



**BOARDMAN TO HEMINGWAY**  
**Community**  
**Advisory Process**

Project Advisory Teams

**Central Meeting #3**  
**& Mapping Workshop**

September 15 & 16, 2009



This document summarizes the third Central Project Advisory Team meeting held September 15, 2009 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and the first Central mapping workshop held September 16, 2009 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in Baker City, Oregon.

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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 County, Union County and Grant County. Since Spring 2009 Idaho Power has hosted three Central PAT meetings and two public meetings in the Central advisory area.

Summaries of the first and second set of PAT meetings and the public meetings held in August 2009 are available on the project Web site [www.boardmantohemingway.com](http://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:

- o Review work to date, project status and how the Community Advisory Process would proceed.
- o Discuss the purpose and need for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project.
- o 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:

- o The federal, state and public processes involved in the project.
- o 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 if 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 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 were held in Baker City on Aug. 12 and La Grande on Aug. 13 for the Central advisory area.

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 indicate 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 purpose of the third Central PAT meeting was to begin to identify a range of possible routes for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line. A full summary of the third Central PAT meeting is included in this document.

## **Project Advisory Team Meeting #3 Overview**

The third PAT meeting began with an evening meeting and was followed by an all-day 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 invitation letter for the third Central PAT meeting can be found in Appendix 1.

- Twenty-three people attended the evening meeting
- Overall, 50 people attended the Central Mapping Workshop
  - 9 people attended the morning session
  - 19 people attended the afternoon session
  - 22 people attended the evening session
- A total of 14 routes were developed by PAT members at the Central mapping workshop

### **Evening Meeting Overview**

The purpose of the evening meeting was to prepare team members for the mapping workshop. At the evening meeting team members:

- Received instruction on how the mapping workshop would proceed.
- Reviewed the regulatory, engineering and community criteria that would be used to map possible routes for the proposed transmission line.
- Reviewed the outcomes of the seven public meetings held in August.

For a detailed summary of the evening meeting please refer to page 6.

### **Mapping Workshop Overview**

The all-day mapping workshop was divided into three sessions to make the best use of attendees' time. Team members were asked to sign up for a time in advance. The sessions were held from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Team members had the choice of mapping their routes on paper maps or working with Geographic Information System (GIS) operators to lay out routes at computer stations. Idaho Power staff and technical experts from other organizations were available to answer questions. County planners from Union County and Baker County also attended the mapping workshop.

Idaho Power kept a detailed record of all routes developed by PAT members. Additionally, team members were asked to provide a written description and comments for each route they identified. This documentation will help Idaho Power understand the location and reasoning behind each route.

For a detailed summary of the mapping workshop please refer to page 25.

### **Next Steps**

After the mapping session, Idaho Power will analyze each route using the regulatory, engineering and community criteria. The analysis of each route that was developed at the Central mapping workshop will be presented at the next Central PAT meeting.

## **Evening Meeting Summary**

### **The evening meeting included:**

- Presentations by Idaho Power representatives
- A facilitated discussion about regulatory, engineering and community criteria
- Overview of how routes would be analyzed after the mapping workshop
- A demonstration of the GIS mapping software that would be available at the mapping session

### **Presenters:**

- Idaho Power—Stacey Baczkowski, Senior Biologist
- Idaho Power – Kent McCarthy, Community Advisory Process Leader
- RBCI – Rosemary Curtin, Facilitator

### **Handouts:**

The following handouts were provided at the evening meeting and are available in Appendix 2.

- Agenda for Central PAT #3 Evening Meeting
- Agenda for Central PAT Mapping Workshop
- September 2009 Mapping Workshop Instructions
- PAT meeting #3 PowerPoint presentation
- A Route Analysis Worksheet that outlined the placement opportunities, avoidance categories and exclusion areas for transmission line routes
- A Route Analysis comment form
- A Meeting Evaluation comment form
- Baker City and La Grande public meeting summary

### **Team Member Input**

Idaho Power asked team members to evaluate the meeting by completing Meeting Evaluation comment sheets. Team members also were asked to complete a comment sheet about the Route Analysis Table. Full transcriptions of the comment sheets are available in Appendix 3.

- Three team members completed the Meeting Evaluation comment sheet. Responses included the following:
  - o “Visual aids were very helpful. Really appreciated and was fascinated by GIS demonstration. I have said this once before, impressive organization. Someone (or many) is good at their job.”
  - o “This process will help educate the public and further the goal of one or several routes.”

- o “I felt quite heartened by the seemingly genuine atmosphere of everyone working together.”
- o “Keep it focused on mapping.”
- Two team members completed the Routing Analysis comment sheet. Responses included the following:
  - o “There are areas of private ground that are at least as beneficial to maintaining deer and elk populations as anything on public ground.”
  - o “Big game winter range, especially mule deer should be high avoidance, instead of moderate.”

## **Presentations**

### **Welcome—Kent McCarthy, Idaho Power, CAP Project Leader**

McCarthy thanked participants for attending the meeting and reviewed the agenda. He explained that the purpose of the evening meeting was to prepare team members for the mapping workshop that would be held the next day.

Staff from Tetra Tech, Idaho Power’s engineering firm, were introduced to the Project Advisory Team. Idaho Power and Tetra Tech staff would work with PAT members at the mapping workshop the next day to develop routes on the GIS computer stations.

