

# Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project

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North Project Advisory Team Meeting #4

Summary

Dec. 9, 2009

4 p.m. – 9 p.m.

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Port of Morrow Convention Center

2 Marine Drive

Boardman, Oregon 97818

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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 North Project Advisory Team (PAT) includes representatives from Umatilla and Morrow counties in Oregon. Since Spring 2009, Idaho Power has hosted three North PAT meetings and two public meetings in the North 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](http://www.boardmantohemingway.com).

### **PAT Meeting #1**

The first North PAT meeting was held May 27, 2009 in Boardman, Oregon.

The purpose of the first North 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 North PAT meeting was held July 30, 2009 in Hermiston, Oregon.

The purpose of the second North 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 North 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 Pilot Rock, Oregon, on Aug. 19, and Boardman, Oregon on Aug. 20.

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

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.

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 North PAT evening meeting was held Sept. 23, 2009 and the North mapping workshop was held Sept. 24, 2009. Both meetings were held in Boardman, Oregon at the Port of Morrow Convention Center.

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 North Project Advisory Team developed 15 of these routes.

### **PAT Meeting #4**

The purpose of the fourth North 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 North 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 North Project Advisory Team (PAT) proposed 15 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 North PAT meeting was to:

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

The meeting was held Dec. 9, 2009 at the Port of Morrow Convention Center in Boardman, Oregon.

Twenty-eight 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.

- North 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**

One team member completed the “Route Analysis” comment form at the meeting. The transcription of this comment form can be found in Appendix 3.

## **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.boardmantohemingway.com](http://www.boardmantohemingway.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](mailto: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.

## **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](http://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](http://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.

### **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.

## **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.

**My question is, are there problems with siting the future substations on the left west side of the Treasure Valley? I understand you already have a 500 kV line there. Why is everything planned for the west side of the valley rather than the east side?**

Yes Idaho Power does have a 500 kV line on the west side of the Treasure Valley. On the other side of the Idaho/Oregon border, the land becomes all desert. So all the population and farms are within the west area. There really isn't anything over there.

**If you are going to put in a substation, what is the problem with putting it on the desert side?**

The Hemingway substation actually is out in the desert right now. But we need to have substations closer to the population areas to get the transmission lines to them. That is why a 500 kV line will circle the Treasure Valley.

**So there is no growth expected on the west side of the valley?**

No, there cannot be any growth because that land is all owned by the BLM.

**Can you explain the revised routes that we are looking at?**

The red routes are all the original routes you developed at the mapping workshops. The blue routes are how we revised them. If you see a really large change it is because we avoided a constraint, for example, a wilderness study area or wildlife management area.

**So you analyzed those transmission line areas as having an impact area and put the blue line there?**

That's right. And we made many changes. Most of the changes were pretty modest, but some of them were pretty significant. You can see we made a revision to a route to avoid wildlife management areas. A pretty big change had to do with protected species streams for steelhead and other protected species. We found if we revised the line to avoid the constraints, it kept the intent of the route and avoided areas that probably would have prohibited it from a permitting point of view.

**How did the cost of permitting difficulty enter into the decision in Idaho Power's judgment?**

Permitting difficulty is not considered a cost. We factor in permitting difficulty, construction difficulty and cost.

**How long do you think it will be before you come up with a conclusion on these routes?**

We would like to finish the analysis in January and bring the PATs back together to discuss the analysis and the routes we have come up with. We would like to submit our application to the BLM in time for the spring survey season. If we do not get that spring survey season this year, it puts the in-service date for the line off another year. Obviously we want to get through this public process first.

**Are you close to meeting that deadline?**

In most cases, yes. I think there are some areas that we have some problems with.

**There was a press release about the proposed transmission lines going through Grant and Harney counties. There was a bit of negative reaction from some of the people I talked to in this area. They say that the line may be coming through Grant County. Is this true?**

It came out in the newspaper for the first time that Idaho Power was going to put the line through Grant and Harney counties and not consider these other routes. That was not communicated to the newspaper by Idaho Power and it has not been communicated that way at any meetings.

