



Blaine County, Idaho  
Local Emergency Planning Committee  

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Working together for a safer community

November 6, 2015

Mayor and Council, City of Ketchum  
Mayor and Council, City of Sun Valley  
Commissioners, Blaine County



Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen:

Idaho Power is applying for permits to build a redundant transmission line from the Wood River Substation north of Hailey to the North Valley. The primary purpose of this second line is to ensure that there is electricity for the residents, visitors, and businesses of the North Valley in the event of a failure of the current single line, or the new line, as a result of an interruption of power to either line for any reason.

On behalf of the members of the Blaine County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), I am writing to express our organization's full support for the need of a redundant power transmission line between Hailey and Ketchum/Sun Valley. The LEPC has been following the discussions and progress on the development of this second line for a number of years and has been fully supportive of it. We consider the lack of redundant power in the North Valley to be one of the significant health and safety hazards to be mitigated in Blaine County and as such it is identified in our adopted *Blaine County All Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

As you begin the permit application process, we feel it is important for you to know that the emergency response professionals in Blaine County recognize that the need for this redundant transmission line is not just a North Valley issue, but that it affects all of Blaine County. Should there be a sustained power outage in the North Valley, the Ketchum and Sun Valley emergency responders will need to rely on assistance from fellow responders from Hailey, Bellevue, Wood River and the County. A sustained outage, particularly in the winter, will also cause strains on the economy of the rest of the County where much of the workforce lives and commutes to jobs in the resort community, as well as the impact on the many members of the emergency response community who are either part-time employees or volunteers.

It will be us, the emergency responders, who will carry the biggest brunt of the work to take care of the significant problems caused by a sustained power outage in the North Valley should the single 53 year old line fail. Please know that we will do everything we can to help in the event of a line failure; however, it is also our obligation to try to mitigate potential significant hazards before they happen.



The LEPC shares with many of the forward-thinking organizations in Blaine County a desire to utilize as many alternative energy resources as possible to reduce the effects of climate change. To the extent that such alternative resources will one day in the future be adequate to provide the necessary energy to carry the entire electrical load for the North Valley, the LEPC will be comfortable that it can carry out its responsibility to provide for the safety and health of the Valley's residents and visitors. However, even alternative energy, when it finally becomes economical and efficient enough to provide the substantial energy loads necessary to this purpose, has to be carried by transmission and distribution lines. The redundant line is an essential public safety need now; and it will be important in the long-term when renewable technology and energy storage have been able to replace energy generated from coal or natural gas facilities.

With limited funding and resources for emergency services, and a mandate for enhancing the safety and economic viability of the communities we serve, the LEPC believes it is a sound long-term opportunity to strengthen the energy infrastructure of the area by permitting this redundant line between Hailey and Ketchum/Sun Valley. Thank you.

The LEPC is available if you'd like more information.

Sincerely,



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