland, Utah; and Brigham
4 City, Utah in January 2008. Opportunity for public comment was given at these
5 open house meetings and specific questions and concerns were addressed
6 personally by Company representatives. Additional opportunity for public
7 comment was provided through the use of a dedicated project phone line
8 dedicated for the Transmission Project and via e-mail.

9 **Q. What land rights will need to be acquired for the Transmission Project?**

10 A. The Company holds nearly all of the necessary land rights, either in easements or
11 fee ownership, between the Ben Lomond Substation and the Terminal Substation.
12 This corridor was acquired nearly three decades ago in preparation for an
13 additional high voltage transmission line. New fee parcels or rights of way and
14 easements will be acquired for that portion of the transmission line between Ben
15 Lomond and the Populus Substation. Land for the Populus Substation will be
16 acquired in fee.

17 **Q. When will land rights be acquired?**

18 A. In order to maintain the project schedule, which provides for work to be
19 performed in sequenced stages, easements must be acquired or the Company must
20 have a legal right of occupancy for certain portions before September 2008. The
21 balance of corridor acquisition for the remaining segments should be completed in
22 phases no later than early February, 2009. Rocky Mountain Power is using
23 experienced appraisers to determine property valuation for negotiations with

1 individual landowners. The Company will exercise the power of eminent domain
2 where necessary.

3 **Q. What permits are required by local governmental authorities for the**
4 **construction of the Transmission Project?**

5 A. The Company holds a franchise agreement with each municipality and county
6 within the Transmission Line route that grants the necessary rights for the
7 construction of the Transmission Line. In addition, conditional use permits are
8 required by certain cities and counties. Applications for conditional use permits
9 will be filed by the end of May 2008.

10 **Q. What other land rights and permits required for the construction of the**
11 **Transmission Project?**

12 A. Permits are required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for construction within
13 jurisdictional wetlands, aviation permits are required by the Federal Aviation
14 Authority for construction of the Transmission Project near Salt Lake
15 International Airport, and crossing permits are required for railroad and roadway
16 crossings. Such permits will be acquired prior to commencement of construction.

17 **Q. What is the projected construction schedule for the Transmission Project?**

18 A. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2008, and project completion and
19 commercial operation is scheduled for June 2010. Survey of the selected route
20 and determination of land ownership was initiated in January 2008. Easement
21 and land acquisition and vegetation clearing will commence in May 2008. Final
22 design of the transmission line will be done between June 2008 and December
23 2008.

1 **Q. What is the estimated cost of the Transmission Project?**

2 A. The total cost of the project has been estimated to be approximately \$750 million.

3 The Company has issued an engineering, procurement and construction request

4 for proposal to potential bidders. All bids were due for submittal in February

5 2008, with an award planned for June 2008.

6 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

7 A. Yes.