

Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

Central Project Advisory Team Meeting #4

Summary

Dec. 17, 2009

4 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Best Western Sunridge Inn

1 Sunridge Lane

Baker City, Oregon 97814

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Community Advisory Process Background

Idaho Power is committed to partnering with communities to identify proposed and alternate routes for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project. The initial process of identifying a route began in late 2007 when Idaho Power submitted documents to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Oregon Department of Energy-Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC). Following public scoping meetings held in October 2008, these agencies received public input requesting that Idaho Power conduct more extensive outreach while identifying the transmission line route.

In Spring 2009, Idaho Power initiated a process to engage communities—from Boardman, Oregon, to Melba, Idaho—in siting the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line. This process is called the Community Advisory Process. As a part of the Community Advisory Process, a Project Advisory Team has been formed in each of the three geographic project areas: North, Central and South. The Project Advisory Teams are made up of residents, property owners, business leaders and local officials.

The Project Advisory Teams will work closely with technical experts to recommend proposed and alternate routes.

During the Community Advisory Process the Project Advisory Teams will:

- **Identify** issues and concerns; develop criteria for evaluating possible routes and integrate community criteria with regulatory requirements.
- **Develop** a range of possible routes that address community issues and concerns. Routes will be identified through mapping sessions; routes not meeting the regulatory and community criteria will be removed from consideration.
- **Recommend** proposed and alternate routes, which will be carried through the permitting process.
- **Follow through** with communities during the state and federal permitting process.



Project Advisory Team (PAT) Background

The Central Project Advisory Team (PAT) includes representatives from Baker and Union counties in Oregon. Since Spring 2009, Idaho Power has hosted three Central PAT meetings and two public meetings in the Central advisory area.

Summaries of the first, second and third set of PAT meetings and the public meetings held in the summer and fall of 2009 are available on the project Web site www.boardmantohemingway.com.

PAT Meeting #1

The first Central PAT meeting was held June 4, 2009 in Baker City, Oregon.

The purpose of the first Central PAT meeting was to:

- Review work to date, project status and how the Community Advisory Process would proceed.
- Discuss the purpose and need for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project.
- Identify community concerns and suggestions for siting the transmission line.

PAT Meeting #2

The second Central PAT meeting was held July 29, 2009 in Baker City, Oregon.

The purpose of the second Central PAT meeting was to give team members a better understanding of:

- The federal, state and public processes involved in the project.
- The regulatory and engineering criteria that will be used to develop routes for the transmission line.

Team members were presented the regulatory, engineering and community criteria that would be used when developing possible routes for the transmission line.

- **Regulatory and engineering routing criteria** include state and federal regulations, policies and other standards that are applicable to development of a route. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Oregon Department of Energy-Energy Facility Siting Council (ODOE-EFSC) will use these criteria when reviewing proposed and alternate routes and determining whether they should authorize the project.
- **Community criteria** include the concerns and suggestions identified by Project Advisory Teams in each area of the project – for example, irrigated farmland.

Identifying routes for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line will involve multiple processes and jurisdictions, agencies and communities. Idaho Power invited representatives from the BLM, ODOE-EFSC, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Oregon Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to the second PAT meeting to participate in an informative panel discussion and present their agencies' regulatory criteria and review processes.

The second PAT meeting provided team members with an opportunity to learn more about regulatory criteria and ask questions directly of the federal and state agencies involved with the authorization of the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project. Team members also refined the community criteria at the second Central PAT meeting.

Public Meetings

In August 2009, seven public meetings were held in the North, Central and South project advisory areas. The public meetings were held after the Project Advisory Teams met twice to formulate community criteria for siting possible routes for the transmission line.

Public meetings for the North advisory area were held in Baker City, Oregon, on Aug. 12, and La Grande, Oregon on Aug. 13.

The purpose of the public meetings was to:

- Give the public an overview of the project.
- Share the outcomes of the PAT meetings with the public
- Allow the public to ask questions and provide input on criteria for siting the transmission line.

Concerns and suggestions of the general public were closely aligned with those of the PAT members.

Each public meeting was conducted in an open house format. Attendees were given a meeting guide and comment sheet. Attendees were encouraged to view the nine display stations with information about the project. Idaho Power staff and PAT members were available to answer questions.

Comments submitted at the public meetings indicated the public generally agreed with work completed by the Project Advisory Teams and the criteria that would be used to site the transmission line.

PAT Meeting #3 and Mapping Workshop

The Central PAT evening meeting was held Sept. 15, 2009 and the Central mapping workshop was held Sept. 16, 2009. Both meetings were held in Baker City, Oregon at the Best Western Sunridge Inn.

The purpose of the meeting and mapping workshop was to begin to identify a range of possible routes for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line.

Overall, 49 routes were developed by the South, Central, North, Harney County and Grant County Project Advisory Teams. The Central Project Advisory Team developed 14 of these routes.

PAT Meeting #4

The purpose of the fourth Central PAT meeting was to present the analysis conducted to date of each PAT-proposed route and present the method used to conduct that analysis. A full summary of the fourth Central PAT meeting is included in this document.

Project Advisory Team Meeting #4 Overview

Introduction

In Fall 2009, Idaho Power hosted five mapping workshops in each advisory area of the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project: South, North, Central, Harney County and Grant County. The purpose of these workshops was for team members to work closely with technical experts to propose routes for the transmission line.

Overall, the five Project Advisory Teams developed a total of 49 routes. On Sept. 24, 2009 the Central Project Advisory Team (PAT) proposed 14 routes at the mapping workshop held in Boardman, Oregon.

When the mapping workshops concluded, Idaho Power's engineering firm, Tetra Tech, began the process of analyzing each route proposed by the PATs. Between September and December 2009, the engineers from Idaho Power and Tetra Tech recorded and labeled all PAT-proposed routes; determined the opportunity, avoidance and exclusion areas crossed by each PAT proposed route; and revised the routes to avoid exclusion and avoidance areas.

In December 2009, the status of the analysis was presented to team members at the fourth set of PAT meetings. The complete analysis will be presented to team members at the fifth set of PAT meetings, which are anticipated to be held in early 2010. The complete analysis will include the ease and likelihood of permitting, constructability and cost for each PAT-proposed route. When the analysis is complete the PATs will begin to select which routes will be advanced into the NEPA process.

Meeting Agenda and Format

The purpose of the fourth Central PAT meeting was to:

- Present the analysis methods.
- Present the status of analysis for each PAT-proposed route.

The meeting was held Dec. 17, 2009 at the Best Western Sunridge Inn in Baker City, Oregon.

Forty-three people attended the meeting. A copy of the invitation letter, list of invitees and list of attendees is available in Appendix 1.

Presenters:

- Kent McCarthy – Idaho Power, Community Advisory Process Leader
- Rosemary Curtin – RBCI, Facilitator
- Dave Perry – Tetra Tech, Routing and Siting Manager
- Jim Nickerson – Tetra Tech, Vice President, Energy Services

Handouts:

The following handouts were provided to team members at the meeting. Copies of these handouts are available in Appendix 2.

- Central PAT meeting #4 agenda
- "Planning evaluation of PAT routes S13, S6, S25 and C13" handout

- Idaho Power PowerPoint presentation
- Tetra Tech PowerPoint presentation
- “Table of All Community Criteria and Idaho Power Criteria” handout
- “Table of CAP Community and Idaho Power Company Criteria Importance” handout
- “Route Analysis” comment form

A CAP and PAT Route Analysis Map Book was developed for this meeting. One book was provided at each table. A copy of the contents of this book can be found in Appendix 4. The CAP and PAT Route Analysis Map Book included:

- Maps of each original PAT-proposed route.
- Maps of how each original PAT-proposed route was revised to avoid constraints.
- Tables listing the constraints of each original PAT-proposed route.

Team Input

Nine team members completed the “Route Analysis” comment form at the meeting. The transcriptions of these comment forms can be found in Appendix 3. Comments included:

- I am concerned about transparency & integrity of the process. Idaho Power’s decision to remove the routes around Boise was made outside of the Community Advisory Process and without input from the PATs.
- All private land (especially Exclusive Farm Use and private timberland) and the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center should be rated as exclusion or at least high avoidance.
- Idaho Power permitting importance ratings should be more in accordance with the PAT importance ratings.