Team members were informed that Idaho Power and Tetra Tech would analyze all routes developed by PAT members after the mapping workshop.

### **Introductions and Public Meeting Outcomes—Rosemary Curtin, RBCI, facilitator**

Curtin thanked team members and Tetra Tech for attending the meeting and asked everyone to briefly introduce themselves. Curtin then went over the following housekeeping items:

- The summary from the second Central PAT meeting had been finalized and distributed to the team members before the meeting. Documents from all prior Central, North and South PAT meetings are available on the project Web site at [www.boardmantohemingway.com](http://www.boardmantohemingway.com).
- Extra copies of the second Central PAT summary would be available at the mapping workshop the next day.
- Extra PAT binders are available to organize documents from the PAT meetings. If a team member has not yet received a binder, please contact Amanda Edge at RBCI, [Amanda@rbc.net](mailto:Amanda@rbc.net), (208) 377-9688.
- No date has yet been set for the next meeting. The date of the next meeting will depend on how long it will take to analyze all proposed routes that result from the mapping workshops.
- Seven public meetings were held throughout the project area in August 2009. For the Central area, public meetings were held in Baker City on August 12 and La Grande on August 13. Idaho Power mailed an invitation to the public meetings to all residents of Baker and Union counties. The purpose of the public meetings was to allow the public to:

- Learn more about the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project.
- Review and provide input on engineering, regulatory, and community criteria for evaluating routes for the proposed transmission line.
- Speak to Idaho Power representatives.
- A total of 108 people attended the public meetings that were held Aug. 12 in Baker City, OR, and on Aug. 13 in La Grande, OR. Attendees were given the opportunity to complete a comment sheet that asked the following questions:
  - What are your concerns about siting the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line?
  - What are your suggestions for siting the transmission line?
  - Do you have comments on the regulatory and/or engineering criteria?
  - Additional comments.
- Concerns and suggestions from the general public were closely aligned with those of the PAT members.
- Twenty-eight written comment sheets were submitted at the public meetings in Baker City and La Grande.
- The comments reflected concerns about the following areas:
  - Preservation of private land and farm land
  - Need for the transmission line
  - Preservation of scenic beauty
  - Preservation of wildlife
  - Economic effects
  - Compensation for land that will be used
  - Public input will not be taken seriously
  - Idaho Power has not considered other options/technology
- Public meeting attendees also submitted suggestions for siting the transmission line. Some suggestions included:
  - Avoid private land
  - Do not build the transmission line
  - The line should be sited to avoid wildlife habitats
  - The line should not obstruct scenery
- A summary and transcription of all comments submitted at the August public meetings is available on the project Web site at [www.boardmantohemingway.com](http://www.boardmantohemingway.com).

### **Criteria and Route Analysis Overview - Stacey Baczkowski, Idaho Power, Senior Biologist**

Baczkowski provided an overview of the regulatory and engineering routing criteria that the team members would use to identify routes at the mapping workshop. Baczkowski's presentation included the following information:

- The goal of the mapping workshops is for team members to identify a proposed route and a reasonable range of alternatives that will then be submitted in a revised application to the regulatory agencies.
- Routing tools for team members include a routing criteria table, a regulatory framework table, and a summary of exclusion, avoidance and placement opportunities.
- Team members may choose to develop routes on the paper maps or work with GIS operators to plot routes at the computer stations. Idaho Power staff and technical experts from other organizations will be available to answer questions. County planners also have been invited to attend. Idaho Power staff will simply be there to assist.
- Not all areas have been surveyed or mapped. While there is data for almost all the criteria that will be used to identify routes, there might be some constraints and opportunities that are not shown on any of the maps.
- When developing routes, team members are encouraged to focus on the Central advisory area, but can also develop routes through the North and South advisory areas.
- The mapping data will continue to be updated throughout the mapping process. While Idaho Power has been using a wide variety of sources to collect data, PAT members are encouraged to keep Idaho Power informed of any information missing from the maps.
- The data are from a variety of sources and there is varying quality assurance and quality control. The GIS data has not been validated. Idaho Power does not currently expect more data to come to light that will result in significant route changes in the future.
- If Idaho Power proposes to change a route identified by a PAT member, Idaho Power will return to the PAT members to discuss the changes.
- Idaho Power will keep a detailed record of all routes developed by the PATs. Team members will be asked to provide a written description and comments for the routes they identify. This documentation will help Idaho Power understand the location and reasoning behind each route.
- A Route Record Form will be provided to each PAT member at the mapping workshop the next day. The Route Record Form would be used to:
  - Assign each route a number.
  - Make notes about proposed routes.
  - Provide a description of why the route was chosen.
  - Raise any questions or concerns about constraints or other items that aren't displayed on the maps.
  - Provide contact information. Idaho Power may contact the developer of the route during the analysis to clarify information about the route.

