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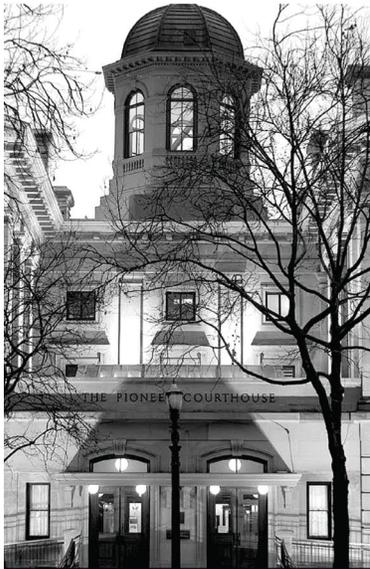
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**THE 2021 NORTHWEST POWER PLAN**

**HOSTED BY MONTANA**

**VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING**

**HELD ON  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021  
5:04 P.M.**



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**5:04 P.M.**

**MR. MADRON:** -- in general and I will communicate via email with them. And then down at the bottom you see there's an already testified area. After you have testified, I have a little behind the scenes way to pop your name down here to this particular spot.

So, with that in place, Member Grob, I'll turn things over to you for the formal opening. Thank you for your patience.

**CHAIR GROB:** Well, thank you, Chad. And good afternoon and welcome everyone. I'd like to call this public hearing to order. This public hearing is being held virtually doing to our ongoing pandemic. My name is Doug Grob and I will be chair.

**OPERATOR:** This conference will now be recorded.

**CHAIR GROB:** I -- my councilmember from the state of Montana appointed by Governor Gianforte

1 in 2021. I will be co-chairing this meeting with my  
2 fellow councilmember from Montana, Mr. Mike Milburn.

3 I'd like to welcome you to today's public  
4 hearing on the Council Draft 2021 Power Plan.

5 Today's hearing is being held by  
6 GoToMeeting and by telephone conference line, both.

7 Anyone wishing to provide testimony should  
8 sign up on the council's website for this Montana  
9 hearing. You may sign up to provide testimony at  
10 any time during the hearing, but, hopefully and  
11 preferably, you can sign up earlier.

12 Due to the virtual nature of this meeting  
13 and Montana being the whole state, Montanans will be  
14 given priority to speak throughout the meeting.

15 I'm also joined by fellow councilmembers  
16 from Oregon, Mr. Richard Devlin who is the chair.  
17 From Washington, Mr. Pat Oshie who is the power  
18 chair, Mr. Mike Milburn I introduced earlier as my  
19 fellow Montana councilmember as well as Mr. Guy  
20 Norman from Washington State, and Mr. Jeff Allen,  
21 Idaho State Councilman.

22 I would like to now invite those  
23 councilmembers to say a few words. And I'll start  
24 with Councilmember Milburn of Montana.

25 Mike, do you have something you'd like to

1 add or say?

2 **CO-CHAIR MILBURN:** I'll just -- I'll just  
3 -- I'll just say thank you, all, welcome to Montana.  
4 And thank you for taking the time to participate in  
5 this meeting. Looking forward to your comments.  
6 Thanks, Doug.

7 **CHAIR GROB:** Okay, then, we're going to  
8 Chair Devlin and go through the line here. Mr.  
9 Devlin, would you like to say something?

10 **MR. DEVLIN:** Councilmember Grob, for the  
11 sake of brevity, I'm -- I'm here to listen to the  
12 testimony. This is our first public hearing on the  
13 draft plan and I'm expecting this -- this period to  
14 go well. You know, we might have a variety of  
15 testimony, but I prefer to see -- to hear the  
16 testimony rather than to say anything additional.

17 **CHAIR GROB:** Thank you, Chair Devlin.  
18 Mr. Pat Oshie, our Power Chair, would you  
19 have anything you would like to say that --

20 **MR. OSHIE:** Thank you, Member Grob. I,  
21 like all of us, I think we're all interested in what  
22 you have to say. And we welcome you to -- to, you  
23 know, share your comments with all of us. And --  
24 and as we said earlier, we thank you for being here  
25 this evening and sharing your time.

1           **CHAIR GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Oshie.