Presentations

Welcome and Background – Kent McCarthy, Idaho Power, Community Advisory Process Leader

McCarthy welcomed participants, asked everyone to introduce themselves and reviewed the agenda. McCarthy reminded team members that the objectives of the meeting were to discuss the analysis methods and present the status of analysis for each PAT-proposed route. He also provided the following background information about the analysis:

- Idaho Power is committed to taking the input from the community and incorporating it into the revised application that will be submitted into the NEPA process.
- Idaho Power will not present a detailed analysis of each route at this meeting. This is a mid-term meeting to discuss the status of the analysis on the routes proposed by the PATs. The complete detailed analysis will be presented at the next meeting, which is anticipated to be held in early 2010.
- Thus far in the analysis, Tetra Tech has recorded and labeled all routes received from PAT meetings. The constraints have been determined for each proposed route. Tetra Tech has revised the PAT-proposed routes to avoid these constraints. Later in the meeting, representatives from Tetra Tech will discuss in more detail how each PAT route was revised.
- Idaho Power has made no decisions about the PAT-proposed routes except for routes S13, S6, S25 and C13. The reasons for not advancing these routes will be explained in this meeting.
- There is a CAP and PAT Route Analysis Map Book on every table. This book outlines the analysis of each route.
- The analysis process is not completed. The complete analysis will be presented at the next meeting, which is anticipated to be held in early 2010.

Team Business – Rosemary Curtin, RBCI, Facilitator

Curtin thanked everybody for attending the meeting and reviewed the following team business:

- Some meeting materials are being shared at the tables. All meeting materials will also be posted on the project's Web site, www.boardmantoemingway.com. If you would like a hard copy of any of the materials mailed to you, please contact Amanda Edge at RBCI, Amanda@rbc.net, (208) 377-9688.
- Summaries of the third set of PAT meetings are posted on the project Web site.
- Comment sheets will be provided during the presentations so team members can submit feedback about the analysis process.

Idaho Power Recommendations – Kent McCarthy, Idaho Power, Community Advisory Process Leader

McCarthy reviewed the Project Order and Idaho Route meeting that had been held in Parma on Nov. 30, 2009. Team members had requested this meeting to discuss the Oregon Department of Energy's project order and speak with resource agency representatives from Idaho.

At the Project Order and Idaho Route meeting, Idaho Power presented four PAT proposed routes that will not be further advanced. Idaho Power has chosen to not advance routes S13, S6, S25 and C13 because they would require too much infrastructure to build and would present risk to the Boardman to Hemingway Project and the Gateway West Project. McCarthy's presentation included the following information:

- Idaho Power re-evaluated the project area. The original project area went into Canyon and Washington counties, but not east of Boise. At the mapping workshops Idaho Power told team members that they could develop routes anywhere they preferred, even outside of the project area.
- Idaho Power recognizes that prior to the mapping sessions, several team members said they planned to propose routes east of Boise. These team members said their intention of developing the routes east of Boise was to join the Boardman to Hemingway 500 kV line with the future planned 500 kV line for the Treasure Valley Electrical Plan.
- Every route, at any time, first goes through a planning-level evaluation. Therefore, Idaho Power undertook a planning-level evaluation of the routes that were developed east of Boise outside the project area. The planning-level evaluation does not consider the ease of permitting for the routes.

Treasure Valley Electrical Plan

- Idaho Power produced the Treasure Valley Electrical Plan (TVEP) in 2006. The timing for construction of the TVEP 500 kV loop is dependent upon load growth and will not occur all at once. The completed TVEP system would be capable of serving 1.6 million people.
- According to the TVEP, there are two alternatives to reinforce the Treasure Valley's electrical system in the near term without bringing in a new energy source from outside:
 - Tapping an existing Boise Bench – Brownlee 230 kV transmission line in the Pearl area.
 - Tapping the Midpoint – Summer Lake 500 kV transmission line near Melba. Idaho Power is in the process of tapping the Midpoint – Summer Lake 500 kV line at the Hemingway Substation, which replaces the planned tap near Melba.
- In 2006, Idaho Power informed project managers it was important to have one of these projects built as soon as possible. Project managers were informed that the project that would go forward first would be the one that was most likely to get permitted first. Tapping the existing Midpoint – Summer Lake 500 kV line turns out to be the most feasible, so it is the one being carried forward.

- Currently four 230 kV lines run from the Brownlee Power Plant and Hells Canyon Complex to the Boise Bench substation. The planned 500 kV line that is part of the TVEP is planned to be built much further in the future, not in the initial stages of the TVEP.
- The TVEP identifies four to five future 500 kV substation facilities that will need to be built to serve the Treasure Valley when the population has reached saturation. Each one of these substations is designed to be able to provide approximately 1,000 megawatts of capacity.
- The Hemingway substation will tap into the existing PacifiCorp 500 kV transmission line that runs through the southern Treasure Valley. This project is the first stage of the 500 kV loop.
- The triggering event for the second 500 kV substation will be when the peak load can no longer be served. This is estimated to occur in about 25 years. Idaho Power's present plan is to build the South Ada Substation and associated 230 kV transmission line into the valley at that time.
- The planned 500 kV loop around the Treasure Valley will not go into the Boise Bench substation. The Boise Bench substation is a mature substation and there is no room for Idaho Power to put 500 kV equipment in that substation. Currently the only connections into the Boise Bench substation are 230 kV supply lines.
- Idaho Power does not intend to connect the future 500 kV line and the Boise Bench substation; it plans to replace one of the existing 230 kV lines. The replacement of this 230 kV line would remove one 230 kV line that is presently feeding into Boise Bench.
- Replacing the 230 kV would require Idaho Power to redirect the power from this line somewhere else in the valley. As planned, Idaho Power would build the Pearl substation and the South Ada substation to inject power into the valley.
- The Treasure Valley now has about 500,000 people. Idaho Power forecasted load growth when analyzing the Hemingway substation and determined this would be the first 500 kV substation built to bring energy into the Treasure Valley.
- Idaho Power examines the reliability of the system and determines whether the Treasure Valley could still receive power if a transformer in the Hemingway substation were to go out of service in a peak loading condition. When the load of the Treasure Valley gets to the point that an outage in this substation would cause the loss of power, another substation will be constructed.
- Originally, the substation that was planned to be constructed after Hemingway was the Sand Hollow substation. However, when Langley Gulch was built, 300 megawatts of capability were added and the plans to build the Sand Hollow substation were deferred. Sand Hollow will be completed someday to complete the TVEP loop.
- Currently, the next substation that is planned to be built after Hemingway is the South Ada substation. This substation is planned to be built between 2035 to 2040. Both Pearl and Sand Hollow would be built some years after South Ada.

Boardman to Hemingway and Gateway West

- The Gateway West Transmission Project is a proposed two-circuit 1,500-mile 500 kV transmission line between Wyoming and Idaho. Gateway West is a joint project between Idaho Power and PacifiCorp. The northern portion of the Gateway West line will form the southern leg of the Treasure Valley 500 kV loop.
- The permitting process for Gateway West is currently under way; the BLM is developing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. The draft EIS is evaluating several alternative routes for the northern section of the Gateway West Project.
- Idaho Power and PacifiCorp purposely did not include the Boardman to Hemingway Project as part of the Gateway West Project. PacifiCorp plans to build transmission lines down to the California/Oregon border and does not plan to build transmission lines to the Boardman area.
- The routes that the PATs proposed east of Boise would link a section of Boardman to Hemingway line with the Gateway West line. Linking the two projects would present risk to the Boardman to Hemingway project. For example, if the permitting process for the 1,500-mile Gateway West Project were delayed, this could delay the progress of the Boardman to Hemingway line. Conversely, if the Boardman to Hemingway project is slowed, this could adversely affect the Gateway West Project. Idaho Power is not willing to take the risk of having the two projects affect each other in such an adverse way.
- Currently, Gateway West and Boardman to Hemingway are on the same timeline; both are expected to be in-service in 2015. However, Gateway West is dependent upon resource development in Wyoming and this could delay the project.
- The purpose of the Boardman to Hemingway Project is not to complete the TVEP. It is to connect Hemingway to Boardman. Tying the Gateway West and Boardman to Hemingway projects together is undesirable because it would expand the scope of both projects.
- The scope has already been established on Gateway West and Idaho Power is not willing to re-establish the scope on Gateway West. Tying the Gateway West and Boardman to Hemingway projects together would put both projects at risk and Idaho Power believes that risk is unacceptable. When routing the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line, it is Idaho Power's preference to stay west of Boise.
- In January, Idaho Power can provide the PAT more information about the risks and concerns about combining the Gateway West and Boardman to Hemingway projects.