- Idaho Power will analyze all routes developed by the Project Advisory Teams using regulatory, engineering and community criteria. This analysis will include:
  - Reviewing Route Record Forms in order to understand the purposes and concerns behind particular routes.
  - Combining routes if several similar proposed routes are submitted.
  - Categorizing routes according to ranked community criteria.
- The analysis of all routes will be presented at the next set of PAT meetings. The teams then will begin revising and eliminating routes. Additional mapping workshops may be needed as the teams and Idaho Power work toward the goal of identifying proposed and alternate routes for the transmission line.
- Idaho Power will review the routes for red flags, such as a route that travels through an exclusion area or conflicts with regulatory criteria.
- Idaho Power will not dismiss or reject any of these initial routes. The PAT members will be responsible for discussing routes and removing some from consideration.
- After Idaho Power has analyzed the routes, a second mapping session will be scheduled where PAT members will work with Idaho Power to:
  - Learn if there is a low, medium or high probability of the route being permitted.
  - Discuss the advantage and disadvantages of each route.
  - If necessary, alter routes to meet the designer's purpose and concerns.
  - Decide if the route should be progressed further or removed from the mapping process.
- Route analysis will not be carried out until all three PATs have mapped their routes.
- If necessary, Idaho Power will form Coordinating Team of PAT members from the South, Central and North PAT areas to discuss how to connect the routes.

### **Mapping Workshop Overview – Kent McCarthy, Idaho Power, CAP Project Leader**

McCarthy presented an overview of the mapping workshop that would be held the following day. His presentation included the following information:

- The objective of the mapping sessions is to identify a range of possible routes.
- Three 3-hour mapping sessions over the course of each mapping day. Team members are encouraged to work in groups if possible in order to become familiar with the needs and concerns of other parties.
- Those team members that develop routes will have the opportunity to refine their routes after the initial routes are analyzed.

- Participants will have two options of how to develop their routes. They can draw their proposed routes on paper maps with a Mylar overlay and permanent markers, or work with a technician to plot the route on one of two GIS stations.
- A set of large reference maps will be displayed on the walls at each mapping station. These reference maps will show engineering and environmental criteria, as well as other constraints that should be taken into consideration when identifying possible routes.
- The GIS system will show all criteria and topographical features in more detail. Aerial images of the project area will also be available on the GIS system.

## Questions and Answers

After the presentations, team members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Below is a compilation of all questions asked by team members at the Central, South and North PAT #3 meetings. Idaho Power has added information to the answers in this summary in order to clarify a point or more accurately answer a question. Questions have been grouped categorically to more easily understand the purpose of the mapping session.

### About the Mapping Workshops

#### **What is the goal of the mapping workshops?**

The goal is to come up with a proposed route and a reasonable range of alternatives that will then be submitted in a revised application to the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service, and included in a Notice of Intent to EFSC.

#### **How will the mapping workshops proceed?**

There will be two identical mapping stations set up for PAT members.. Each station will have a hard-copy map, a GIS station and several large reference maps.

The paper maps will cover the specific project area and include general constraints. Participants will have the option to map their route on a clear Mylar covering and have Idaho Power enter those routes onto GIS later. Participants also have the option to work at a computerized GIS stations and have technicians assist them with plotting their routes.

With either method, it is possible to see general constraints and other route limitations, as well as placement opportunities. Staff from Idaho Power and Tetra Tech, Idaho Power's engineering firm, will be available to answer technical questions.

There will be three sessions scheduled throughout the day of the mapping workshop. Participants are free to come to only one session, or to stay for the entire time.

#### **Will the original routes proposed by Idaho Power be included on the maps at the mapping workshop?**

No. Those routes have been removed from consideration.

#### **If someone draws a route that is the same as the route originally proposed by Idaho Power, will that route be considered for analysis?**

Yes. Idaho Power will analyze that route just as it will any other.

#### **Idaho Power representatives have said they will not influence where participants map their routes. But are there some general guidelines?**

We ask that the routes be buildable, affordable and able to receive all regulatory approvals. To be buildable and affordable, the route cannot extend out too far past its beginning and end points. It

cannot go underground or over mountain peaks. It can go over moderate mountains and through valleys.

To receive all regulatory approvals, the route cannot go through an exclusion area, such as critical wildlife habitat. You will be able to see the exclusion areas as you plot your route. However, there are many avoidance areas where it is not clear if the area must be excluded from consideration. In those cases, go ahead and draw your route there. We will be able to determine later whether those routes are worth pursuing or if they can be modified to address the issue.

**Are PAT members the only ones who can identify routes at the mapping workshop?**

No. Anyone can come to the mapping workshop and propose a route.

**What are some guidelines for using the GIS mapping system?**

When you develop your route, it's best to pick your starting and ending points, then have the GIS operator assist you site the route between those two points.

**How many routes did each PAT develop at their mapping workshops?**

The South PAT developed 15, Central PAT developed 14 and North PAT developed 15. Many of the mapping participants who did not map their own routes commented on other identified routes.

**Will we be able to see what other people have done already in the mapping sessions? Can I just agree with somebody else's route?**

Yes. Idaho Power will show PAT members all of the proposed routes. Please fill out a Route Record Form and tell us why you agree with the route.

**Can we collaborate on routes?**

Yes, we encourage people to work as teams.

**The data used on the GIS system is from 2005. Why can't we use 2009 data to assist us with plotting our routes on the GIS?**

We are continually updating our data, and you can help us with that. If you know of landscape features or other factors that are not apparent on the maps, please let us know so we can add them to our data.

When we narrow the range of routes, Idaho Power will begin conducting on-the-ground surveys for specific resources. Also, as we analyze the routes, we will use Google Earth and the resource maps we have developed. We will get new aerial photography and we will also talk to the landowners.