2           Mr. Guy Norman, Washington, would you like  
3 to give a few words to us?

4           **MR. NORMAN:** Thank you, Member Grob. I  
5 just wish we were in person in the great state of  
6 Montana. But given our situation, it's the best we  
7 can do. And I just look forward to the testimony  
8 tonight. So thank you.

9           **CHAIR GROB:** Thank you, Guy Norman. I  
10 wish we were in person too. I really regret we're  
11 in this pandemic and have to do this virtually.

12           And not least, Mr. Jeff Allen of Idaho,  
13 would you like to greet?

14           **MR. ALLEN:** It's tough going last. Member  
15 Norman stole the idea. I really wish we were in Big  
16 Sky Country tonight. It make for a much better  
17 meeting, but I'm looking forward to this.

18           **CHAIR GROB:** Well, thank you, all and  
19 welcome. I'm glad you're all here. And I -- I  
20 certainly am thanking all of you who have signed up  
21 and getting ready to give testimony.

22           As the first order of business, I'll read  
23 a statement about the hearing for the record. Then  
24 I'll review today's public hearing procedures.

25           Under the Northwest Power Act, the

1 Northwest Power and Conservation Council is required  
2 to develop a Regional Electric Power Plan and review  
3 that plan every five years. The council is now  
4 engaged in its latest Power Plan review and  
5 revision.

6 And as part of this process, we've  
7 recently released the Draft Power Plan for public  
8 review and comment. The council is conducting this  
9 public hearing to receive oral comment on its Draft  
10 2021 Power Plan.

11 This virtual hearing and the testimony  
12 provided tonight will be recorded. The transcript  
13 of this virtual hearing will be circulated to all  
14 councilmembers and placed in the administrative  
15 record for the council plan. The council will hold  
16 several virtual hearings like this one over the next  
17 several weeks.

18 In addition, the council is also accepting  
19 written comments on the draft Power Plan through  
20 November 19th, 2021. All oral and written comments  
21 submitted on the draft Power Plan will be considered  
22 by the council as it makes its decision on the final  
23 Power Plan.

24 For more information on the Draft 2021  
25 Northwest Power Plan including the plan draft

1 itself, additional hearing dates as well as all  
2 supporting materials, please visit the council's  
3 website at [www.northwestcouncil.org](http://www.northwestcouncil.org). (sic) all  
4 lower case. I'll repeat that, [www.nwcouncil.org](http://www.nwcouncil.org).  
5 And council is c-o-u-n-c-i-l.

6 As a reminder, you may submit written  
7 comments by using the link on the webpage devoted to  
8 the Draft 2021 Power Plan or by submitted comments  
9 to [comments@nwcouncil.org](mailto:comments@nwcouncil.org). I repeat  
10 [comments@nwcouncil.org](mailto:comments@nwcouncil.org). Again, council is c-i-l on  
11 the end.

12 The council's code of conduct can be found  
13 on our website. And we expect all participants to  
14 abide by this code of conduct throughout today's  
15 hearing.

16 This hearing will run for two hours until  
17 7 p.m. Mountain Time, 6 p.m. Pacific Time.

18 As a reminder, anyone wishing to provide  
19 public testimony, please sign up on the council's  
20 website for the Montana hearing. Once you sign up,  
21 your name will appear on our list. We encourage you  
22 to sign up now if you would like to speak.

23 As this hearing is being hosted by Montana  
24 and would, if not for the pandemic, be live in  
25 person in Montana, residents of Montana will be

1 called to provide testimony first and comment from  
2 all -- people of all other states of the region will  
3 follow.

4 If a Montana resident arrives later in the  
5 hearing and signs up to speak, they will be moved to  
6 the front of the queue. Individuals will be able to  
7 track the order of the next five speakers on the  
8 GoToMeeting screen. After the first five speakers  
9 who have signed up via the website have finished, we  
10 will allow Montanans who have dialed in by phone to  
11 provide testimony and continue to go back and forth  
12 between the webinar and the phone until all Montana  
13 residents wishing to speak have spoke either by  
14 Webinar or phone.

15 Depending on the numbers of persons signed  
16 up to testimony, we may need to establish time  
17 limits on testimony, but we hope that won't be  
18 necessary.