Input from Grant and Harney Counties – Kent McCarthy, Idaho Power, Community Advisory Process Leader

In September 2009, the South and Central PATs proposed routes in Grant and Harney counties. In October and November 2009, Idaho Power hosted meetings in Grant and Harney counties to get their input on the PAT-proposed routes. McCarthy presented the outcome of these meetings to the South PAT. His presentation included the following information:

- In October two public meetings were held in Grant and Harney counties, one in John Day and one in Burns. The purpose of these public meetings was to present the PAT proposed routes to the citizens of Grant and Harney counties and identify potential PAT members.
- After the public meetings, a Project Advisory Team was formed for each county. These PATs have met two times. The purpose of the first meeting was to gather concerns and suggestions so community criteria could be formed for each PAT. At the second meeting, PAT members had the opportunity to develop routes and comment on the routes that were proposed by the South and Central PATs.
- Summaries of all PAT meetings and public meetings held in Grant and Harney counties are available on the project Web site, www.boardmantohemingway.com.
- The citizens of Harney County had the following concerns:
 - A route through Harney County is not practical.
 - A route through Harney County would be much more expensive.
 - A longer route will be more expensive and this will mean higher rates for Idaho Power customers.
 - Environmental groups will not allow a route through Harney County.
 - Benefits to Harney County are uncertain. Any economic benefits to Harney County would likely be short-term.
 - The line will not benefit Harney County unless it can be connected to nearby wind farms.
 - The transmission line will negatively affect the environment.
 - The transmission line will require construction of new access roads.
 - Undeveloped areas should be protected.
 - The line could create adverse effects to views, protected environmental areas and wildlife.
- The citizens of Harney County had the following suggestions for siting the transmission line:
 - Use existing corridors.
 - Follow the I-84 corridor.
 - Shadow an existing line.
 - Site on public land.
 - Avoid Exclusive Farm Use land.

- Consider wildlife areas.
- Use the most direct route between Boardman and Hemingway.
- Use Idaho Power's original route.
- The following community criteria were developed for Harney County. These community criteria were based on the concerns and suggestions identified by the citizens of Harney County:
 - Placement Opportunities:
 - Existing energy corridors
 - I-84 corridor
 - Areas with potential for wind power
 - Direct route between Boardman and Hemingway
 - Avoidance Areas:
 - Wildlife habitats (especially sage grouse leks)
 - Undeveloped or wilderness land
 - Riparian areas (strips of land that border creeks, rivers or other bodies of water)
 - Exclusive Farm Use land
 - Private land
 - Forests and timberland
 - Roadless areas
- The citizens of Grant County had the following concerns:
 - The transmission line would have a negative effect on scenic areas. Grant County residents treasure scenic beauty and open space.
 - The transmission line could lower property values by damaging views.
 - There are few clear benefits to Grant County of having the line constructed there. Construction jobs might bring only a short-term benefit and Idaho Power would use Idaho crews for maintenance.
 - Tax benefits to the county would be minimal if the line were built in Grant County.
 - Building the transmission line so far to the west of the center route is not practical.
 - It would be less expensive to use the shorter route that is closer to the I-84 corridor. Higher costs for Idaho Power will translate into higher costs for power users.
 - Residents of Malheur and Baker counties pushed the line over to Grant County because they did not want it in their own counties.
 - Grant County residents should have been invited into the CAP process earlier.

- Grant County doesn't have as much influence as Malheur and Baker counties because it has a very low population.
- The citizens of Grant County had the following suggestions for siting the transmission line:
 - The line should be constructed close to the I-84 corridor.
 - The line should be as short as possible to save Idaho Power money.
 - The line should be available locally for transmission if wind projects (or other alternative energy sources) are developed nearby.
 - Idaho Power should seek in-state sources of energy so it doesn't have to transmit energy from Oregon.
 - The line should not go through John Day Valley, where many Grant County residents live.
- The following community criteria were developed for Grant County. These community criteria were based on the concerns and suggestions identified by the citizens of Grant County:
 - Placement Opportunities:
 - Existing energy corridors
 - I-84 corridor
 - Direct route between Boardman and Hemingway
 - Avoidance Areas:
 - Undeveloped areas
 - Wilderness areas
 - Rural areas
 - Roadless areas
 - Riparian areas (strips of land that border creeks, rivers or other bodies of water)
 - Scenic areas (i.e., the cedar grove, fossil beds, view sheds)
 - Recreation areas
 - Wildlife habitats (i.e., sage grouse leks, big game winter range)
 - Forest land and old growth
 - Private property
 - Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) land
- Harney County PAT members proposed two line segments in Malheur County. The main objective of these proposed routes was to avoid EFU land. Grant County PAT members did not propose any routes or segments; however, they did submit numerous comments on routes proposed by the other PATs.

- The Grant County PAT members were unanimous in stating that they did not want the transmission line to be built through Grant County. Many citizens in Grant County also criticized Idaho Power for not forming a PAT earlier in the process and not notifying them of the meetings in a timely fashion.

Route Analysis Process – Dave Perry, Tetra Tech, Routing and Siting Manager & Jim Nickerson, Tetra Tech, Vice President of Energy Services

Idaho Power's engineering firm, Tetra Tech, began analyzing all PAT-proposed routes between September and December. The analysis is expected to be complete in early 2010. Perry and Nickerson presented the methods that are being used to analyze the PAT proposed routes and also presented the status of the analysis. Their presentation included the following information:

- Forty-six routes and segments were proposed by the PATs in Fall 2009. The routes and segments make up about 2,000 miles. The route analysis process began in early October 2009. Each route and segment is being given equal consideration in the analysis process. A map of all the PAT proposed routes is available on the project Web site, www.boardmantohemingway.com.
- The goal of the analysis is to find several routes that are permissible, buildable, and cost-effective. These routes will go into Idaho Powers resubmitted application for the NEPA process. Idaho Power and Tetra Tech are continuing to collect data and refine routes. The routes that have been proposed by the PAT members provide valuable information about areas that should be avoided and areas that should be considered placement opportunities.
- Thus far in the analysis, Tetra Tech has recorded and labeled all routes received from PAT meetings. The constraints have been determined for each proposed route. Tetra Tech has revised the PAT proposed routes to avoid these constraints.
- At the mapping workshops team members completed a Route Record Form. On this form the developer of the route could provide a description of why the route was chosen and list specific features the proposed route avoids. Tetra Tech reviewed the PAT members' proposed routes and suggestions very closely.
- Tetra Tech has prepared a CAP and PAT Route Analysis Map Book that includes a map of each PAT proposed route. The constraint table lists the constraints of each route and includes the total mileage of each route and segment.
- After determining the constraints of each route from the data, Tetra Tech examined each route from aerial photos and made adjustments based on the features that were shown in these photos. The aerial photos gave detail that wasn't available on the GIS mapping, such as farm buildings and homes.
- When revising the routes, Tetra Tech attempted to move the routes to the edge of agricultural fields, or to areas not developed for agriculture. Steep mountainous areas were also avoided because building the transmission line in these areas would require more maintenance. Mountainous areas also create a larger environmental impact and it is more expensive to build the line in these areas. Access roads would have to be constructed for the parts of the line cross

mountainous areas; three miles of access roads are factored in for every mile of transmission line.

