

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
OF OREGON**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF IDAHO POWER COMPANY'S, PETITION FOR CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY.</b>	<b>Docket: PCN 5  Opening Testimony  Wendy King</b>
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**Date: February 1, 2023**

**Wendy King, Pending Intervenor**

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To the authority of Oregon's PUC I would like to provide personal testimony of the impact a wildfire can impose on a community, regional and state area.

If IPC is able to admit to the possibility of wildfire ignited by their transmission line:

*“While uncommon, the operational risk of the proposed facility igniting a wildfire may be caused by overgrown vegetation contraction the transmission line, a tree falling on the transmission line, or from equipment failure”*

Then IPC is choosing to ignore the devastation it creates.

I have personally experienced the tragedy of a wildfire that occurred September 7, 2020. My husband and I managed the clubhouse and grill at Tokatee Golf Club near Rainbow, Oregon. We live less than a mile from the ignition point of The Holiday Farm Fire, which is believed to have been ignited from a powerline. Regardless of how it started, the flame burned 173,393 acres (271 square miles) because the winds of +50mph fanned its intensity and spread. In the days that followed the wind receded, but fire had taken hold and continued to burn the tinder dry fuels of the landscape.

The entire town of Blue River, OR was burned beyond salvage. The town lost all electrical infrastructure, water supply, internet capability, and roads. This recovery of basic systems took months. At my home, cellular service is currently worse than before the fire.

Of the nine hundred and eleven buildings lost to the fire, 150 of those were homes. There were 2,500 displaced residents. My family was among many that were successfully evacuated with very little time (by cell phone we received a level 3 evacuation notice with no time to gather anything beyond pets and some clothing). The terror in this was that the last thread of communication we use in our daily lives was about to be cut off by the fire burning the cell tower. Other sources of information had been cut off earlier in a power outage due to the wind-broken power, telephone & cable lines. The escape to safety was harrowing with the uncertainty of swaying trees along the road to the stability of power poles being pelted by the gusts of wind. Simply getting into my car was a lesson in efficiency.

Many people lost their homes, including employees of the golf course. The golf course, clubhouse and our home were spared, however we were not able to open again until a month later due to road closures, broken communication and data services. The seasonal nature of our business left us little time to recover, let alone hire people back who had lost their homes. Customers simply could not get to Tokatee due to either the road closures or poor air quality in an outdoor activity.

Smoke from the fire impacted thousands of people downwind in Eugene, Springfield and beyond. To the extent that those with respiratory challenges, young children, and older adults were told remain indoors to prevent health difficulties. For the first time, I experienced the super-fog this level of fire generated.

Several days after the ignition of the fire, the traditional winds returned to their normal pattern and began to move the fire backward from its initial path and while much fuel was exhausted in its path, the perimeter was primed to burn more of the valley. Because the threat of looting was reported, we found it difficult to gain access to home/work. Once we gained access the clean-up work began. Although we had been spared of the wildfire, our food service equipment required a tremendous amount of cleaning and restocking. All the food in our fridges and freezers was spoiled. While my economic loss was somewhat small, for many others it was considerable to the extent of unrecoverable.

It is now over 2 years since the fire and our community is still fighting for normalcy. Friends dealing with insurance claims, temporary housing, clean-up, county permitting, rebuilding, lack of contractors, skyrocketing building supply prices and ever-present theft on construction sites seems to be draining their resolve. I have a few friends that simply sold their property and moved away (which feels like a very big loss) speaks to the psychological effects and long-term emotional health.

While I am less familiar with the department of Agriculture, there is a plethora of consequences to soil, erosion, watersheds, drinking water, roads, recreation, botany, wildlife, and fisheries. The hazards to the public re-entering the

fire zone such as hazardous trees, soil contamination & erosion, and flooding are a few that require consideration for safety.

Due to the time restraints, I am anxious to lastly add that there are possibly numerous unforeseen long-term effects that have yet to be determined.

In conclusion, this experience is presented to provide insight to the potential consequences of a negligence of facts pertaining to fire prevention and safety for Oregonians and their properties. In particular, I am referencing the facts presented in the Intervenor Opening Testimony provided by Sam Myers dated 1-17-2023.

I hereby declare that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I understand that they are made for use as evidence in administrative and court proceedings and are subject to penalty of perjury.

Dated this 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2023.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Wendy King*

Wendy King