19 And I'm just here to say that Mr. Jim Yost  
20 has joined us from Idaho too.

21 Jim, do you have anything you would like  
22 to add?

23 Okay. Thank you.

24 Now, I would like to have staff provide a  
25 brief overview of the Draft 2021 Northwest Power

1 Plan. I would like to invite Ben Kujala, the  
2 Council's Power Division director to begin his  
3 presentation.

4 Ben, are you with us?

5 **MR. KUJALA:** I am. Thank you, Member  
6 Grob.

7 I would like to take the people who are at  
8 this hearing through a little bit of an overview of  
9 the 2021 Northwest Power Plan. This is our first  
10 one, so bear with me. This is the first time I've  
11 gone through this presentation. But we're going to  
12 try to keep it very high level. The interest is to  
13 give you a general sense of what we have done and  
14 give you a little bit of a context for the council  
15 and our power planning process.

16 So, just to start out with. Why do we do  
17 regional power planning? The -- the whole reason  
18 why we're here, the reason why we are going through  
19 this exercise is that mistakes in power planning  
20 have cost the region billions of dollars or  
21 thousands of dollars for the average region consumer  
22 of electricity.

23 And those mistakes have happened in  
24 different manners throughout time. Whether it's  
25 through the height of Thermal Power Project,

1 Washington Public Power Supply Service or the  
2 California energy crisis or Westcoast energy crisis,  
3 there are things that have caused us to have to  
4 spend extra money on supporting our system. And  
5 those are errors that could have been prevented with  
6 planning or errors in planning that brought us to a  
7 point where we've had mistakes that have costs the  
8 consumers in our region money.

9           The other thing that we want to make sure  
10 that we're careful about is the Bonneville Power  
11 administration has significant influence on what the  
12 power -- the citizens of the region pay for power.  
13 And so the accounts was tied to Bonneville. But  
14 Bonneville has an impact on -- on the price of  
15 power, whether it's through the wholesale rates to  
16 preference customers or the utilities that take  
17 power from Bonneville or whether it's through  
18 residential exchange, customers of private or  
19 investor-owned utilities.

20           So, this is a substantial impact on our  
21 region, the cost of power. And the power plan  
22 really gives the states a voice in the cost  
23 Bonneville incurs for new resources and really  
24 provides independent analysis and forecasts that's  
25 vetted by a broad range of interest in a -- in a

1 very public process. And that's why we're here and  
2 taking public comment.

3 So, under the Northwest Power Act, the  
4 council is to prepare, adopt, and promptly transmit  
5 to the administrator a Regional Conservation  
6 Electric Power Plan. And that plan is to ensure  
7 that we have an adequate efficient, economical, and  
8 reliable regional power system over the next 20  
9 years.

10 It's to one of those resource acquisition  
11 decisions are to be consistent with the plan. And  
12 it really provides an independent reference for  
13 regional utilities regulatory commissions and  
14 policymakers.

15 And we must review this power plan and not  
16 less frequently than once every five years. And it  
17 may be amended from time to time. So we are in the  
18 process of doing the power plan at the moment. And  
19 that's what this -- this hearing is about as it  
20 says here it's a highly public process. And this is  
21 part of our -- our process, so thank you for being  
22 here.

23 In this power plan, we are seeing things  
24 that are very different from maybe what we've had in  
25 previous power plans. And -- and this is just true

1 in general for the energy industry. Things have  
2 been changing quite substantially over the last few  
3 years.

4 One, there's been a lot of different clean  
5 policy decarbonization goals that have happened  
6 across the entire west that have been adopted by  
7 different states, utilities or municipalities. We  
8 certainly have been watching very closely and  
9 looking at the many coal units that are retiring  
10 throughout the entire western region. And there's  
11 also been a pretty substantial decline in the cost  
12 of solar PD and wind resource options. So, we've  
13 seen technology is used to generating power really  
14 changing in how much they cost.

15 We do see an increasing frequent --  
16 increasingly frequent aggregate market prices at  
17 intervals driven by different renewable resources in  
18 our markets. And we anticipate that that's going to  
19 continue going ahead.

20 So, just to give a little bit of context  
21 in our region where does electricity come from, the  
22 dominant resource in our region is hydro. The rest  
23 of our system is supported by a variety of  
24 resources. Although you see we have quite a  
25 substantial amount of power generated by, both, coal

1 and natural gas resources, the most common renewable  
2 resource in our region is wind or the most common  
3 sort of renewable RPS resource. Of course, hydro  
4 being a renewable resource as well. And then  
5 there's other resources that make up the rest of our  
6 power supply.