- During the analysis, Tetra Tech has received input from:
 - The Nature Conservancy – Tetra Tech wrote to the Nature Conservancy and asked for comments on the PAT proposed routes. The Nature Conservancy replied with a 20-page letter discussing some of their conservation easements. The Nature Conservancy’s response will be integrated into the analysis.
 - The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife – Sage grouse leks are a primary constraint to routing. New information has been released about which leks are occupied and which aren’t.
 - BLM Prineville District – Tetra Tech met with the Prineville District in November to discuss routes in Grant County and the John Day Basin.
 - BLM Burns District – Tetra Tech met with six to eight staff at the Burns District office. The parties discussed resource impacts and possible concerns about the PAT proposed routes.
 - Wallowa-Whitman, Umatilla and Malheur National Forests – Tetra Tech met with these branches of the U.S. Forest Service in October to educate them about the project. Previously, Tetra Tech had only discussed the project with the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest staff. It was important to also inform the Umatilla and Malheur Forest Service departments because Forest Service land occupies a large part of the area between Boardman and Hemingway. The Forest Service could be key to permitting the proposed routes that are near the centerline.
 - Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs – The Confederated Tribes have a number of landholdings, some of which have been dedicated to conservation. The Confederated Tribes have helped Tetra Tech identify the properties that have been designated for conservation.
 - The Department of the Navy – Tetra Tech has applied to the Navy for a right-of-way permit to cross their bombing range in Boardman. If the bombing range can be crossed, much of the pivot-irrigated agricultural land near Boardman could be avoided.
- For the purposes of route analysis, Tetra Tech has divided the project area into four regions:
 - Northwest – This area includes Grant, Umatilla and Morrow counties. Constraints include a large amount of agricultural land, and pivot irrigation is a particular concern.
 - Northeast – This area includes Baker County up to the utility crossing through the Blue Mountains. Minor adjustments were made to the routes proposed through this area. Constraints include sage grouse leks and view sheds from the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.
 - Southwest – This area includes Harney, Grant and Malheur counties and part of Baker County. Proposed routes through this area were revised significantly to reflect concerns about protected species. Natural resource considerations are significant in the Southwest area and topography is a concern. Significant changes were made to routes through these areas to avoid a wilderness study area and state wildlife management areas.

- Southeast – This area contains Malheur County in Oregon, and Canyon, Owyhee, Washington, and Payette counties in Idaho. Constraints on the west side of the Southeast area include sage grouse leks, topography and natural resources. The large number of constraints led Tetra Tech to make revisions to the proposed routes in this area.
- The complete route analysis will determine the following three factors for each route
 - Permitting difficulty
 - Construction difficulty
 - Cost
- **Permitting difficulty** includes:
 - Meeting the state standards in Oregon
 - Meeting the standards of the various counties
 - Cooperating with the federal government
- Idaho Power provided the regulatory criteria to PAT members at previous meetings and at the mapping workshop. Input from PAT members has influenced how Idaho Power looks at the importance of resources within the regions and within the study areas.
- When routing there are three categories: placement opportunities, avoidance areas (low, medium and high) and exclusion areas.
- Tetra Tech has revised the routes proposed by the PATs at the mapping sessions. The routes have been revised so they do not cross avoidance and exclusion areas. The revised routes are the routes that Tetra Tech intends to go forward with for the remainder of the analysis. At the next PAT meeting Tetra Tech will present which routes are the most reasonable to take into the NEPA process.
- The PAT members are encouraged to comment on the revised routes and also on the method that used to analyze the routes. PAT members are also encouraged to comment on the importance ratings that have been assigned to the community and regulatory criteria. Tetra Tech will read and acknowledge comments from the PAT members. The comments submitted during the CAP will be considered all the way through the transmission line routing process.
- The Project Advisory Teams have each developed community criteria for their area. Tetra Tech developed a table that shows all criteria and rates the criterion's importance level. The table also shows how Idaho Power rates the criterion's importance level. Idaho Power welcomes comments from PAT members on the importance ratings that have been assigned to each criterion.
- In some cases Idaho Power has rated the importance of the criteria differently than the PATs. For example, all the PATs and Idaho Power rate the West-wide Energy Corridor as a "placement opportunity." However, all the PATs rate private land as "Avoidance: High," and Idaho Power rates private land as "Avoidance: Low."
- Another example is Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) land. EFU land is considered an exclusion area by the South and Central PATs and listed as high avoidance by the Grant County and Harney

County PATs. From a siting point of view, the term EFU does not represent an exclusion area. A utility or transmission line can be built across EFU land as long as there is a strong case for doing so; however, there are strict guidelines in Oregon law for building on EFU land. EFU land is a complicated issue, and Idaho Power recognizes that it is a significant matter of concern for the PAT members.

- Throughout the CAP, team members have voiced concern that private lands should be considered as high avoidance areas and federal lands should be considered opportunities. When siting, the issue of private land will be examined on a case-by-case basis.
- **Construction difficulty** has many implications for environmental impact and for cost. If there is a choice between two routes that seem to have the same permitting difficulty, construction difficulty or cost might be the deciding factor. The path of least resistance is advisable from a constructability point of view. Some examples of construction difficulty include:
 - Steep terrain
 - Proximity to major roads
 - Tree clearing
 - Access roads
 - Stream crossings
 - It is possible to site the transmission line across a stream if you do not cut the riparian habitat on either side.
 - Construction of a culvert might be necessary.
 - If the area has a significant profile, the tower might need to be built up on one side, which will mean more roadwork.
 - Biological seasonal restrictions
 - Biological and seasonal constraints might require an additional year to build the transmission line.
 - Big game closures are common.
 - Often there are places where the contractor cannot get into the location from the first of the year until July. That causes work to be delayed.
 - Severe weather
 - Snow or rain can be more of a problem with some areas than others.
- **Cost** is also an important factor that is considered when siting a route. There will be an absolute difference in cost between any of the proposed routes and segments. The proposed route and alternative routes must be within a reasonable range of cost. Some examples of cost factors include:
 - Route length
 - Construction difficulty
 - Mitigation requirements (i.e., big game winter habitat is often Category 2 and requires mitigation.)

- Proposed and revised routes will be compared within each region. Routes in each region will be combined to create complete routes. Idaho Power cannot yet say which proposed routes are the most reasonable. The PAT proposed routes that are the most reasonable would likely be advanced into the NEPA review process.
- When the NEPA review process begins, ODOE and BLM will hold a series of scoping meetings. After the scoping meetings, ODOE will evaluate the proposed and alternative routes against the ODOE-EFSC standards, and BLM will develop a range of alternatives that will be studied in detail.

Questions and Answers

Team members were given the opportunity to ask questions of Idaho Power representatives during and after the presentations. Below is a verbatim transcription of the questions asked by team members and answers provided by Idaho Power, Tetra Tech and RBCI.

Can the 500 kV line use the same right-of-way that has already been established for the 230 kV lines?

No. The right-of-way would have to be expanded and widened to put the 500 kV line there.

Does it necessitate that the right-of-way for the 230 kV line just transfers over to the 500 kV line?

It is not an exact transfer. We would have to make it wider because the 500 kV line would require more right-of-way.

What does the Treasure Valley Electrical Plan have to do with the Boardman transmission line we are talking about tonight? This is something totally new. What do we have to do with Boise's transmission lines?

The Southern Project Advisory team had proposed a route for the Boardman to Hemingway line that goes around east of the Treasure Valley.

Who is the Southern Project Advisory Team and what do they have to do with the transmission line from Boardman to Hemingway?

You are in the Central Project Advisory Team meeting right now, with the Baker County and Union County citizens. The Southern Project Advisory Team is made up of citizens from Malheur County and four counties in Idaho. They are the same type of team as this, but they are looking more at the southern issues for siting the transmission line.

Okay, I understand that, but what does the Treasure Valley Electrical Plan have to do with us?

We just wanted to show you a decision that we had made about the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line.

So you have made that decision? Is that what I'm hearing? What is the decision?

The decision is not to consider the routes going east of Boise. It really does not affect the folks here in Baker and Union County. We just wanted to let you know about it.

You have got us very confused. You say that you have made a decision on the Boardman to Hemingway line?

Just on the proposed routes that go east of Boise. All of the routes that go west of Boise are all still under consideration. But those routes that went around the east of Boise have been removed from consideration.

This is the first time that you have presented to this information to us, correct? Is this to confuse us more?

We are just trying to be upfront with you on any decision that we make. Forty-six routes came out of the mapping workshops. All these routes are on the map that we have handed out. After reviewing this initial set of routes, Idaho Power made the decision that the routes that go east of Boise are not routes we are willing to carry forward. All the other routes are still being considered.

