



**Wood River
Electrical Plan**

Planning for the Future



Community Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Wood River Inn
603 N Main Street, Hailey, ID

Thursday, May 24, 2007
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Purpose:

- To present the attributes of the feasible alternatives developed by the committee at meeting #4
- To clarify and refine the feasible alternatives as needed
- To screen the feasible alternatives to identify the top priority most feasible alternatives; Overall and for each section of the planning area

I. Attendance

Citizen Advisory Committee

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| • Len Harlig | • Jay Loesche |
| • Chuck Carnohan | • Nils Ribl |
| • Kurt Nelson | • Rod Kegley |
| • Tom Bergin | • Dave Ziegler |
| • Ron LeBlanc | • Tara Hagen |
| • Lloyd Betts | • Rob Struthers |
| • Tom Hellen | • Tom Blanchard |
| • Nick Purdy | • Chuck Turner |

Idaho Power Staff

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| • Kent McCarthy | • Dave Angell |
| • Dan Olmstead | • Marc Patterson |
| • Bryan Hobson | • Jim Bell |
| • Lynette Berriochoa | |

KMP Planning

- Mike Pepper, Facilitator
- Lynn Jaynes, Meeting Secretary

II. Welcome and Introductions

- Dan Olmstead, *Community Relations Representative*
- Kent McCarthy, *Project Leader*
- Mike Pepper, *Facilitator*
 - *Meeting purpose, agenda and format*
 - *Review planning steps / Where we are in the process*

Review CAC Meeting #4 – April 26, 2007 - Comments, additional questions, etc.

- No additional comments were provided at this time from the committee regarding the results of meeting #4
- Kent asked the committee for comments about the education portion of the planning process

- Committee Member Comment: If cost analysis options had come into the meeting discussions earlier in the process as part of the education components, this would have facilitated a more thorough discussion process. Perhaps it could have been brought up before alternative routes and options were first discussed. This could have included operation and maintenance costs.
 - Explained: So many components come into play with cost that it's really a mixed bag, depending on such things as terrain, vegetation, etc. Until possible routes are identified, costs cannot be anticipated with accuracy. Idaho Power is still in the process of coming up with more accurate cost projections.
- Committee Member Comment: Why don't we break the area from Ketchum north into underground costs and not worry about this option for the rest of the valley, since it is likely not feasible for the rest of the valley.
 - Explained: Idaho Power has categorized all proposed committee plans into three phases—south valley options, mid-valley options and north valley options. This fits well because the valley sections are separated by different transmission needs and economics. For future alternatives and routing discussions, it should be noted that each south valley option will work with each mid-valley option, which will also work with each north valley option, giving greater flexibility of choice for the total solutions.
- Committee Member Comment: I would have liked to have had more construction technique information (before and after pictures) earlier in the discussion process.
 - Idaho Power representatives explained that the education component for this process was distilled somewhat to try and condense the timeframe. This came at some cost to the committee and Idaho Power is still evaluating that decision to see if it was beneficial to the overall process or not.
- **Committee Member Request for Additional Information:**
 - **Above / below ground actual cost comparisons; including operation and maintenance, right of way, etc.**
 - **Idaho Power staff has been attempting to get operation and maintenance information for underground transmission. This type of information typically comes from both the cable manufacturer and other utilities. The problem is maintenance practices for underground transmission vary greatly from utility to utility. In most cases, the maintenance is quite conservative which leads to high maintenance costs. From most indications we've received thus far, the maintenance costs for both underground and overhead transmission are fairly equivalent.**
 - **Construction techniques; before and after (request needs more clarification and is in progress)**

Review Updated Goals – based on committee input at meeting #4

- Committee Member Comment: I recently used our committee “goals” model and explained what the committee was about in this process to community peers. This positively facilitated a community discussion to allay fears about the process.

III. Present / Discuss Attributes of Feasible Alternatives (Kent and Bryan)

Bryan and Kent outlined the basic attributes of each of the committee's alternatives. Bryan noted he had made minor adjustments in the alternatives so that they were sound from a technical standpoint. He also noted that the committee should realize that all south section alternatives will work with all mid section alternatives, which will all work with all north section alternatives.

Group A- Alternative 1 South Discussion:

- Committee Member Comment: I presented these routing plans at a recent staff meeting and the question arose as to who would bear the cost of burying the line if the BLM granted a right of way only with the stipulation that the line was buried and, in fact, would not consent to issue a permit if the line was not buried.