7 We also have a long history of doing a lot  
8 of energy efficiency in this region. And at this  
9 point, we have saved over 72,000 average megawatts  
10 from energy efficiency, a huge amount of power that  
11 does not have to be generated by central plants  
12 because of the efforts that this region has gone  
13 through to save energy rather than having to build  
14 and construct new resources.

15 So, you can see that that translates into  
16 us looking at the forecast for how much energy we  
17 need to use going forward. And these graphs show  
18 you a little bit of the history. So you can see  
19 that the region at one point had used more  
20 electricity. And then the energy crisis hit in 2001  
21 and we had quite a substantial drop in the amount of  
22 electricity that we use.

23 This power plan we're forecasting that at  
24 least we expect us to go back up above the levels of  
25 energy that we used prior to the energy crisis. And

1 that is -- has a range of uncertainty that we test  
2 throughout power planning. So we look at a high  
3 load growth or, sorry, a high demand for  
4 electricity, a low demand for electricity, and kind  
5 of a next spike to demand for electricity and look  
6 at that whole range in how we plan and the resources  
7 and sort of strategies that we adopt.

8 In our load forecast, we have incorporated  
9 climate change to make sure that we're looking  
10 forward at what the sort of models are telling us  
11 are likely to happen in terms of weather and  
12 uncertainty.

13 Now, in general, we've seen in the climate  
14 change records that we've taken from the  
15 meteorological studies that have been done is that  
16 you would expect to have a little bit lower sort of  
17 electric load in the winter because we will see a  
18 little bit more moderate temperature. Although, the  
19 climate change records do show some very extreme  
20 temperatures that are actually beyond what we've  
21 historically experienced. So it has a wide range of  
22 temperatures in it. But on average, we do see that  
23 it comes to be a little bit more mild in the winters  
24 and a little more hot in the summers. And that's  
25 reflected in the lows that we're projecting going

1 forward, increasing demand in the summer and, on an  
2 expected basis at least, decreasing it slightly in  
3 the winter.

4 So we take all of this sort of landscape  
5 of what our existing power system is of what we  
6 expect the demand for electricity to be going  
7 forward and kind of look at that and come up with a  
8 strategy that we think is robust to help us maintain  
9 an adequate economic efficient reliable power system  
10 going forward.

11 And, really to be clear, this is  
12 augmenting the existing systems in coordination with  
13 our existing system which has our hydropower system,  
14 energy efficiency achievements that existing thermal  
15 heat that is out there, renewable resources that  
16 we've already installed in this, and our access to  
17 markets outside of our region. All of that goes  
18 together and then it's augmented by the between 750  
19 and 1,000 average megawatts of energy efficiency at  
20 least 3,500 megawatts of renewable resources and,  
21 basically, low-cost frequently deployable demand  
22 response where it is available and -- and able to be  
23 brought there.

24 And we see that this is a strategy that  
25 will take us forward in a way to make sure that we

1 maintain the power system as required under the  
2 Power Act.

3           With this, we take a look at the  
4 emissions, something that often comes up. And we do  
5 see there a lot of things coming down the road that  
6 are going to decrease commissions in the power  
7 sector. And there are sort of expected look, we  
8 see that the power sector will go down substantially  
9 in the carbon emissions. But we do see that under  
10 our base forecast where we have accounted for how  
11 many electric (audio disruption) we expect to come  
12 into the system that there will still compute to an  
13 increase in admissions from transportation and that  
14 the overall admissions in the region will stay above  
15 1990 levels by 2041 unless there is a -- a differ  
16 sort of action taken.

17           So under kind of our expected case, we see  
18 emissions the same. And that's not in the electric  
19 sector. The electric sector has a substantial  
20 reduction. But the region as a whole continues to  
21 have pretty steady emissions based on population  
22 growth, increase in transportation needs, et cetera.

23           We did a robust set of scenario analysis  
24 to really make sure that when we are looking at this  
25 strategy that we're putting forward, that we're

1 considering a lot of different potential impacts  
2 down the road. We want a system that is good,  
3 effective going forward through a lot of different  
4 circumstances, not just one different -- one  
5 circumstances in expected case.

