

MINUTES

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 22, 2014

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Raybould, Vice Chairman Eskridge, Representative(s) Anderson(1), Hartgen, Vander Woude, DeMordaunt, Nielsen, Thompson, Anderson(31), Anderst, Mendive, Monks, Morse, Trujillo, Smith, Rusche, Woodings

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Anderson(1)

GUESTS: Doug Dockter, Idaho Power; Will Hart, ICUA; Scott Pugrud, OER; Dave Johnston, OER; Sean Ellis, Capital Press; Lynette Berriochoa, Idaho Power; Rich Hahn, Idaho Power; John J. Williams, BPA; Kristyn Kirschenman, Risch-Pisca; Parker Papworth, Lobby Idaho; Mitch Colburn, Idaho Power; Jared Ellsworth, Idaho Power; Joan Cloonan, Board of Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals; Jim Lowe, Food Producers; Jerry Brady; Colby Cameron, Sullivan and Reberger; Elli Brown, Veritas Advisors; Elizabeth Criner, Veritas Advisors; Neil Colwell, Auista Corp; Russell Westerberg, RMP

Chairman Raybould called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

RS 22376: **Robert Hales** from the Idaho Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals Board, presented **RS 22376** to the committee. He stated that there is variation in licensing and that this bill equalizes the treatment of all the licensees they issue.

MOTION: **Rep. Morse** made a motion to introduce **RS 22376. Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 22579: **Alex LeBeau**, President of the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry, presented **RS 22579** to the committee. He stated that the intent of this legislation is to give Idaho primacy over the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Program (NPDES). He gave an overview of the roll out of the new program and what each stage would look like. He stated that there is other legislation that will be coming to deal with other aspects of the NPDES program like confidentiality and the appeals process.

MOTION: **Rep. Morse** made a motion to introduce **RS 22579** and allow for the sponsor to make corrections to the Fiscal Note.

In response to questions regarding whether or not federal money would be available to assist with the program, **Mr. LeBeau** stated that at first that aid would likely come in the form of professional expertise and could eventually come in the form of grants and other funds.

In response to a question regarding the rules that will be required for this program, **Mr. LeBeau** stated that there is still federal regulation like the Clean Water Act that must be met but this program is much more flexible.

With regard to a question about permittees and how many fall in the public and private sectors, **Mr. LeBeau** stated that about half of the permittees are municipalities and they tend to be in favor of moving forward with the NPDES program.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by voice vote.**

John Chatburn, Director of the Idaho Office of Energy Resources, introduced **Jackie Flowers**, **Mitch Colburn**, and **Jared Ellsworth** to the committee for their presentation on electrical transmission in Idaho. He also pointed out the additional information that was distributed to the Representatives about the topics that would be discussed. He also made the committee aware of the others who were present to answer questions. They were **Doug Dockter** and **Rich Hahn** from Idaho Power, **Neil Colwell** from Avista, **Russ Westerberg** from Rocky Mountain Power Co., and **John Williams** from Bonneville Power Administration.

Jackie Flowers, Chair of the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance, gave an overview of the Alliance and an update on energy in Idaho. This included efforts to raise the Energy IQ in Idaho and the report from the Transmission Taskforce.

In response to a question regarding the Energy IQ initiative and the intent to get a breakdown of individual usage of power from the various sources monthly bills, **Ms. Flowers** stated they do an annual report where they try and share that information with their clients. She mentioned that an obstacle to achieving this goal is the unique billing format of various companies, so each company has to do the reporting differently.

Mitch Colburn and **Jared Ellsworth** from Idaho Power, gave a presentation about the electrical system in Idaho and around the North West. They began with an overview of the electrical transmission systems across the country and the governing authorities. These authorities include the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), and the Western Electric Coordinating Council (WECC). They discussed the various types of transmission lines, their voltage, and the service capacity. They explained to the members of the committee the process of getting electricity from the generation point to its destination in homes/businesses. Lastly, they detailed the constraints and challenges that Idaho faces with regard to electrical transmission. They stated that Idaho only has about 96 MW of additional capacity space (mostly located in Eastern Idaho) left to bring electricity into the state. This issue, they said, is of the biggest concern during peak usage times when they are limited by the amount of power they can provide.

In response to a question regarding other technological solutions besides building new lines, **Mr. Ellsworth** stated that there may be some other options to help increase the capacity but not during the times when it is needed most, like during peak usage times.

In response to concerns about an electromagnetic pulse and its impact on the system, **Mr. Ellsworth** stated that they had looked at it, but stated that in Idaho our newer lines have series capacitors that block the flow of that particular kind of energy put out in those instances so they cannot disrupt the system. He stated that in the East most lines do not have those capacitors.

In response to questions regarding the power outage in Eastern Idaho, **Russ Westerberg** from Rocky Mountain Power Company, stated that it was caused by a variety of factors that compounded to create the outage. He stated that there was a cold snap and that some of the lines failed, that WECC had ordered them to shed some load, and they were doing some planned maintenance on one part of the line so when all those things combine it led to the large outage.

When asked about the status of the Gateway Project, **Mr. Chatburn** stated that they had most of their proposal approved but that two segments are under reconsideration by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Originally, they had an agreement with the Birds of Prey refuge but that was not approved by the BLM. They are still looking at this and alternate routes and will hopefully have some kind of decision in the next 30-60 days. When asked why the BLM ignored the local agreement, Mr. Chatburn said that they determined there was not enough information to prove the benefit to the raptors. However, they are allowing for additional information to be brought and re-look at this route as part of their further determination.

In response to a question regarding the cost of transmission, **Mr. Hahn** from Idaho Power stated that when they do a charge it is a bundled rate that includes a variety of factors like transmission, distribution, administrative costs etc. When asked if there was any effort to break out the costs not related to the actual production, Mr. Hahn said usually that bundled rate is split into a fixed cost.

When asked for an update on the Hell's Canyon Complex permit, **Mr. Hahn** stated that they are still waiting on the EPA to make a determination about temperature standards so their license can be approved. He stated that it has been an extremely long process.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Representative Raybould
Chair

Kaela Becklund
Secretary