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From: Marie Hall <mariekhall@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2015 6:04 PM
To: comment@boardmantohemingway.com
Subject: 4667: Comments for Consideration
Attachments: B2H Comments.docx; B2H Comments.pages.zip

Attached are my comments regarding the proposed transmission line.

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B2H Transmission Line
Comments for consideration
March 14, 2015

Please reconsider the proposed route of the B2H transmission line and more importantly, reconsider the underlying assumptions of its need. The proposed route crosses valuable agricultural land, scenic areas, and critical habitat for sage grouse, a threatened species, requiring more thorough vetting of assumptions, alternative investments, and cost:benefit analyses.

Rather than building the “easy, traditional” fix of another power line, consider investment in conservation throughout Idaho Power’s service area and the northwest, along with small scale power generation at points of usage, to provide peak electrical needs and to balance regional electrical generation and usage.

Conservation measures may include insulation and window replacement programs, solar panel installations on businesses, public and private buildings and homes, and other small-scale power generation from wind and solar — in the areas needing to gain power to meet peak demand and equalize electrical loads.

Calculation of efficiency and long-term investment costs must include opportunity costs of power line construction and removal of affected land from present agricultural, sage grouse and other species habitat, and negative impacts on scenic values affecting the livability and tourism of eastern Oregon. Specifically, highly sensitive areas include the sage grouse habitat in Baker County, the lands bordering the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Oregon Trail Interpretive Center and historical Oregon Trail, and scenic values from the Elkhorn Mountains across the Baker (Powder River) Valley.

I urge Idaho Power to respond to residents’ concerns by reconsidering construction of the B2H power line and to think more creatively how to meet the demand for electricity with the least risk to our environment and best economic return.