**When we meet again in January, you will you basically have preferential routes based on what was referred to tonight?**

I don't think we are going to come back necessarily with preferences, but we will come back with an analysis and show you places that are more difficult or more reasonable. We would like the teams to make that decision for us. Again, the permitting difficulty is the most paramount of all the criteria. Cost, constructability and fitting in with all the community criteria that the PATs developed all go into the decision. As the PATs produce what they would like to see us go forward with, we have to look at what has been recommended by the groups and see if that is reasonable for us to go forward with. I think it will be. Because frankly, in my experience, if you share with committees the same information that you use to make your decision, they usually make the same decision, or pretty close to it. I am pretty confident in the PATs.

**Early on in the process you talked about having some coordination between the areas. Will that still be necessary?**

We held the first mapping session in the Central area. We showed the North their lines, and all the lines that came from the North matched up with the ones in Central and the ones from the South also all matched up the Central routes. At this point, we don't see that the coordinating team will be necessary.

**I heard you mention your application to BLM in February. Is that the SF299?**

Right, the amended document to BLM is the SF299. At about the same time, we will also submit and amended Notice of Intent to Oregon's Energy Facility Siting Council.

**Is one route going to be chosen to submit in those applications? Or will it be two or three routes?**

Typically in practice with the federal government, you always submit the location where you want it to go. The proponent really is charged with submitting one route and one alternate or segments of an alternate. We have had some discussions about whether it might be possible to submit a third route. There are pluses and minuses on both sides; both agencies do not know the answer yet. We may have some answers in January.

**If there's an amended request to the Oregon Department of Energy, will you update the scoping report and the project order?**

My understanding is that is possible.

**I spent all day Monday in Boardman with federal agencies for another transmission line, from Bonneville Power Administration. This transmission line is all on Forest Service land, not BLM, but the federal agencies now have their memorandum of understanding in place for the siting of energy facilities. But we are seeing still a disconnect on how the state process works versus how the federal process works. Both sides have to give a little bit and try to mesh so we do not end up doing all of one process, and then sequentially doing the next. It is just going to be this nightmare. It's not good, it's very time-consuming, and everybody will have to go to days of meetings.**

So there are some really big issues that have to be settled between the states and the federal government. Most of those have to do with the surveys. If you pick a route, you give the state an application that shows you studied that route, and then you show you can meet the standard. With the federal government you usually show multiple possibilities, and then identify preferred alternatives. Then they will study those alternatives. Those two things are in conflict with trying to make this an efficient permitting process. There are still a lot of discussions going on. All the process issues that we are going through are more complicated.

**What is the “drop-dead” date?**

I can't say. The next round of our Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is coming out at the end of December. The IRP initially had an in-service date for the Boardman to Hemingway line of 2013. We pushed it out to 2015 because of this advisory process, and if we miss the spring survey season, it could go out to 2016. In the IRP the in-service date will probably be identified as 2015. That date is based on when this line is needed to serve Idaho. If we do not get that 2015 date, then we start having to take other actions to provide for our service territory. The “drop-dead” date doesn't mean the lights will necessarily go out. It means Idaho Power will have to start taking some actions that may put us at risk with our regulatory community. We really are aiming for 2015 right now, and if we do not meet that date we will take some actions.

**Is that 2015 date the in-service date?**

Yes. It is pretty aggressive but we think we can get that.

**Do you have two public utility commissions to satisfy, Oregon and Idaho? Did Idaho already approve your IRP?**

They acknowledged our updated IRP of 2008, and in Oregon they wanted us to go through and reevaluate our loads based on peak numbers. We went ahead and pulled our application for the 2008 IRP update and we are actually submitting a full-blown IRP at the end of December to both Idaho and Oregon.

**You have wildly different routes, multitudes with twice the amount of construction. Have you set a range of costs in that? Or how do you deal with that?**

There is an assumed overall project cost. And it is a cost that can be raised up and down. That is compared with all the other resources in our budget, building natural gas-fired plants, building wind turbines, all kinds of things. We have a whole basket of things that go into that.