- Answer: The line would likely not be built in that location without an outside funding source to pay for the difference between UG and OH.
- Committee Member Question: Has the generation of hydroelectric power climaxed?
 - Yes.
- Committee Member Question: If additional power has to be generated, why couldn't we put a gas generating plant at Ohio Gulch so that transmission lines wouldn't have to be built?
 - One disadvantage to this option is that there isn't a gas line sufficient to bring in the gas, so either electrical lines have to be installed or gas lines have to be installed. Natural gas is used in generators now and efficiency is decreased at higher elevations by up to 15-20%. Another issue affecting this option is the availability of a natural gas supply and the volatility of gas prices. The combustion turbine in Mountain Home is costing \$60 million just for construction of the facility and does not include distribution costs. Generating power from natural gas is also not cost effective for year-round production. Note that transmission lines would still need to be built to deliver power north of a gas generator at Ohio Gulch and to connect as needed to other transmission infrastructure.
- Committee Member Comment: What about other options for generating power, like wind?
 - *Answer: Idaho Power representatives felt that the PUC would not approve a gas generator for the valley because of efficiency issues.*
- Committee Member Discussion: The committee requested that the following alternatives and related issues be outlined in the final report to illustrate that these options had been discussed and why they had not been recommended. This should help address questions from the public and to show that these options had been considered.
 - Report Documentation:
 - Alternative Power Generation: This issue of alternative power generating should be addressed at some point in the committee outcome report so that residents will know the issue was addressed as an alternative but was not considered as a primary solution to the energy needs of the valley. The reasons for not further investigating alternative energy need to be enumerated so that residents understand the problems they present.
 - Include general description of energy alternatives considered such as wind, solar, etc., along with their pros and cons and why they were not recommended by the committee as part of the solution. Note that for any of these sources, transmission and distribution lines would still be needed.
 - Generator (in Ohio Gulch) Alternative Evaluation: Further discussion concluded that bullet points would be developed for the final committee report outlining the decision points for not putting in a generator for the valley. This information would provide background for the public discussion of the committee's recommendation and so that it would not be seen as an unanswered question. These bullet points could include the following items
 - History: History narrative pertaining to the time the valley had this type of generation, and reviewing the problems associated with it.
 - Cost and efficiency: Approximate construction cost and energy efficiency. Note that a gas generator would primarily be used in winter for peak loads, etc., not just for back up power.
 - Environmental Issues: Related air quality, noise impact and the infrastructure needs to support alternative energy.
 - Power redundancy: An alternative energy generator might not be considered redundant power, depending on the type of generation.
 - Use of methane gas: Residents of the valley might see methane gas as a feasible option and this should be addressed in the discussion points, as well. If this were possible, the methane would be generated south of the area nearer to the dairies and then transmitted north. Water availability might affect cow populations, and this makes the methane option weaker and less dependable. Note that additional infrastructure such as gas lines from the source to the generator, etc. would still be required to support a methane gas system.
 - Power needs: This type of energy generation is not adequate to supply the needs of the valley.

- Committee Members were reminded that regardless of the source of power generation, the issue of redundant power to the north end of the valley still needed to be addressed and transmission lines would still need to be developed.

Group A- Alternative 2 (south):

- Committee Member Question: If a transmission line was built adjacent to an existing transmission line (to replace the initial line), does the right of way need to be expanded?
 - In this scenario, an existing ROW must be expanded to a greater extent than if an existing line is just upgraded (although upgrading might also need some ROW expansion). Constructing a third transmission line along SH 75 from Midpoint helps relieve some of the ROW issues of the existing two lines, since the highway line can be built and power transferred to it as the old line is rebuilt; however, this requires obtaining a new ROW along SH 75.
- When power poles are placed along a highway are they put next to the road or back off the road some distance?
 - Idaho Power usually acquires its own ROW instead of using the highway ROW. This is beneficial when highways expand so that poles generally do not have to be moved.

Group A- Alternative 3 (north):

- No Comments:

Group A- Alternate 4 (north):

- No Comments.

Group B- Alternate 1:

- Committee Member Question: How long would it take to build the lines from Midpoint to Timmerman, considering construction only?
 - Less than a year.
- Committee Member Question: Does the PUC regulate pole size or type, such as a single pole versus an H-frame structure?
 - The PUC does not usually dictate this. One of the issues taken into consideration when deciding on which structures to use is distance. If H-frames are used, there are generally fewer poles needed, as these allow for greater spans. Single poles over the same span would have to be heavier (more expensive) and would have to be closer to each other. The H-frames have more visual impact and have more ROW issues and the PUC does want to keep the public-at-large happy; However, if a line was proposed to be built through a desert area with single poles, for instance, the PUC would probably not approve that.
- Committee Member Request for Additional Visual Models:
 - 230 kV single pole south of Timmerman on the existing route with single circuit distribution underbuild
 - The same visual, but with a 138 kV line from a northbound perspective.

Group C- Alternative 1:

- Committee Member Comment: The BLM has concerns about bringing a line from Picabo east along Picabo Desert Road, but if the line were brought over from a point further south, perhaps closer to the old Burma Road, then the ROW wouldn't be as much of a problem. This would bring the Timmerman substation closer to the old Burma Road and require double circuiting from Richfield north to Silver. The BLM's issues and concerns for this area primarily involve wildlife (i.e. pygmy rabbits, raptor perches and sage grouse).
 - Committee Discussion on this issue: ***This alternative route will be considered option C2 (Burma Road option) and will be considered basically the same as option C1 regarding cost (and evaluated***

as one alternative). This alternative will move the switching station south to Burma Road; the transmission line would run east along the Burma Road to the Midpoint/Silver Line and include double circuits north from the new intersection point.