6           So we looked at many different things and  
7 try to take a broad reach of information and  
8 perspective when we formulated the resource  
9 strategy. That included looking at reliability and  
10 how we interact with external markets. It looked at  
11 what would happen if we saw continued acceleration  
12 or retirements of core resources throughout the  
13 West. We looked at the impacts of robust energy  
14 efficiency and what would happen if you had more or  
15 less, your supply changed. And then we looked at  
16 the Bonneville portfolio just as a way to make sure  
17 that we understood the impacts of a lot of these  
18 different scenarios and the things that we're  
19 looking, the sort of landscape that we see in the  
20 electric sector on Bonneville because that's  
21 something that we have direct responsibility in our  
22 recommendations to Bonneville.

23           We also looked at same of the greenhouse  
24 gas regulations, the cost impacts there and the  
25 potential for decarbonization efforts taking the

1 electric sector in a different direction.

2           And so we -- we went through all these  
3 scenarios and looked over a broad range of things,  
4 but then we focus on kind of the near term. We know  
5 that we will be doing another power plan down the  
6 road. And so our resource strategy we feel is  
7 robust to get us through that near term, over a wide  
8 range of circumstances. And it's something that we  
9 will continue to monitor and kind of adapt going  
10 forward.

11           Of course, this is a very high-level  
12 overview of -- of really large amount of work. And  
13 so if you want to engage with the draft plan, here's  
14 a link that this presentation will be on the webpage  
15 for this hearing. So you'll be able to get back to  
16 it. There's a link for getting to our home page,  
17 for getting to the actual draft plan document and  
18 the many, many supporting materials that we have on  
19 the website to help people understand and explore  
20 the analyses that we did in formulating the resource  
21 strategy put forward in this plan.

22           And right now you're at a public hearing,  
23 but also there are different ways that we can get  
24 comment. And so we want to hear from you. There's  
25 a web form on our website where you could put that

1 comment in. You can send us an email and you hear  
2 this public hearing you can comment here as well.

3 So, at this point I would turn it back  
4 over to Team Member Grob. And I'm excited to hear  
5 what people have to bring as comment.

6 **MR. MADRON:** This is Chad. I'll just go  
7 ahead and bring up the list of presenters. Member  
8 Grob, there you go, you're unmuted.

9 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, thank you for the  
10 presentation, Ben. I wasn't too sure that you were  
11 actually over. I recognize there's a lot of new  
12 insights and some shifting of what has been in the  
13 past going into the future.

14 Now, we'll begin the hearing. We'll begin  
15 hearing from those who have signed up to testify.  
16 And as I said earlier, the first in line was a --  
17 please correct me if I mispronounce your name. And  
18 please spell your name and give your address to the  
19 -- so the court reporter can take that down, so we  
20 have it in the record of this legal meeting.

21 Now, go ahead, Mr. -- are you with us,  
22 Derek Woldstad, I believe.

23 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Yes, can you hear me?

24 **MR. MADRON:** Yes we can. Just to be  
25 clear, commenters may turn their cameras on while

1 they're giving comments. If you'd like to be on  
2 camera, that's fine, but it is not required. So  
3 turn your camera on if you'd like or you can just be  
4 audio only. It's up to you.

5 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Okay. I'll probably just  
6 stay audio only if that's all right.

7 **MR. MADRON:** It is indeed.

8 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Okay. My name is Derek  
9 Woldstad. My address is 111 Harbon Hill --

10 **ANGELA::** Derek --

11 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Yeah.

12 **ANGELA::** Sorry. You don't -- you don't  
13 need to provide your address.

14 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Oh, I'm sorry.

15 **MS. EDWINS:** (audio disruption) -- you're  
16 from the council. Sorry. No, you're -- you're  
17 totally fine. Just your name and if you could spell  
18 your name, that would be terrific.

19 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** Oh, yeah. My name is Derek  
20 Woldstad. It's D-e-r-e-k, last name is W-o-l-d-s-t-  
21 a-d.

22 **MR. MADRON:** Thank you.