Does that mean that you are disregarding the Idaho routes altogether?

We are disregarding, based on analysis, S25, C13, S13 and a portion of S6.

So you are not going to use the routes in Idaho?

There are still several routes in Idaho. They are in the south.

(Comment from PAT member) I can appreciate from Idaho Power's perspective the resource burden the eastern routes would present, as well as the potential risk. But in terms of Grant County, if you were to use the eastern routes, you would not go into Grant County at all. What concerns me is that Idaho Power has made this decision based on criteria that are important to them. The eastern routes would affect Idaho Power and affect your consumers. Whereas, ignoring those eastern routes means you are intentionally deciding to put a route through Grant County, and we are not consumers. That should be registered.

Don't you think you can try in Idaho a little harder?

We are more than willing to go through Idaho, I promise you that. This decision was made because it could have destroyed the project completely. We could not afford to build the Boardman to Hemingway line around Boise. If we did that, it would accelerate the projects that are planned to be built 50 years from now. And we probably would not have even gotten approval from the public utility commissions to build the line if we were to go east around Boise.

What I'm hearing is that we need to be making notes on the comment sheets. This is how are voices will be heard correct?

Yes.

Can I ask what the timetable is that we are dealing with? I thought I read in the paper that you have to resubmit your application by the end of January. Is that correct? And if that is correct, do all these decisions have to be made pre-application stage? Or are you still in the decision-making stage?

If possible, we would like to submit the revised applications in February. This is so we can hit the next spring survey season and keep the project on track for being in-service in 2015. If we miss the spring surveys this year, it is likely to knock the in-service date back another year. So it would be our preference to get the applications resubmitted in February. However, it all depends on if we can get through the decision process with the Project Advisory Teams first.

So any input these people put in, and myself put in, has be done by the end of January? To impact that application that will go in the first of February?

Right.

Will you be working over the Christmas holidays?

We will be on the analysis portion, but let me add to that. Before the application goes back to BLM and the Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council, it will include the results of the CAP process. That will be a number of different routes, but not all the routes you are going to see tonight. What we are going to try to do in the remainder of December and January is whittle down the number of routes that appear to be more or less reasonable. We will then come back to you in January and say, "Here's the results of

everything we've looked at, and here's how the different routes stack up. What do you folks think about that?"

Idaho Power will then have to figure out exactly how many routes to take back to the BLM. Once the BLM has those routes it will start them down the path of saying, "Okay, we have to consider a reasonable range of alternatives," which has specific meaning in the NEPA world. It means that they have to consider anything that is reasonable and give enough decision authority to the decision maker to pick an agency-preferred alternative.

That will kick off another series of seven or eight public meetings that will be sponsored by BLM and the Oregon Department of Energy. The public will get to come back and make their points again. It is not black and white. We are asking for help in January, but it doesn't close the door on your influence and where this process goes.

Just a reminder that the Community Advisory Process is not part of the NEPA process, it is in addition to the NEPA process. So once we are done here, the scoping process, the public process for the NEPA process, will begin.

Why does it cost too much to go east around Boise to get to Hemingway but you can wander all over Oregon and it does not cost you anything?

The decision to remove the routes east of Boise was not purely about cost. There were a number of factors, one of them was that we would have to build another substation. And another was that if we were to build the line east it would tie the Boardman to Hemingway line to another transmission project that is being built at the same time.

Did you say that the actual reason you could not go around east of Boise was because the PUC said you could not?

The PUC did not decide that. We feel it would be likely that the PUC would not allow us to accelerate the projects that are planned for 50 or 75 years out.

So that decision has not been made yet? You have to recognize that the cost of installation now would be considerably less than it will in 50 or 75 years. If you put that infrastructure in now, even though it does not serve a purpose now, you avoid inflation and expenses later.

That's a good point. But it has been our experience that the PUC does not allow us to accelerate projects. At this point, they might allow us to accelerate right-of-way purchase. But they will not let us build projects that are not needed.

What if you said this was not an accelerated project for 50 or 75 years? What if you said this is part of the Boardman to Hemingway Project? Then you would not be accelerating it.

If we went east of Boise, it would require us to put in an additional substation and additional transmission in the Treasure Valley way ahead of when they are needed.

I do not understand those things, and I do not want to divert our attention, but the fact is if you do not consider Idaho routes, you are impacting a lot of people that are not going to see any use out of this power line. It seems only fair that Idaho Power takes some additional steps, and incurs some additional costs, to avoid that as much as possible. Especially when this is going to play in nicely with your future goals.

Even if we did go east, once we get around the Treasure Valley, we still go west through Oregon, so it still does not remove routes.

It does, because if you go eastern, there will still be challenges, but there are simply some routes further south, like the ones through Harney County, that would be no longer feasible. It would eliminate those possibilities as feasible. So it does have a significant impact on what routes remain feasible.

Good point. We've captured your comments, but Idaho Power has made the decision to remove those routes. So we are going to take your comments back to our people in planning. We don't want to misrepresent the message of tonight. We will take your comments back to Idaho Power with this information and get back with you.

I do not think Idaho Power should discount any routes like that. I thought this was supposed to be done with a team of people, not just you guys making the decision.

That is why we wanted to share this information with you tonight. This decision is outside the way we presented the process in the first place. I agree with that. But it is something that we felt was important enough to make a decision about. One of the discussions we had was to not take these routes off. We thought perhaps we could go forward with it and let the PAT make that decision, but we did not want to delay bad news. We wanted to come out front with it right away. We thought it was important enough to share with you right now, rather than waiting until the end.

Okay, but I thought you were through with closed-door meetings?

That is why we are presenting this to you now.

But you have already made the decision to remove these routes haven't you? Without us?

That is true. But when we do a transmission line project, the first thing we always do is look at it from a planning sense and see if the route meets purpose and need sense. If it does not fit the need of the project, then it never makes it to a map. So we did skip that process, you are right.

I am asking that you clarify because we do not understand why the routes east of Boise do not apply to purpose and need.

We talk about purpose and need when we consider the project and applying to the BLM. But what I am stating right now is Idaho Power's purpose and need for the project. I hear everything everyone has said. I understand, and this information will get back to planning at Idaho Power, and this will be discussed in depth, I can guarantee that. We are discussing this as we go along. I know Dave Angell, the manager of delivery planning, wants to do more analysis. We have already done a lot of analysis, but he has made instructions to more analysis to make sure everything on this is bulletproof. I will make sure everything you said gets back to him.

(Comment by PAT member) Still, the executive decision to remove Idaho routes from consideration throws it back at us here in Oregon. Whether it comes through Baker County or Grant and Harney. And that constitutes a lack of public involvement. So those decisions that Idaho Power made without us make a mockery of this PAT. And it also makes us wonder about the time schedule. You want to keep on track, but you still have a lot of work to do.

I have been out of the area working, so I have missed the earlier meetings. But what is the goal of this 500 kV line? Is it to put more power into the Treasure Valley? Or is it the goal of Idaho Power to pick up wind power from Boardman to fulfill your 25 percent green power needs, as dictated by the federal government? And also allow you to have your subsidiary that sells on the open market, not as Idaho Power but as another corporate name, to make more money off the power that you will be selling on the other grids. What exactly is this 500 kV line going to do?

There are a couple answers to that question. Number one, we do not have a subsidiary anymore that sells power. IdahoCorp Energy has been shut down since 2004. Our purpose for building this line is to provide capacity from the Boardman area to buy energy off the mid-Columbia trading hub, to transmit down into Idaho to Hemingway substation. Also, the line will transmit power from Hemingway up into the mid-Columbia region.

The Idaho area is a summer-peaking area, which means our utility usage is higher in the summer. In the Northwest, their power is higher in the winter, so it is a good exchange for the two regions to do that. It is not to tie into the wind turbines, it is to get into the mid-Columbia trading hub. Whatever is being traded there, we will purchase it from that trading hub. When you purchase power from the mid-Columbia trading hub, you are generally just buying power, it doesn't matter what the method of generation is. You go through other methods when you get your renewable energy credits.

We expect to have our renewable portfolio standards imposed on us by the federal government. For right now, we believe we are covered for the amount we will need right off the bat. So we do not need to go out and find how we can get more right now. But this will tie into that wind up there and with the Gateway West Project that goes into Wyoming. We will tie the wind resources in the Northwest to Wyoming. So when the wind is blowing in Wyoming and it's not in the Northwest, and vice versa, power can still be transferred between the two regions.