The GIS data we are using for development and analysis of routes have been collected and provided by numerous state and federal agencies and local governments. The data we have are the most current data sets available. As the various agencies and governments update their data sets, we will work with them to update our databases. There is also often a time lag of several months to a year between data collection and data availability because of the time it takes to process GIS and hard-copy data and to verify its accuracy.

**Why should I develop a route if I can't see all the possible obstacles? I want to see the constraints and exclusion areas before I waste my time identifying a route that might be impossible to build.**

The constraints are not necessarily exclusions; a constraint just means that there may or may not be a problem getting through a particular area. Technical assistance will be available to you at the mapping workshop. If we know where there is a constraint we will let you know. If there is a problem with a certain area, we will likely know about it. However, some of the constraints are not absolute.

**Do participants need to route the right-of-way as well?**

Participants will be asked to route the centerline of the transmission line. The proposed right-of-way width is 250 feet total, 125 feet on each side of the transmission line.

**What if I can't make it to the mapping workshop? Can I get a copy of the map with the exclusion areas on it?**

The general constraint map is currently available online at the B2H Web site, <http://www.boardmantohemingway.com>. It can be printed on 11-by-17 paper.

There are also six other reference maps: topography; cultural and visual resources; fish and wildlife resources; physical and natural resources; exclusion areas and land use. To receive copies of these maps, contact Kent McCarthy at Idaho Power: [kmccarthy@idahopower.com](mailto:kmccarthy@idahopower.com) or 208-388-2565.

**How long will it take to develop a route at the mapping session?**

The time it takes to develop a route varies from person to person. Some people have been spending one or two hours working at the GIS, and some only take a half hour. Some have just come in and filled out a form to agree with another route that has already been mapped. Some people have stayed for the full three hours.

**Is there a time limit?**

No. You can stay throughout all three sessions during the day if you wish.

**Is any time of day busier than any other?**

No. Attendance has been evenly distributed throughout the day.

**What if I develop a route, and a segment of that route has three different alternatives? Should I label them 1a, 1b and 1c?**

If you have three alternative routes, please fill out a separate Route Record Form for each route. All three would be assigned a different number.

**Will we get another chance to identify routes after the mapping workshop?**

Idaho Power will analyze all proposed routes that the Project Advisory Teams develop. At the fourth set of PAT meetings Idaho Power will bring this analysis back to the Project Advisory Teams. The fourth set of PAT meetings will be devoted to refining routes.

**Should we try to make our routes connect to the routes mapped by the other two PATs?**

We encourage you to connect with the routes the other PATs have developed but this is not required. If necessary, Idaho Power will form a Coordinating Team, made up of PAT members from each area, to bring the routes together.

**Do we have to put routes on the West-wide Energy Corridors?**

The corridors are shown on the maps. They are not mandated, but resource agencies encourage utilities to use them.

**Have the environmental reviews already been completed for the West-wide Energy Corridors?**

Yes. The Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement was released on Nov. 20, 2008. The BLM published notice that its Record of Decision was available on Jan. 14, 2009, and the Forest Service did the same on Jan. 15, 2009. Additional information on the corridors can be found at: <http://corridoreis.anl.gov/index.cfm>.

**How much does the federal government charge for using those corridors?**

Information on the federal government's fee schedule for right-of-way rental can be found on the Bureau of Land Management's Web site:

[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/cost\\_recovery\\_regulations/grant\\_issuance.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/cost_recovery_regulations/grant_issuance.html)

**Can we plot routes in other areas?**

Mapping participants are free to map routes in the other advisory areas.

**Has the state of Oregon said the line should not cross Oregon?**

No. The ODOE's Jan. 26, 2009 Project Order did address the "...many public and agency comments stating that Idaho Power must do more to avoid land in Oregon zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU)" by stating that "Idaho Power must seriously consider route alternatives through other lands before using the EFU zone in Oregon." This includes alternatives that bypass part of Oregon by using a more direct route through Idaho." These statements have been misinterpreted to mean that Idaho Power must propose a route outside of Oregon. Rather, the statements are intended to address that portion of the route(s) in Malheur County that passed through EFU.

In accordance with the ODOE's siting process, Idaho Power could propose a route in Idaho. As long as the portion of the line in Oregon was found to meet all of the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) criteria, it would receive a site certificate. ODOE has no jurisdiction in Idaho.

**Do we have to work with Idaho Power when we're mapping our routes?**

Idaho Power does not want to guide or influence mapping workshop participants. Technical experts will be on hand to operate the GIS systems and answer questions about regulatory criteria.

**How will we know where the other PATs crossed into our area?**

You will be able to see their proposed routes on the GIS computer station at the mapping workshop.

**How many mapping workshops are there going to be?**

We don't know yet. We had planned on three, but if we reach agreement on routes before we hold three meetings, we'll stop there.

## **Route Analysis**

**How will Idaho Power analyze the routes identified at the mapping workshops?**

We will use the regulatory, engineering criteria and also the community criteria that the PATs developed. We will consult with local planners and experts from local regulatory agencies when analyzing the routes developed by the PATs. Idaho Power will use professional judgment in assessing whether each route is buildable and how difficult it may be to obtain permits.

**Are you also considering cost when you analyze the routes?**

Yes. Cost is very important. It is not yet clear if a route that is 60 miles longer will be considered. However, we can almost definitely say one that is 100 miles longer will cost \$200 million more, and that is too expensive.