- Committee Member Question: Do any of these options potentially create PUC grief?
 - The most expensive routes are going to have a problem obtaining PUC approval, even with the private funding available, because some of the more expensive plans are two or three times the cost of the less expensive plans.
- Committee Member Question: We are still not addressing ROW in any of the cost analyses; Will ROW issues be a killjoy to any of these plans? Why are we throwing out (*suggesting for consideration*) a smattering of plans at this point without knowing who and what the landowner issues are?
 - Landowner issues are always an unknown. If the committee says options “A”, “B” and “C” are approved as part of their recommended plan, but in the future we face snags with the BLM, Forest Service or private sector, then that particular plan will have to be abandoned. This committee will have to make its “best assessment” as to which plans will potentially have the fewest obstacles and prioritize the alternatives accordingly. In actuality, it will be years before Idaho Power knows where the real headaches (including ROW issues) exist.
- Committee Member Question: If the committee identifies plans with seemingly insurmountable obstacles (whether those are private issues, BLM issues or Forest issues), then why even present a plan with those options?
 - No plan will be free of headaches but the plans that come out of committee will be prioritized and it is hoped that some of them will avoid the biggest issues—although there are several unknowns that cannot be resolved at this planning phase. This is just the first step in the planning process. Idaho Power will probably store the committee’s preferred prioritized options for each section of the valley (south, mid-valley and north). When each section is finally addressed for construction the prioritized alternatives will be assessed for implementation. If the first priority does not work out, then Idaho Power can go to the next acceptable alternative, etc. This allows flexibility to the final plan. In reality, the final process will probably not be exactly like any one plan presented but will likely be a combination of the plans. Determining which options are the least objectionable is part of the evaluation process and is included in the committee’s goals.
- Committee Member Question: Do we have enough information about energy conservation or environment before prioritizing the plans?
 - Energy conservation has no bearing on the issues of redundant power or reliability. Environmental issues include wildlife and natural resources (which have been addressed somewhat in group discussion) and aesthetic value (which the group has tried to address during the entire planning process).
- Committee Member Comment: With no ROW data, the only thing that can be taken into consideration at this point is that if there are two lines constructed versus one, and then the ROW cost will be increased significantly.
- Committee Member Question: What is Idaho Power’s responsibility for environmental impact?
 - This depends on each county or land management entity when considering conditional use permits.
- Committee Member Comment: The BLM would not look at this as a piece-by-piece project, but would consider the overall plan instead of just a phased plan.
- Committee Member Question: Can we get a Forest Service opinion on the Burma alternative route option?
 - The Forest Service prefers to use existing ROWs instead of creating new ones. Visual impact is the major consideration. This applies no matter where the lines are placed.

IV. Screening Feasible Alternatives to Determine the List of Most Feasible Alternatives

- Introduction of screening process; matrix and cumulative scoring form
 - Mike explained the use of the screening matrix, relationship to the goals and scoring.
- Begin evaluation / scoring of each alternative
- Informal discussion among committee members and Idaho Power staff while screening and scoring alternatives

12:00 p.m. Lunch – catered on-site by Full Moon Catering

V. Screen Feasible Alternatives to Determine the List of Most Feasible Alternatives

- Score each feasible alternative compared to the goals, including the goals supporting bullet points
- DISCUSSION: At this point, energy conservation measures are not going to affect any one plan option differently than any other plan option; therefore, energy conservation will not be addressed as a prioritizing factor. It is estimated that energy conservation measures can affect new demand by 20%. For today's purposes, each plan's energy conservation value will be given the same median score of three. Communities or public entities in the future may be willing to support different levels of energy conservation, which would have to be applied at the time any of the alternatives are in design or construction and could mitigate the energy demands to be met with new infrastructure.
- DISCUSSION: Committee members worked to score and prioritize alternatives. After the allotted time available was exhausted, it was decided that instead of completing the screening and tallying the scores from committee members by the end of this meeting, each committee member was given the opportunity to take the score sheets home for further consideration and scoring. At the next meeting committee scores will be combined and entered into the excel spreadsheet to determine a prioritized list of alternatives for each section of the planning area. Committee discussion to consensus will follow the results of the scoring.
 - Note: Mike will resend the scoring matrix to each of the committee for them to fill out and return electronically or fax back to Idaho Power in advance of the next meeting. Committee members may also submit their completed matrixes at the next meeting – either at the beginning of the meeting or following additional discussion.

VI. Next Steps and Wrap up

- Next CAC meeting – Thursday, June 28 – 10:00 a.m. – Wood River Inn; Hailey
 - *Complete discussion on alternatives*
 - *Conclude scoring of alternatives, cumulative scoring totals and identification of priority order of alternatives based on scoring*
 - *Committee discussion to consensus for the prioritized alternative(s); Overall (for all three sections of the planning area) and individually for the south, mid and northern sections of the planning area. Present / final discussion on list of prioritized most feasible alternatives*
 - *Discuss / develop implementation strategy*
 - *Discuss implementation plan, committee role, steps, etc.*

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