So you are tying into a loop that feeds into Wyoming?

Every transmission line in the west is all tied together.

I understand that Idaho Power did away with the routes in north Idaho because of the terrain. That is steep and nasty. I understand why they dropped those lines because of the terrain and the cost incurred by the terrain.

We have only discounted the routes east of Boise, the ones further north are still under analysis. We will look at those routes. I'm not sure how in-depth the analysis will be, but we will bring it back to you, and you can help us make the decision on those Idaho routes. Remember everything has to be affordable, constructible and permissible. We have to look at all three of those factors whenever we look at the routes. We will continue the analysis and get back to you.

(Comment by PAT member) As I sit here, as part of this Community Advisory Process, I am very aware that I have been helping with this decision process as partners with Idaho Power. This is my understanding from Idaho Power. A year from now, or five years from now, I can look back and say, "I was given all the information and we as a community group made the decision and we partnered with Idaho Power."

But I have some flags on the field with what has happened since we last met and what is being said here today. We are representing our communities here. When people stop me on the street and ask me, "What the heck happened to the route?" I want to be able to knowledgeably say, "We were here every step of the way in partnership with Idaho Power. It was transparent. We did this together and we made the best possible choice together."

But what I am hearing from listening tonight, is that decisions were made outside the parameters of the process that we agreed on. Idaho Power didn't come back and tell us, "We are going to step out and decide this and this and this."

I've been trusting and thinking that we are working together now. We have put our processes on hold with Move Idaho Power and our concerns. But I am telling you I am having a few flags on the field tonight with what is happening about removing these Idaho routes around Boise.

I am looking at the first blue line on this Idaho Power Importance Criteria Table that's titled U.S. Forest Service Managed Lands. For Grant County, the criteria table says it is "Avoidance: High." Is that what the county or community decided? However, the South, Central and other PATs say Forest Service Managed Lands are a placement opportunity. So this means that these lands are not as much of a concern to them. I do not understand how Idaho Power says this is an "Avoidance: Low" for permitting though. Because permitting is irrelevant to how we are rating this. Is that correct?

We could have assigned it moderate or high or exclusion. But it is double counting if we weight the criteria from an ownership point of view and a resource point of view. If we go out and also evaluate whether the land is for example, irrigated cropland, exclusive farm use or big game crucial winter range, it means we have given it two values. We really have to look at the resource value or how the community plans to use the land.

I do not understand all those difficulties, but it looks to me like maybe the opposite thing is happening. In terms of the Grant County and Harney County communities, this sort of approach lingers mute our concern about how the forestlands are addressed. This table simply says that whatever the community thinks, it does not matter when it comes to permitting.

Let me address that. Let's make sure we understand the terminology. On the Forest Service where it says "Avoidance: High" it meant that in Grant and Harney counties, the citizens that attended the meetings thought it was important to avoid forestland. In the South, Central and North the citizens felt that the public land that was encompassed within the forest was the place to put this transmission line.

I understand that, what I do not understand is how the two "high avoidance" plus the three "low avoidance" give you a sort of permitting solution?

We did not weigh them across. This document is an expression of all the PATs opinions and in the last column is the opinion that Idaho Power has, as we weigh all the rules and regulations, the weighting we put on that particular factor.

So the permitting does not follow the community ratings at all?

No, the criteria I pointed out are the ones that have differences in the weighting. But most of the 57 factors are weighted the same. If you look across the table, a lot of the ones we have not talked about have a high degree of similarity. We are calling particular ones out to let you know where there may be some differences. Once again use your yellow comment sheets to make those notes.

In Grant and Harney counties there is a great deal of concern about both federal and private forestlands. I continue to be a little baffled about why private forestland is ranked as less important a livelihood than exclusive farm use land. Essentially, farmers are making a living from their farms and private forest owners are making a living from their forests. We are

ranking EFU lands as high avoidance, and I continue to be surprised that private forest owners are getting brushed aside here.

I don't think they are getting brushed aside. What we have done on the other criteria table is identify factors that need to be considered when you deal with forestland from a resource point of view. One of the comments that came up in Grant County was, "Aren't certain parcels of private farmland also exclusive timber use land? In other words does it have the same protection of law?" We have looked into that issue and it does not translate into that. We are tracking down the private farm parcels through the counties to actually locate them and understand that definition correctly. But from a resource point of view, we have treated both public and private forests the same way.

If you go to the table where it says U.S. Forest Service Old Growth Forest, it is "Avoidance: High" for both Grant County and Harney County. For the other teams this category is listed as non-applicable. And yet, the permitting column lists it as "Exclusion." What I still do not understand is how the permitting part of the evaluation is related to the community value. Here is an example where you have high avoidance in two areas and you get a different permitting assessment. Something seems funny about how this table is written.

If we can find old growth forest, the intent is to avoid it. We cannot go across it whether it privately held or publicly held. From a siting point of view, we value old growth forest areas as exclusion areas. A transmission line is flexible enough, and the old growth forests are small enough, that we should be able to avoid those areas.

On one hand, I agree because there is a small amount of acreage. But on the other hand the Forest Service says you simply cannot cut trees over 21 inches because they constitute old growth. I can guarantee you, if you go through the forest, you are going to get old growth and that power line would be like a checkerboard. A 250 foot swath through any part of the Wallowa-Whitman, Malheur or Umatilla Forests is going to be, permitting-wise, extremely difficult.

When we get into the NEPA analysis the level of analysis will keep increasing. We will get down to the point of doing pedestrian surveys to identify those kinds of resources.

I would like to make a comment about the Forest Service and BLM managed lands. The gentleman from Grant County brought up about how the Grant County analysis had a high avoidance for these lands. I notice under the Central PAT rating Forest Service and BLM lands are rates as a placement opportunity. I understand that the opinion of rating forestland and BLM land as an opportunity was voiced by this group here in Baker City. I have been a part of this group and I would just like to make the note that some people in this group, myself included, rated public lands as an avoidance area. So I am feeling a little unheard when I see that public lands are listed as an opportunity.

We will go back and check if it's not quite accurate. Just a couple things about the second table, the blue rows represent the community criteria, the white rows represent the other kinds of resource and regulatory and siting criteria that come out of the regulations. We attempted to put an importance rating on the factors that were in the 26-page packet of regulatory criteria you received a previous meeting.

When I say importance rating, some people want to get into cranking numbers and that doesn't really work. For us, it's a way to aggregate information so that we can use it more easily as we start to look at routes and come up with our permitting difficulty. That will be part analytical and part subjective as we

look at each piece of route. We may say, “From a permitting point of view, and looking at the resources, this is really just not a good idea for the environment or for getting a permit.” We will try to convey that back to you as we come to a conclusion from a permitting point of view.

I am interested in the sage grouse exclusion area. There is a two-mile buffer around each lek?

Correct.

Who identifies the habitat?

ODFW, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Are you aware that east of Baker City there are sage grouse all over the county?

Yes we are. The routes that we have identified, actually that you have identified, do avoid those leks.

No they do not. You go east of the Interpretive Center. There are sage grouse on the road that goes down to Keating and they have been in that area forever.

We may be talking about different things and we may be talking about the same thing. There are some maps in the book that are on your desk that show the leks. They do not show which ones are active, or occupied, or not.

The point being, particularly around Baker, there has been a question about which leks are still occupied and which are not. The data we got recently from Fish and Wildlife for the whole study area was probably 95 percent the same as the data we have had for the last two years. They did rule one lek, out to the east of the Interpretive Center. So that is the information we have to work with.

Why was that lek ruled out?

They determined it had not been occupied for the last seven years. Any lek that has shown activity within the last seven years is considered to be active. It is still considered habitat, but if it is not an active lek it is not an exclusion area. We would still need to pay compensation though.

I see that residences, like hospitals and schools, are exclusion according to the importance that Idaho Power put to the permitting. How close can you come to my house?

From an electrical point of view, the edge of a right-of-way for the transmission line can come within 125 feet of a physical structure. We are required to be at least 125 feet from a structure. That is the safety requirements we have to follow. Our intention would be to build much further than that. But the requirements would be 125 feet.