**What are some "red flags" that Idaho Power will look for when analyzing the routes?**

A red flag would be a segment of a route that passes through an exclusion area or is in conflict with the regulatory criteria. For example, if someone draws a route that goes through the Starkey Game Management Unit or a state park, those are areas that Idaho Power cannot build a transmission line through.

**What if Idaho Power determines that most of the route is buildable, but there are problems in some segments?**

Idaho Power will analyze proposed routes in their entirety, and in segments. We will develop alternatives to problem areas and discuss them with PAT members at future PAT meetings. Mapping workshop participants will be asked to submit their proposed routes even if there is an apparent problem, such as an exclusion area, involving part of the route.

**How long will it take to analyze the routes?**

The time it will take to analyze the routes will be dependant upon how many routes the Project Advisory Teams develop. It is not yet known when Idaho Power will finish analyzing the routes.

**When does Idaho Power plan to be finished with the mapping process?**

We hope to try to complete this process by late December or early January so we can begin on-the-ground surveys in the spring of 2010. If we miss that timeframe, the in-service date for the project may be delayed another year.

**How many routes will Idaho Power present to EFSC at the end of this process?**

One or more routes. EFSC would evaluate each one separately and determine if each route met their standards.

**Who has the last word on whether the transmission line can be built in a certain area?**

On federal land, the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service will each conduct review processes. In Oregon, ODOE-EFSC will issue the site certificate and in Idaho this will be up to the individual counties. There are also other permits that are necessary to construct the transmission line. Examples are permits from the Army Corps of Engineers for construction that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material to waters of the U.S. (e.g., streams, wetlands), or permits related to construction stormwater (promulgated by the state in Oregon and the EPA in Idaho).

**What is Idaho Power going to do with the routes that we identify at the mapping workshop?**

After all three PATs have completed their mapping workshops Idaho Power will analyze all the routes they develop. We will look at the routes based on a low, medium or high probability of the route being permitted. We will then return to the PATs to discuss the results of our route analysis. This will include a review of how the routes meet community criteria, areas where routes are in conflict with regulatory criteria, and changes that were made to address “red flags” or other issues. We will also rank the routes as to high, medium or low probability of receiving all necessary permits.

**When Idaho Power is analyzing the routes, will they remove any of the routes developed by the PATs from consideration?**

No. At the next meeting, teams of PAT members will begin to revise and eliminate routes together. Taking routes out of consideration will be up to the PATs.

## **Route Record Forms**

**Why is Idaho Power asking us to complete Route Record Forms?**

Idaho Power will ask each participant at the mapping workshop to complete a Route Record Form when they identify a route on the paper maps or on the GIS computer station. On the Route Record Form, participants can explain why they chose that particular route, and also indicate if there are concerns or issues that aren't easily captured by a constraint or opportunity shown on the map. Each Route Record Form will be numbered. The route developed by the participant will be assigned the number that is on the Route Record Form.

Idaho Power will use this information in a number of ways. If we find several routes in the same area, we will consider combining them. The information submitted on the Route Record Form will help Idaho Power evaluate the purpose and concerns behind each route. Information provided by the creator of the route will help Idaho Power determine if it's appropriate to combine the routes.

Additionally, this form and the information it contains will help us develop a thorough siting report and documented process for developing routes that will be submitted and evaluated by the BLM and ODOE-EFSC during the regulatory processes.

The Route Record Form also has space for a name and contact information. If Idaho Power's analysts need to ask questions for clarification we will use that information to follow up with the person that developed the route.

**Can mapping workshop participants fill out a Route Record Form even if they don't draw a line?**

Yes. If you like a route that is already drawn, you can fill out the Route Record Form to tell Idaho Power what you like about that route.

**Will Idaho Power weigh the number of supporters for each route when deciding which one to use? (Are the Route Record Forms a kind of voting process?)**

No. The process is not a vote. Each route will be weighed equally.

## **Exclusion Areas and Criteria**

**How will Idaho Power proceed when there is a constraint, or an impediment, to a proposed route?**

Idaho Power will identify the constraint and present this information to the PATs. The PATs will then decide to whether or not to keep this route in consideration. If the constraint can be mitigated, Idaho Power will mitigate with one of three approaches. The first approach is to avoid the impact. The second is to try and minimize the impact, and then mitigate to compensate for the impact. For example, if the ground is disturbed to build a tower, mitigation might be reseeding with native grasses. The third approach is used in the case of a permanent impact. In those cases, we find adjacent land to do mitigation off-site.

Idaho Power will try to change the proposed route to avoid or minimize the constraint or impediment. This is why it is important that you complete the Route Record Form. We do not want to change a route such that it is in conflict with the purpose behind the route. The original route and changes will be presented to the PATs.

**Can you explain the areas of avoidance?**

We have three categories: low, medium and high. At the low level, we try to avoid the impact, but if avoidance is not possible, the cost of mitigation is probably low. At the high level, we try to avoid the impact altogether because the cost of mitigation in that case would be high or it would be very difficult to implement mitigation.

**Will I find high avoidance areas labeled and identified by a color on the paper maps?**

The categories of low, medium and high avoidance are not color-coded on the maps. The Route Analysis Worksheet for the Central PAT designates where the low, medium and high avoidance areas are.