23 **MR. WOLDSTAD:** All right. Okay. I'm here  
24 just to voice my support for what is -- has been  
25 going on for the past however long, I don't know,

1 several years. I live in a beautiful area in  
2 Kalispell. It's -- we rarely have power issues. I  
3 attribute that to hydropower. The Columbia River  
4 basin, the system, and also probably includes the  
5 Snake River dam system is highly efficient. It's  
6 low emissions. I believe it is the cheapest source  
7 of hydropower.

8           Biggest fears and concerns I would say  
9 it's for things to happen like that are happening in  
10 California. I don't know all the ins and outs  
11 exactly what are causing their brownouts, constantly  
12 having to turn power off and on. I know wildfires  
13 have something to do with that.

14           It's -- where we live and dealing with the  
15 power issues that California has to deal with, we're  
16 lucky enough to not have to deal with them. And I  
17 believe that hydro is -- is the way to go and to  
18 keep going. You hear about people talking about  
19 possibly ripping dams out and turning them out. And  
20 I just don't know where you go from there. How do  
21 you replace that?

22           And I know that solar and hydro or solar  
23 and wind are all the rage. But what do you when you  
24 have no wind, you have no solar? And I believe what  
25 happened in Texas last winter is a big tell to what

1 could happen.

2 We, in Montana, deal with temperatures  
3 ranging from, I mean, I saw 110 this summer and I  
4 believe last winter, 30, 35 below on the highline on  
5 any given day. So having a consistent power supply  
6 like hydro is really key to what we deal with in  
7 Montana with our extreme weather. You know, Idaho  
8 is also in there as well.

9 But, yeah, that's -- those are kind of my  
10 comments. Just don't want to see the major problems  
11 that happen in California and -- and in Texas which  
12 I don't know all the ins and outs in, but I believe  
13 they -- we're relying a little too much or too  
14 heavily on wind and solar when the system collapsed  
15 and they just didn't have, I don't know, other power  
16 sources to maintain the heavy load when they got  
17 extremely cold.

18 So, that's kind of my -- those are my two  
19 cents and that's what I had to say.

20 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, thank you, Mr.  
21 Woldstad. And I guess I was misinformed that you  
22 needed your address, so, everybody, please forgive  
23 me. And don't -- just spell your name and -- and  
24 correct us on, perhaps, the incorrect pronunciation  
25 or delivery of your name.

1 Next we'll hear from a Mr. Ben Fitch-  
2 Fleischmann of Northwestern Energy. Mr.  
3 Fleischmann.

4 **MR. FITCH-FLEISCHMANN:** Good evening. Can  
5 you hear me?

6 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** We can.

7 **MR. FITCH-FLEISCHMANN:** Hi. I'm Ben  
8 Fitch-Fleischmann, last name is F-i-t-c-h dash - F-  
9 l-e-i-s-c-h-m-a-n-n.

10 I'm the manager of Energy Supply Planning  
11 with Northwestern and just want to say a few words  
12 about where we see our position in their region.

13 But, first off, I want to thank  
14 councilmembers and especially Ben Kujala and John -  
15 John Fasio (ph.), the modeling staff. I know you  
16 guys do an incredible amount of work on behalf of  
17 our region and we really appreciate. And I know  
18 that the life of the model or -- is -- is kind of  
19 like an unsung hero. So, we -- we thank you for  
20 your all time and effort.

21 So, at Northwestern, we view our position  
22 and it's not just Northwestern as a company, but  
23 Montana as a region as unique. Just like every, you  
24 know, we're unique just like everyone else. But I  
25 want to talk a little bit about the ways in which

1 we're unique because we're a bit on the end of the  
2 whip out here in Montana from a few different  
3 perspectives.

4 So, at Northwestern, we're a small  
5 relative to other utilities. We're short in our  
6 capacity position. And we're on the edge of the  
7 region. And, so, that adds up to some unique  
8 situations that mean we're very much at the mercy of  
9 the regional situation. And -- and just a few notes  
10 on that.

11 So, we're small in the sense that our  
12 loads are relatively small compared to the rest of  
13 the region. We make up a, you know, a drop in the  
14 bucket. But, you know, a lot of people think of us  
15 as a big utility because, geographically, we're  
16 quite large. But we wind up with more poles than  
17 customers. And that means a lot when you're  
18 thinking about cost recovery affix versus variable  
19 costs. And that, obviously, has implications for  
20 energy and capacity.