So do we keep letting businesses peck away at the leks rather than letting the sage grouse regain their population and spread out again?

A project like this is regulated under the state and federal government and it has to follow certain rules. I'm not sure whether your question was about protection of sage grouse or elimination.

It was about eliminating their habitat. How can they come back if businesses keep pecking away at leks?

That is an excellent question and that is why the sage grouse is on the verge of being listed on the endangered species list in February. It is proposed now, but sage grouse are not officially listed as endangered yet. We are as much in the dark as everyone else about what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service is going to do in February.

You had the category of clearing trees. When you construct the line, I assume you are going to basically have to clear-cut underneath it for the width of the right-of-way. Then you will have to conduct maintenance where the line is. Can you give us an idea of how tall you would allow the vegetation and trees to grow under the line? And then would you go in there with a chainsaw crew or use herbicide? How does that play out on both public and private land?

In terms of clearing, everything would be clear-cut. Except in the case of riparian crossings. In riparian crossings, vegetation would be left to be by the side of the stream to the point that it didn't interfere with the conductor security zone. Between two towers there is a sag in the transmission line and under its highest operating temperatures the conductors get hot and the lines will sag. That is important because it there cannot be any less than 35 feet of clearance. The general vegetation cannot be within 25 feet of the maximum sag, so at the very lowest point of the conductor sag, maximum vegetation growth is about 12 feet. As you approach the towers, you can have conditions where you can allow material to grow back. The utility is usually not going to let trees grow back to any great height. In terms of maintenance, it really depends; the federal lands have very clear restrictions about what can and cannot be done. For example, no herbicide use or certain kinds of herbicides. On the private lands it will usually be mechanical tree clearing.

For routine maintenance on private lands, what do you do in terms of herbicides?

Normally we work directly with the property owners and if they are using a certain kind of herbicide, that is the kind we would use. But otherwise, you would have check with our biologists.

How realistic will the appraisal be? Half a mile on the map makes a big difference in price. Since you do not have a specific route, you are just in the ballpark now, how realistic are your appraisals for the cost analysis?

The cost analysis is based on length. We will probably use two or three biological indicators, certainly like big game winter crucial range. We cannot deal with micro-habitats; we will be looking at that later on.

I am thinking about road building. If you are going across the Malheur Forest and you need three miles of road for every mile that you build, can you get appraise that pretty close?

Pike Engineering, the engineering contractor for Idaho Power, is looking at the numbers of stream crossings, the number of miles of road that may have to be built and the number of the amount of clearing. They are doing it in five-mile increments along the line using GIS and whatever available aerial photography there is. It is an analysis that combines enough factors to make a reasonable assessment about the construction difficulty.

I do not want to be critical but my concern would be that this is the sort of thing that is easily “fudgible.” You can push it somewhere or not, and I just want to know that it’s not easily fudged. Idaho Power will be making its decision based on what it costs. You can manipulate the financial data pretty easily.

I told you cost would be a factor, and that it would be less important than permissibility. All we can do is make it transparent and bring it back to you. If there is a lack of trust, all we can do is try.

All I am saying is this is part of an argument to persuade people that this is the route to build. We need to be pretty convinced that it is honest.

One thing that you should remember is that it will not be just one route. And part of the final pick will be your recommendation.

(Comment by PAT member) That is exactly why I am making the point. There will be a variety of routes there and some people could fudge the cost analysis to push it one way rather than another. What if it is the more costly route that Idaho Power likes? And for some reasons they just cannot be honest about or frank about that right now. I am not saying that is how it could happen. I am saying that it would be the sort of thing that would be easy to happen. And given the amount of dollars in this it would be very tempting to happen.

Who makes the final decision on this project? The federal government?

If you are asking about the final decision on where the line is actually going to be built, the decision will come out of two places. The federal government can only make final decisions on where the line is built on the federal lands that they manage. In getting to that decision, they have to look at the total project. They will make an agency-preferred recommendation. But when it is not on federal ground, they do not have jurisdiction. In Oregon, unlike other states, particularly on the private land, the Energy Facility Siting Council will put a flag in the ground and say, "This is where you are authorized to build the line." It is a bifurcated approval process. The two agencies will have to work together to get to that point.

Can I assume that Idaho Power is going to recommend the route that they would prefer?

I do not think they are sure yet. Both the Energy Facility Siting Council, and their application process, will require the resubmission of the initial application. For the Bureau of Land Management's application, the SF299, it will be required to identify a proposed route. That is what the BLM regulations call for. We have had discussions with both entities about the Community Advisory Process. We do not know yet whether it will be possible to submit several routes. In the utilities we usually use red to identify our proposed route. We don't know if it will be possible or not to have just the red route, or maybe also submit a couple of alternative routes. I do not know the answer now. Idaho Power does not know the answer and I do not think the agencies know the answer right now either. They have never been confronted with a process like this before.

You said that a land-managing agency could only make decisions about their managed property.

That is correct. They can have an opinion about the agency preferred environmental route. But they do not have the right to say where the routes are going to be off of federal land.

I have been trying to find out what conclusion you reached in terms of the national historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. Is that off the board now?

We have not reached any conclusions. There have been routes drawn, which you can see on the maps. We are going to analyze all the routes and come back to you next month and ask you to begin removing routes.

I would like to know how you weighted avoidance high, moderate and low. I would like to know, for the community process, what is high, medium and low.

On the criteria importance table we showed you the community ratings. I want to be clear that when we listed Idaho Power's view of permitting difficulty, it was from regulatory point of view. It is how difficult we think the permitting will actually be. It does not really have to do with what the community criteria was. It might have been rated differently than the community criteria because we were looking more at the legality of permitting. The community criteria is being taken into account, and mostly it is being taken into account by the folks drawing the routes. When people wrote the descriptions of the routes at the mapping sessions, they gave us reasons for why they drew the routes like they drew them. So when they were drawing those routes, they were taking the community criteria into account. So we are not throwing the community criteria out, whatsoever.

I am thinking about the timeline and how you said by the end of January something is going to happen. I would like to see a timeline of when Idaho Power is going to make their decision. I would also like to see the community input come in. It's still not clear enough.

The Community Advisory Process is such a unique process, it's never been done before. So the next meeting is planned at the previous meeting. We are trying to figure out what happens at the next meeting. The hopes are that at the next meeting each Project Advisory Team will take the action to eliminate some routes and put some routes forward. We will come out of the next meeting with a range of routes to go forward with in the NEPA process. We certainly could not go into the NEPA process with forty-six routes. We need a realistic number, like three routes or five routes.

I want to acknowledge that Rosemary and you have worked together to do this process and you are doing a great job with the community process. We want the community criteria to have a high impact, not low.

As these routes were initially drawn, the community criteria was the leading factor in drawing the routes. The primary criteria that was put into the route development was the community criteria.

I think there is a whole piece here that I wish Idaho Power understood. Idaho needs to put their skin in the game. You are asking us to put our skin in the game and this is a good faith piece. It is more than just the criteria pieces. You know what I mean? It is sort of like, "I'm going to give up my arm, but you don't have to give up anything." You need something from us so they need to give something too. What are you hearing me say?

What I am hearing you say is that we need routes that are entirely in Idaho, along with those routes that are entirely in Oregon.

Well not necessarily entirely, but at least partly.

There are still routes remaining in Idaho, but they are not very long.

Well maybe they need to be longer. It is just really inequitable. And it is an emotional piece. It is not just a cold logic piece, but there must be logic under there somewhere.

We are seriously considering all routes. And we are not stopping now. Every time something like this is brought up, we take it back. You have not seen us not take something back yet, have you?

We have been honest about this process. I want to you understand that we are analyzing everything that has been put forward, and we are not going to stop. Even though I have said Idaho Power took those eastern routes off the map, we are still looking at those routes in one form or another at a

planning level. We are not going to stop. But we are not going to hide the fact we think those routes probably cannot be built.

You said you couldn't propose all these routes, which means someone is going to make a cut down to so many routes. Is the engineering firm going to cut that down to four or five routes in January or February? How are you going to take this mass of information and get down to a manageable amount?