**How do you know when a constraint can be mitigated?**

It is not always immediately clear when a constraint can be mitigated. In some cases, it is easy to mitigate. For example, a visual impact can be mitigated by placing the structure behind a hill. In other cases, the specific situation must be analyzed.

**Are all the data on areas of exclusion and placement opportunities up-to-date?**

We have the most current data that are available. Idaho Power will continue to update its database of constraints and opportunities as we get more information. We do not feel that we are missing data that could significantly affect routing.

**How will I know if there are constraints where there is no information on the maps, such as in Idaho?**

The GIS computer stations have the capability for you to identify routes beyond the borders of the maps, given that we have collected data in these particular areas.

**Why don't your maps include more Idaho data?**

Idaho Power collected data for the previously identified study area between Hemingway and Boardman.

**Why doesn't Idaho Power build the transmission line through Idaho?**

If a team member identifies a route through Idaho, Idaho Power will analyze it.

**How do we know where the exclusion areas are?**

One of the reference maps will show all the exclusion area data. They also are identified in the Route Analysis Worksheet. There will also be several other reference maps available at the mapping workshop. The exclusion area data will also be available on the GIS computer stations.

**Are all three PATs, South, Central and North, looking at the same routing criteria?**

Idaho Power used the community criteria identified in each PAT area to complete the Routing Analysis Worksheet. The Routing Analysis Worksheet is different for each PAT area. Idaho Power will also provided tables of the regulatory and engineering criteria to PAT members at the second PAT meeting; these tables of criteria are the same for all three PATs. Packets of the regulatory and engineering criteria will be available at the mapping workshops.

**In the northern area, is the bombing range an exclusion area or an avoidance area?**

It's an avoidance area ranked very, very high.

**Some exclusion areas aren't absolute. They're conditional. For example, land designated as Exclusive Farm Use, or EFU, must be avoided unless you have looked for alternative routes and found none. How will Idaho Power's analysts treat those conditional exclusion areas?**

Idaho Power has used the community criteria developed during the Community Advisory Process to help develop the Routing Analysis Worksheet. Idaho Power has also used professional judgment to categorize community criteria and other regulatory criteria. Idaho Power will review the routes proposed by the PATs with regulatory agency experts and local planners. Based on professional judgment, Idaho Power will present whether there is a low, medium or high probability of each route being permitted.

**Can you create a table that shows only regulatory criteria?**

Yes. Idaho Power is currently developing this document.

**Why do transmission lines currently run through areas that are classified as exclusion areas?**

The transmission lines were authorized and built in these areas before the regulation that led to the characterization of the area as exclusion was in place.

**Why can't you go underground?**

It would cost 10 to 20 times more to build a 500 kV line underground, and the environmental impact is enormous. In the United States, there are only a few miles of 500 kV lines underground right now. For a great distance, engineering problems make it nearly impossible to manage the line.

**If we pick a route that involves burying the power line for a short distance, is that something your engineers will discuss?**

A discussion and analysis will take place to some degree on all proposed routes. We will report back to the PATs with analysis of each.

**Can we change how the areas of avoidance are ranked?**

Yes. The areas of avoidance were ranked based on input from the PAT members and the community and are not always consistent with regulatory criteria.

**What if we see errors on the data?**

Please let us know so we can incorporate the correct information into our data.

**If we use the criteria we've gathered, we might still identify a route that can't be permitted under state or federal rules. Isn't that a waste of time?**

No. There are a lot of grey areas. The purpose is to identify routes that can undergo further analysis by the permitting agencies such that a route can be developed and permitted over the coming years. This process will be open to the public and Idaho Power will continue to work with local citizens and landowners to ensure all voices are represented.

**Do the exclusion areas represent deal breakers?**

It depends on the route, the nature of the exclusion area, and if we are able to modify the route to avoid the exclusion area. The issues surrounding exclusion areas are complex. The only true deal breaker for the state of Oregon is Category One wildlife habitat, such as the sage grouse leks. With other exclusion areas, there are conditions that we avoid the area or resource unless there is simply no other choice. In that case, we would then mitigate the impact if applicable.

**Are the criteria going to be changed? Is it possible that a placement opportunity today might be classified as an exclusion area later?**

The data will continue to be updated. As new land-use planning is adopted, Idaho Power will continue to update it. We feel the data are accurate and viable today, but please remember that new data continue to come in.

**We've been told by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife that some sage grouse leks haven't been visited in 10 years. Why do we still have to consider them when we are planning the route?**

The ODFW and BLM conduct annual lek monitoring, but this does not mean that every lek in Oregon is monitored every year. Also, just because a lek has not been visited does not mean that

it does not meet the definition of occupied. A lek must be visited and have no documented use for 8 or more consecutive years before it can be considered unoccupied.

The following definitions are from a white paper presented by the ODFW at the August 7, 2009 commission meeting. The white paper and meeting minutes can be found at: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/09/08\\_august/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/09/08_august/index.asp).

*Annual status:* Lek status based on the following definitions of annual activity.

