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October 25, 2019

Public Utility Commission of Oregon
Filing Center
201 High Street SE, Suite 100
P.O. Box 1088
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Transmission Updates: 3rd Quarter 2019

Attention Filing Center:

Enclosed please find the 3rd Quarter 2019 Transmission Update regarding the Gateway West and Boardman to Hemingway transmission projects. This update provides a description of the developments that transpired in the third quarter of 2019.

This filing should be brought to the attention of Jason Eisdorfer, Utility Program Director. If you have any questions, please contact Senior Regulatory Analyst Courtney Waites at 208-388-5612.

Very truly yours,



Lisa D. Nordstrom

LDN/kkt

Enclosure

Idaho Power Company's
Transmission Update for 3rd Quarter 2019
October 25, 2019

In late 2013, Staff of the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (“Commission”), requested¹ that Idaho Power Company (“Idaho Power” or “Company”) provide quarterly updates regarding the Energy Gateway West transmission project (“Gateway West”) developed jointly between PacifiCorp and Idaho Power (“Companies”). Commission Staff requested that, for each sub-segment² of this project, the Company provide a description of the developments³ that transpired in the previous quarter. Similarly, in 2017, Commission Staff requested⁴ that Idaho Power provide updates on the permitting or completion of the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (“B2H”). The Company committed to providing updates as part of this quarterly notification.

Gateway West

On November 14, 2013, the Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”) released its record of decision (“ROD”) for Segments 1 through 7 and 10 of the Gateway West project. The BLM postponed a decision on the remaining segments — Segment 8 (Midpoint to Hemingway) and Segment 9 (Cedar Hill substation to Hemingway) — to resolve routing in the affected areas.

On January 19, 2017, the BLM released its ROD for the remaining segments. That decision was then appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (“IBLA”) by certain challengers. In April 2017, the BLM requested that the IBLA remand the decision back to the BLM in light of the State of Idaho’s opposition to the BLM-selected route and because the BLM Idaho State Director concluded that it was in the best interest to do so. On April 18, 2017, the IBLA granted the BLM’s request and remanded the ROD for Segments 8 and 9 back to the BLM for further consideration.

On May 5, 2017, President Trump signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017, which incorporated by reference the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Boundary Modification Act (“Modification Act”). The Modification Act directed the Secretary of Interior to issue a right-of-way for the portions of the Companies’ preferred routes for Segments 8 and 9 that are located within the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (“NCA”). On August 28, 2017, the BLM issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental

¹ Commission Staff Data Request No. 1, Transmission Updates Docket, dated December 17, 2013.

² Segment E comprised by the following sub-segments: Hemingway to Cedar Hill, Hemingway to Midpoint, Midpoint to Cedar Hill, Midpoint to Borah, Borah to Populus, Cedar Hill to Populus; and Segment D comprised by the following sub-segments: Populus to Bridger, Bridger to Aeolus, and Aeolus to Windstar.

³ By developments, Commission Staff means any federal, state, and local permitting, regulatory, and other events.

⁴ Commission Staff Data Request No. 65, Docket UE 316.

Assessment (“EA”) to reconsider its January 19, 2017, decision. The primary purpose of the EA is to solicit public comments and identify issues associated with such reconsideration, including addressing the rights-of-way needed to cross BLM lands outside of the NCA and the potential amendment of several Resource Management Plans and Management Framework Plans in the project area.

On November 3, 2017, the BLM issued its draft EA for public review and comment. On January 5, 2018, the BLM issued its final EA along with a Finding of No New Significant Impact (“FONNSI”), beginning a 30-day period for protesting the proposed Resource Management Plan amendments. The significance of the FONNSI is that BLM concluded it does not need to complete an additional or supplemental Environmental Impact Statement before making a decision on Segments 8 and 9.

3rd Quarter 2019 Project Developments

There were no notable Gateway West project developments in the 3rd quarter of 2019.

Boardman to Hemingway

The Companies and the Bonneville Power Administration (“BPA”) jointly propose to design, construct, operate, and maintain a new, approximately 300-mile-long, 500-kilovolt, single-circuit electric transmission line from the proposed Longhorn Substation near Boardman, Oregon to the Hemingway Substation near Melba, Idaho. Idaho Power is leading the permitting process for the B2H project.

The permitting phase of B2H is subject to federal review and approval by BLM, the U.S. Forest Service (“USFS”), the Department of the Navy (“Navy”), the Army Corps of Engineers, and certain other federal agencies. BLM, as the lead federal agency on the National Environmental Policy Act review, issued its final Environmental Impact Statement for the project in November 2016.

For the state of Oregon permitting process, electronic copies of the amended preliminary application were submitted to the Oregon Department of Energy (“ODOE”) and other reviewing agencies on June 29, 2017, marking a major milestone in the Oregon permitting process. Required hard copies of the approximately 17,000-page application were delivered on July 19, 2017.

On November 17, 2017, the BLM released its ROD for the B2H project, authorizing the BLM to grant a right-of-way to Idaho Power for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the B2H project on BLM-administered land.

On May 23, 2018, the Commission issued Order No. 18-176 in Docket No. LC 68 that specifically acknowledged Idaho Power’s 2017 Integrated Resource Plan’s action items to conduct ongoing permitting, planning studies, and regulatory filings for the B2H transmission line, as well as to conduct preliminary construction activities, acquire long-lead materials, and construct the B2H project.

3rd Quarter 2019 Project Developments

The Navy issued their ROD on September 26, 2019, for 7.1 miles of the project on the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility near Boardman, Oregon. With the Navy’s permit secured, the B2H project has secured all federal permits. The Navy expects to issue an easement in the first quarter of 2020.

With respect to the Oregon permitting process, on May 22, 2019, ODOE issued the Draft Proposed Order (“DPO”) for B2H. In the DPO, ODOE recommends the Energy Facility Siting Council issue a site certificate for construction in Oregon. Public hearings on the DPO were held the last two weeks of June 2019. Public and reviewing agency comments on the DPO were due on August 22nd and Idaho Power continues to prepare responses to the comments which are due on November 7, 2019. Idaho Power also continues to meet with reviewing agencies and other stakeholders to facilitate the ODOE application process.

Approval of a Geotechnical Plan of Development (“POD”) and a Notice to Proceed from the BLM are required prior to taking core samples along the project route to inform the final design of the project. In the fall of 2018, Idaho Power submitted a draft Geotechnical POD to the BLM for review and approval. The draft POD was out for agency review in the second quarter of 2019 and Idaho Power has incorporated comments into the POD and resubmitted the document to the BLM. Idaho Power expects to finalize the Geotechnical POD in the next few months and anticipates the BLM will issue a Notice to Proceed in late 2019 or early 2020. Geotechnical sub-surface activities are expected to start in 2020.

Idaho Power has also continued to meet with landowners to micro-site the project route and prepare for an ODOE site certificate amendment in the future.