21 We're short in the sense that as a  
22 percentage of our energy and capacity needs, we rely  
23 very heavily on markets, more so than most in the  
24 region. And that means we're exposed to financial  
25 and reliability consequences of that for better or

1 for worse.

2 But as an example of that, during the  
3 recent heat dome events earlier this summer, there  
4 were times when our load was being met over 50  
5 percent with imported power from off our system.  
6 And that's an enormous amount of power to be relying  
7 on from a region during peak load and heat events.

8 So, we're also on the edge of the system  
9 in the sense that just physically where we're  
10 located, but with the transmission system and the  
11 distribution of demand and supply of power the way  
12 it is, it means we don't have a market to -- much of  
13 a market to buy and sell power to the east of us.  
14 And -- and it's limited to the south as well. So,  
15 it's largely to the west that we turn and we're very  
16 much on the same, you know, on the same ship as  
17 everyone in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon.

18 So, the things that I just named there  
19 have a lot of implications for how the modeling  
20 happens in a plan like this. In particular, the  
21 assumptions about transmission are really key for us  
22 because we rely so heavily on imports, understanding  
23 how transmission constraints might affect the  
24 ability of power to move around within our region is  
25 key. And, you know, we see at times limits on our

1 ability to import power and even limits on our  
2 ability to export power as well which is a key  
3 assumption when you're evaluating the economics of  
4 energy resources on our system. The assumption that  
5 excess energy can be monetized.

6           So, all those pieces and especially  
7 assumptions about transmission availability and our  
8 transmission system to move power around the region,  
9 it's really important that we get them accurate  
10 because they obviously have huge implications for  
11 everybody, but especially us kind of on the edge in  
12 a constrained position.

13           I just want to highlight a couple more  
14 elements slightly more technical, but the modelers  
15 will, I think, have thought about these things. And  
16 I just want to put them out there that, you know, I  
17 -- I've emphasized the importance to understand the  
18 role of transmission, model the system accurately  
19 and understand what rube and transmission system  
20 might play by way of role entering adequacy.

21           Just generally on the -- on the modeling,  
22 the -- the very low probability of resource adequacy  
23 in the near term coming out of the model like in  
24 2025 as you know is a head scratcher or has -- has  
25 been the cause of much head scratching across the

1 region. And it's starkly different from the results  
2 that the models that the council has produced as  
3 shown previously. I think which should rightly give  
4 us all pause to -- to recognize that the role of  
5 uncertainty in -- in planning for reliable supply  
6 into the future.

7 But that's a big about face and really  
8 deserves a lot of scrutiny. And I know that you  
9 guys have spent a lot of time digging into it and --  
10 and doing your best to ensure that modeling  
11 assumptions are not --

12 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Please close, Mr.  
13 Fleischmann.

14 **MR. FITCH-FLEISCHMANN:** Sorry.

15 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Please close, we're about  
16 out of time. Thank you.

17 **MR. FITCH-FLEISCHMANN:** I apologize. I'll  
18 just wrap up. The technical assumptions, you know,  
19 underlying the model that lead to these things are,  
20 obviously, a huge importance. And, so, I guess I'll  
21 reiterate by -- reiterate that we appreciate all the  
22 time you've put into the modeling. And we look  
23 forward to a more detailed review and certainly will  
24 be in touch with more on it.

25 So, thank you very much for your time.

1           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you for your effort  
2 to comment.

3           We'll now go to Mr. -- it looks like or  
4 Ms. Terry Crooks and your affiliation, if any. And  
5 please introduce yourself and go Mr. or Ms. Crooks.

6           **MR. CROOKS:** Hey, this is Terry Crooks. I  
7 -- I'm a guy. I live in Northwest Montana. I'm  
8 with Flathead Electric.

9           And so we're up in Glacier Park Country.  
10 And so we've got about 70,000 plus meters. We're  
11 very pro environment since Glacier Park is in our  
12 backyard. But we're also very concerned about power  
13 adequacy. And we heard about the blackouts  
14 happening in California and the -- the balance.  
15 We're afraid we're getting the cart before the  
16 horse. That's important that we realize that coal  
17 and gas are a part of the energy picture even though  
18 here in the Northwest we're certainly blessed with  
19 so much hydro, but there's also more on hydro these  
20 days with the lower Snake River dams and the big  
21 push to remove those dams.