- **Active lek:** A lek attended by  $\geq 1$  male sage-grouse during the breeding season. Acceptable documentation of grouse presence includes observation of birds using the site or recent signs of lek attendance (e.g. fresh droppings, feathers). New leks found during ground counts or surveys are given an annual status of active.
- **Inactive lek:** A lek with sufficient data suggests that there was no male attendance throughout a breeding season. Absence of male grouse during a single visit is insufficient documentation to establish that a lek is inactive. This designation requires documentation of either: 1) an absence of birds on the lek during at least 2 ground surveys separated by at least 7 days. These surveys must be conducted under acceptable weather conditions (clear to partly cloudy and winds  $< 15$  mph) and in the absence of obvious disturbance or, 2) a ground check of the exact known lek site late in the strutting season that fails to find any sign (fresh droppings/feathers) of attendance. Data collected by aerial surveys alone may not be used to designate inactive status.
- **Unknown lek:** Lek status has not been documented during the course of a breeding season. New leks found during aerial surveys in the current year are given an annual status of unknown unless they are confirmed on the ground or observed  $> 1$  time by air.

*Conservation status:* Based on its annual status, a lek is assigned to one of the following categories for conservation or mitigation actions:

- **Occupied lek:** A regularly visited lek that has had  $\geq 1$  male counted in the last 7 years. Designate and protect surrounding area as Category 1 habitat (see Hagen 2005 for lek count protocols).
- **Occupied-pending-** A lek not counted regularly in the last 7 years, but birds were present at last visit. Designate and protect surrounding area as Category 1 habitat. These leks should be resurveyed at a minimum of 2 additional years to confirm activity.
- **Unoccupied lek:** A lek that has been counted annually and has had ZERO birds for 8 or more consecutive years. Mitigation category based on habitat type and condition.
- **Unoccupied-pending:** A lek not counted regularly in a 7 year period, but birds were NOT present at last visit. Designate and protect surrounding area as Category 1 habitat. These leks should be resurveyed at a minimum of 2 additional years to confirm activity.
- **Historic lek:** A lek that has been unoccupied prior to 1980 and remains so. Mitigation category based on habitat type and condition.

## What Happens Next?

**What will happen after Idaho Power analyzes the routes?**

Additional mapping workshops may be needed as the PATs and Idaho Power work toward the goal of submitting one proposed route and a range of reasonable alternatives to the Bureau of Land Management and to the Oregon Department of Energy-Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) at the start of the NEPA process.

**Why hasn't Idaho Power set the date for the next PAT meeting?**

We do not know how many routes will be developed during the first mapping workshops. The length of the analysis will be dependant on the number of routes developed by the PATs. When we know how long the analysis will take, we will set the dates for the next PAT meetings and notify all PAT members.

**How will CAP participants be notified of the results of the route analysis?**

Idaho Power will present the route analysis at the next PAT meeting.

**Will mapping workshop participants get a chance to modify the proposed routes?**

Yes. When Idaho Power returns to the PATs to report on its route analysis, participants will help Idaho Power narrow down the range of routes and choose the ones that will be proposed to the state and federal agencies.

**When will the entire mapping process be completed?**

That depends on how long it takes Idaho Power and the PATs to identify proposed and alternate routes.

**What is the timeline for finishing the Community Advisory Process?**

We haven't made a commitment to any date yet. However, Idaho Power will continue to keep the Project Advisory Teams informed throughout the federal and state review processes.

## **Other Considerations**

**Will Idaho Power only look at possible routes between Boardman and Hemingway? Or will Idaho Power analyze other options like building the power plant closer to Hemingway? Are there other things Idaho Power could do to mitigate the effects of the transmission line and put power-processing plants closer to Hemingway?**

The Community Advisory Process is designed to site a route for the transmission line between Boardman and Hemingway. Idaho Power analyzes its need for power plants and transmission lines through its Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) process. For more information about that process, see <http://www.idahopower.com/AboutUs/PlanningForFuture/irp/default.cfm>.

**Some of the proposed routes go through Grant County and Harney County. Will the people in those counties be included in the Community Advisory Process?**

We invited Grant County and Harney County to participate on the South PAT. We will hold public meetings in both counties in the middle of October to further involve these communities in the CAP. We will include them in our next mapping session.

**Why does a route that was proposed by a PAT member go all the way into Washington?**

This PAT member was trying to find a way to route the transmission line that didn't touch Oregon until just above Boardman.

**Why did Idaho Power build the substation in Hemingway before they knew how to route the power line there?**

We chose that location because it is in close proximity to the 500 kV PacifiCorp Summer Lake transmission line. This location allows Idaho Power to connect to the Summer Lake line and to route 230 kV transmission lines into the Treasure Valley.

**Why didn't Idaho Power form a panel of Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho district BLM and U.S. Forest Service representatives to answer PAT members' questions?**

Idaho Power apologizes for not yet meeting this request. A meeting with these Idaho agencies is currently being planned.

Idaho Power did not include them in the original panel discussion for the following reasons:

- The BLM's Vale District is the lead for BLM responsible for processing our application and compliance with NEPA and the National Project Manager – Lucas Lucero – is assigned to Washington, D.C. Routes within the PAT boundary in Idaho could cross BLM lands administered by the Four Rivers Field Office. Under the guidance of Lucas Lucero, the Vale District and Four Rivers Field Office have been working together and coordinating on the proposed project. The Vale District's participation in the panel discussion was not intended to only represent Oregon, but was intended to represent all of the BLM offices involved.
- Idaho's Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) does not have habitat categories and mitigation requirements similar to those of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Also, Idaho does not have a siting process similar to ODOE-EFSC; therefore, IDFG does not have the same regulatory criteria and role as ODFW.
- There were no lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service within the PAT boundary in Idaho.

