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From: Max Koltuv <mkoltuv@bluum.org>
Sent: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 8:47 AM
To: PUC PUC.FilingCenter * PUC
Subject: AR 626 – Certificate of Public Convince and Necessity

August 9, 2022

403 1st St
La Grande, OR 97850

I am expressing my profound concern over the Commission's plans to disregard Oregon's regulations governing eminent domain. This is a flagrant example of OPUC's regulatory capture by utilities. The Oregon Public Utility Commission, as a regulatory agency, is tasked with representing the public's good, not serving utilities' convenience. Utilities are claiming that following the law is "too slow." That is one purpose of the law, to prevent hasty decisions on important issues. Regulations, written and amended over time, are devised to assure a balance of power.

Idaho Power's B2H is one case of many. Why is an Oregon regulatory agency willing to hand over a 305 mile long corridor, 250' wide, to profit an Idaho utility? That corridor, once established, will be open to use by other utilities. Seventy percent of the proposed B2H transmission line ROW is on private land. Oregon residents are your constituency. Oregon laws are designed to protect us. Who are you serving?

What business would spend over \$200 million for an assured profit of \$80 million? Idaho Power would do that because the \$200 million will be charged to Oregon and Idaho rate payers, while the \$80 million profit will benefit Idaho Power administrators and share holders.

Corporate utilities are not public service agencies. They are for-profit, often mega-corporate entities. These monopolistic utilities make a guaranteed profit by constructing

projects, whether they are needed or not. For example, Idaho Power's plans for the B2H were first announced in 2007. I.P. insisted that completion of the line was "essential" by 2016. Now the same line is "essential" by 2026 – whether it is needed or not. In my opinion, OPUC erred in granting provisional approval for construction of the B2H in 2017. Commissioners were bamboozled by unsupported statistics and failed to consider the many new developments for producing and storing power. At that point, Idaho Power was still "considering" the "possibility" of solar energy. Pitiful.

OPUC Commissioners are familiar with Idaho Power's vague and misleading IRP's – submitted, withdrawn, frequently amended and always late. Utilities, accustomed to rubber stamps for their proposed projects, slap applications together, assuming they will not be adequately scrutinized. When they are, the process does slow down. This is not the public's fault. Private citizens should step in to avert disasters when regulatory agencies fail in due diligence.

Consider: Idaho Power's B2H Application for Site Certificate was so hastily contrived in 2017 that I.P. has spent more than five years attempting to justify their errors and omissions in planning the proposed routes for the B2H. Thirty serious separate issues remain in dispute. Would you allow a surgeon who mistakes your gall bladder for your liver to operate on you?

There is no valid reason to abandon or override existing regulations governing eminent domain. The regulations should be observed, not ignored. Wake up! For-profit utilities are green-washing their projects, while the green they're actually focusing on is shareholder profits. Be aware: Confidence men are always agreeable, often wear expensive suits, and commonly respond to requests for specific information with false promises and evasive generalities.

Sincerely,
Max Koltuv

cc: Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Jeff Merkley
Governor Kate Brown
Union County Commissioners