We would like to partner with the advisory teams next month to cut some of those numbers down, actually cut a lot of them down. Tetra Tech will be combining routes; there will not be as many because they will be total routes. But we would like the advisory teams to say, "Okay based on all the different factors we would like to remove this route or that route. And then here are the routes we can live with going forward."

Idaho Power will then take those routes, in one form or another, and put them back into the NEPA process. Whether it ends up being a number of alternatives without a proposed route, or a proposed route with alternatives.

(Comment from PAT member) I came to this meeting hoping you would sell this to me that this power line is a good idea for Baker County, or Oregon in general. Idaho Power's history with Baker County has been "slap you in the face, we are going to do our thing." It's documented at the Baker County Library in the notes from Hells Canyon Dam in the minutes you guys did in 1955. It was explicit that the Oregon Fish Commission and a judge, at that time, told Idaho Power, that you would have to build a viable fishery below Hells Canyon Dam. From the start of the dam to this point in time. You have not done that, you have never done it. And what you have said about mitigation has not sold me on the process.

What are the credentials of the members of the advisory committee? Are they electrical engineers? How do they know where to put an electrical line?

For the advisory team we are looking for people with local knowledge of the geology and terrain and important issues in the community. We are not looking for electrical engineers. We are looking for the local knowledge.

You said earlier that you were going to take this data to the advisory committee. Who is the advisory committee? You have told us two things: number one: that we are the advisory committee, and number two: that you are going to take the data off to the advisory committee.

We have five teams put together, one of them is in the South made up of Malheur County and four counties in Idaho. Then there is a Central Advisory Team, which is Baker County and Union County. And there is also the Northern Advisory Team which is Morrow and Umatilla County. And then a Harney County Advisory Team and a Grant County Advisory Team have been formed also. So when I say we will take the data off to the team, I'm talking about one of the other five teams to talk to them about different things too. But this here is one of the teams.

When selecting these people for the advisory teams do you look at whether they have a vested interest, do they have something personal? Or are they a totally neutral person? Can they give you an honest, unbiased opinion?

When we decided who should be on these teams, we first talked to stakeholders in the area and we asked them who should be on the teams. We went to people who had formed groups that were opposed

to the line. We asked them to be on the teams. If a person came to our public meetings and asked to be on the team, they were on the team. Once we held these team meetings, if you just came to the meetings you were automatically on the team and you became part of the mailing list that we send the meeting invitations to. We tried to be as all-inclusive as we could.

(Comment from PAT member) It was not that easy at the beginning. I remember a county commissioner here that wanted to pick the team himself. I think you did a good job of letting anyone who wanted to participate be allowed to participate. That was well done.

Regarding the community input, I attended a meeting in Burns and people brought up comments about medical risks and health hazards for people living near or under these high-powered lines. It seemed at that meeting that the general consensus of the people that attended that meeting were interested in the potential hazards health-wise. Is this something that is not going to be addressed? Was it purposefully neglected to be printed?

No, it was not purposefully neglected. We can include that as a concern, and you are right, we should have included that as a concern. That is something that we do evaluate, the issue of EMF. The most stringent regulatory body in the United States would be the California Public Utilities Commission and they have a list of guidance about things concerning EMF, such as stay away from schools, hospitals or stay so far away from homes. We as a company already do those things as part of our practice. Idaho Power is more stringent in our personal practices than even the California PUC but there is nobody that is actually regulating the EMFs right now legally. There are general issues with EMFs that are difficult to quantify. But we do consider them and we will add that as part of the concerns. I apologize that we did not include it originally.

Is it right that the line can be 125 feet from a residence?

Legally for safety purposes, we cannot get closer than 125 feet. In practice we would be much further than 125 feet.

When Tetra Tech comes back with these next maps are they going to have the factors on there for each area, like high construction difficulty? For example, are you going to show cost for each route? We would like to have the opportunity to see it all before deciding. Because if you bring it all together into one combined route, we cannot see some of those thought processes that you guys go through in combining the routes. If we could have permitting difficulty, construction difficulty and cost for each one of those refined routes, that would help us, rather than just the results of which route you think is the best. Can you do that?

I think that is our intention. I think that we will explain how we eliminated various routes. Some of them may not require going through all three analysis, it may be an overriding factor. But we will try to bring out as much information as we can. We are not going to just be relying on maps. We will point out the factors that really led us to our decision-making.

Are you going to post those routes ahead of time so we can come to the meeting prepared and have the chance to see the routes and make comments?

I think we would like to. The problem is the schedule. If we tried to get it out a week in advance would that be enough time?

Anything in advance would be good because it would give us the chance to know more.

In terms of the process and the hoops you have to jump through along the way, will you go to the public utility commissions and the Energy Facility Siting Commission? Does that happen before the BLM does its draft environmental impact statement (EIS)?

We are submitting an Integrated Resource Plan to the Oregon and Idaho Public Utilities Commissions on the 31st of December. That will include an updated analysis of the Boardman to Hemingway line. It is already in draft form and I think you can find it at your public libraries right now. That will go through the Public Utilities Commissions processes for decision and I would expect that to be in maybe four or five months. Then we go into NEPA, which starts with the scoping process. We did scoping last year; we stopped it and took the lines off the map. We will be restarting the scoping process with the BLM and then they will do the draft environmental impact statement and then the final environmental impact statement. And then concurrently we have to go through the Oregon Department of Energy-Energy Facility Siting Council process too. All three of those have to be done.

Do you have a target for when the scoping for the BLM draft EIS is going to be?

I would think the earliest for scoping meetings would be late March or early April. It is going to be a bit of a gap between scoping and the draft EIS. It is probably way too early to even guess when a Draft EIS is going to be out. We probably will not see a Draft EIS until at least early 2011.

Is the Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council process going on right now? Or does that follow the PUC process?

They use the PUC process. One of their criteria is that purpose and need has to be defined or approved by the PUC. The PUC has to acknowledge our Integrated Resource Plan and the Oregon Department of Energy will use that acknowledgment to fulfill the purpose and need part of their criteria.

So ODOE has to wait until the PUC sorts that out?

For the purpose and need portion, yes.

Who does the environmental studies on private property?

The environmental studies will be done under the BLM EIS. It will cover both public and private lands. BLM is responsible for the preparation of the EIS. Those lands that are adjacent to the federal lands are part of the EFSC process, the counties will require that. That is what we have been assured by the Oregon Department of Energy. The counties will cooperate with the EIS, but by law BLM has to look at the whole project, whether it is on public or private land. In addition, the Energy Facility Siting Council is looking at the whole project. Hopefully, they are doing it together. But BLM cannot approve the line on private land. They can only analyze for environmental effects on private land.

They can go on private land and make decisions?

No, they cannot make decisions about using the private land. They have to analyze the effects on private land, but they cannot make the decision whether or not the line goes on private land.

They will do the NEPA process on private land?

The BLM will identify issues that could impact private lands. EFSC will do the equivalent of the county land use process on private lands.

Does Idaho Power as a company have a criteria list? For example, do they as a company have a line drawn in the sand on how close they will put a line next to a house? As this process goes forward, will that line in the sand change? Right now you are saying you might stay a mile away from a house. But depending on where the line goes, will that distance change later? I want to know what are Idaho Power's standards as a company?

We do not have a standard, or a line in the sand, on how close we will build to a house. I was describing our practices earlier. The way we like to go forward is not to go near a house, but we do not have a standard. We do not have a line in the sand.

For future planning and growth, is consideration being made for when this line is approved? Will a secondary line be needed 15 years from now? And if so will it follow the same route?

If a second line did need to be built and we wanted it to be in the same area we would have to obtain a new right-of-way and go through the entire process again. But we are not planning for more lines.

Is it true that once a corridor is cut through, the corridor will be the area where future gas pipelines and other utilities are put through?

It is not always easy to follow a corridor. We could not put another 500 kV line in the same corridor as this one.

Tell us about the agreements that the county is signing with EFSC and BLM?

Baker County has signed an agreement to get reimbursed for the expenses, and that was with EFSC. I believe all the counties signed it for reimbursement. All the counties that were in the original scoping have also signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the NEPA process. That is only the agreement that we would participate, not that we agree, not that we disagree, but that we would participate in the NEPA, so we could be at the table with the federal agencies and participate. That is all Baker County has signed.