**How close are the routes that PAT members have mapped to Idaho Power's original proposed route?**

Some routes identified by PAT members are located close to routes originally proposed by Idaho Power.

**Can Idaho Power rent space on their towers to another user?**

It's a possibility, but would have to be worked out during permitting – the space would be limited to fiber optics, not other power lines.

**Can Idaho Power put more power lines along the same corridor as the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line?**

Idaho Power is requesting right-of-way for a single circuit 500 kV transmission line with a right-of-way width of 250 feet. There are no future plans to expand or upgrade the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line with additional power lines.

## **Mapping Workshop Summary**

### **Overview**

An all-day mapping workshop was held for Central PAT members on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2009 at the Sunridge Best Western Inn in Baker City, Oregon.

**The objective of the mapping workshop was to begin to identify a range of possible routes for the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line.**

The Central Project Advisory Team mapped 14 routes at the mapping workshop. For maps of all routes developed by the Central Project Advisory Team please refer to Appendix 6.

Team members had the option to lay out routes on paper maps or work with GIS operators to lay out routes at the computer stations. All team members chose to map their routes on the GIS computer stations.

The mapping workshop was divided into three sessions to make the best use of attendees' time. Sessions were held from 7 to 10 a.m., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Team members were asked to sign up for a time in advance. Attendees were informed they could stay for as long or as short a time as they wish.

Idaho Power staff and technical experts from other organizations were available to answer questions. A representative from the U.S. Forest Service was also present to answer questions from team members. County planners from Baker and Union counties attended the mapping workshop.

Two identical mapping stations were set up for PAT members to lay out their routes. Each station included:

- **A map of the Central project area** – this map included general constraints. The general constraints included areas of exclusion and areas of concern that had been identified by Project Advisory Teams during the Community Advisory Process.
- **Large reference maps showing:**
  - General constraints
  - Cultural and visual resources
  - Land use
  - Physical and natural resources
  - Fish and wildlife resources
  - Exclusion areas
  - Topography
  - Copies of the general constraint map and six reference maps are available in Appendix 4.
- **Geographic Information System (GIS)** stations with a computerized database of opportunities and constraints.

- **Community criteria** that the Central Project Advisory Team identified as important to their area.

### **Documentation**

Team members were asked to provide a written description and comments for the route(s) they identified. A Route Record Form was provided to each team member when they arrived at the mapping workshop. Each Route Record Form had a pre-assigned random number that would be used to identify each route that was mapped. This assigned number would also identify the route during the analysis after the mapping workshop.

Team members were also asked to provide the following information on the Route Record Form:

- Which mapping session they attended (7 a.m., 11 p.m., or 5 p.m.)
- What method they used to map their route (paper map or GIS)
- If they could be contacted to answer questions for clarification concerning their route.
- Specific factors that made their route important.
- Any additional comments.

If team members did not map a route, they were to use the Route Record Form as a comment sheet to give input on other routes.

The 14 routes that were mapped at the Central mapping workshop received the following assigned numbers: C3, C4, C6, C8, C9, C11, C13, C17, C18, C21, C24, C25, C40, C41

### **Comments**

Below is a summary of comments that were submitted for each route on the Route Record Forms. Comments may include those that were provided by the developer of the route and other team members that commented on the route. Verbatim transcriptions of all Route Record Forms are available in Appendix 5.

#### **C3**

- Follows a transportation corridor
- Avoids most constraints (community, natural etc.)
- Conscious of controlled airspace

#### **C4**

- Minimizes access road construction
- Minimizes running corridor through Leafy Spurge containment area
- Avoids high value crop ground
- Follows too close to Oregon Trail
- Too close to homes and EFU

#### **C6**

- A direct route from Boardman to Hemingway (short route)
- Avoids valuable agricultural land

- Avoids population areas
- Avoids exclusion areas
- Utilizes existing energy corridors
- Has a realistic balance of private and public land

### **C8**

- In Baker, relocate the existing 230 kV line to the east and put it closer to the rifle range. Then site the 500 kV in the existing 230 kV right-of-way
- Route needs refinement; it is conceptual
- Cross I-84 north of Ash Grove and avoid Durkee by going north; joining back with 138 kV
- Connects to the South and North project areas
- Keeps route to the east of existing power lines east of the freeway

### **C9**

- Avoids populated areas
- Avoids high value agriculture lands
- Avoids exclusion areas
- The length of the line is longer, but may be more permissible
- Misses strawberry wilderness
- Utilizes existing energy corridors
- Has minimal impact on sage grouse leks

### **C11**

- Conceptual route
- Takes into consideration the low impact factor of hugging the freeway on the west of I-84 to avoid airport
- Intended to avoid environmental impacts ODFW categories 1 & 2 east of freeway

### **C13**

- No descriptive comments were submitted about this route

### **C17**

- Follows existing BPA and Idaho Power lines
- Stays out of the City of La Grande area

### **C18**

- Short route
- Avoids sage grouse

### **C21**

- Short alternative C18
- Avoids elk calving
- Avoids Morgan Lake and Elk Song

**C24**

- Alternative to C6

**C25**

- Alternative to C11
- Should tie into C17

**C40**

- Avoids private property
- Stays on north side of I-84

**C41**

- Avoids houses and private property