22           Most are not aware that here a couple of  
23 years ago in March we had a major cold snap. And  
24 had not been for the dams, we would have blackouts  
25 in the Northwest and, apparently, it got very, very

1 close.

2 And so it's important that our concern --  
3 my concern is that we keep this balanced, that we're  
4 all concerned about the environment. We live in a  
5 beautiful land and need to take care of, but we need  
6 to use common sense in applying all of logic and  
7 work this together.

8 Some of the states seem to be leading the  
9 charge to go total green with this thing. And  
10 wouldn't that be great. We want to -- another thing  
11 we can do to save the planet. But there having to  
12 import their power and they're not exporting their  
13 power. Wind and solar is not taking care of that.  
14 So, it's important that even though that state is  
15 being modeled as the leader and what we need to do  
16 in a power thing, we need to -- in the Northwest we  
17 need to really protect our -- our resources here.  
18 We need to watch out for what we're doing because we  
19 are really with this hydro system supplying power,  
20 not only to the Northwest, but into the Southwest as  
21 well. And, so, we've got to use a common-sense  
22 approach with that.

23 Some of the things that's happening with  
24 this bills over the dam seems to be very unrealistic  
25 and unscientific with the nitro problems that

1 happens. We know when such spills. Having spent my  
2 life in the Libby area and Libby Dam, Google  
3 admitted they did quite a few spills. And being a  
4 fisherman on the river, seeing the fish laying on  
5 the shore with the bubbles that were coming out of  
6 them because the nitro issue was pretty pitiful.  
7 And it was a -- it was a tragic thing to see.

8           And, so, it's the confusion of pushing in  
9 the Northwest and losing all that power without  
10 proper research as to what's going on down river  
11 with the nitrogen. And the salmon is really  
12 important. And also with those spills, my  
13 understanding is some of the -- some of the concerns  
14 if somebody breeding salmon are being washed over  
15 the spill ways and they make their way up again,  
16 they get washed over again and they're not breathing  
17 because we're killing them through this spill way.  
18 That's not scientific and that's not really balanced  
19 in how we should deal with all that we're dealing  
20 with here.

21           So, to tie it up here. I thank you for  
22 your work, council. And it's a -- it's a -- it's a  
23 difficult task that you've been saddled with. Thank  
24 you for digging in and working with that. And thank  
25 you for looking for a realistic balance approach.

1           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Crooks.

2           We now go to a Shauna Radford (phonetic).

3 Shauna, please go ahead with your testimony and any  
4 affiliation, et cetera.

5           Shauna, are you there? I don't get a  
6 response from Shauna. We will go back to her if we  
7 can.

8           One last call. Shauna?

9           **MR. MADRON:** Member Grob, this is Chad.  
10 We had a few people connected only by phone who I  
11 had to mute due to noise. If you're connected only  
12 by phone, please be aware of any noise on your line.  
13 And I've now unmuted those lines in case Shauna  
14 connected that way.

15           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** So Shauna is ready to go.  
16 We'll go back to her.

17           **MR. MADRON:** I don't -- I don't see her  
18 connected, so she may not be available right now.

19           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, if you can get her  
20 back, why please come back to us. Time is of the  
21 essence, of course.

22           So we'll proceed on to a Mr. Joe Lukas.  
23 Joe, are you with us?

24           **MR. LUKAS:** Yes. Thank you Member Grob.  
25 My name is Joe Lukas, Lukas spelled L-u-k-a-s. I'm

1 general manager of Western Montana G&T.

2 I'd like to thank the council and staff  
3 for the work on the 2021 Draft Power Plan. We think  
4 overall it does a very good job of identifying the  
5 paradigm shift occurring in the Northwest power  
6 industry.

7 As -- as always, it's always an effort to  
8 identify, spend more time on the shortcomings of the  
9 plan. But I do want to make sure that council  
10 doesn't misconstrue that as just being, you know,  
11 critical and not -- not recognizing the -- the  
12 importance of things that were -- that were, you  
13 know, handled -- handled properly and with a very  
14 good job. Energy efficiency, you know, key among  
15 them. The range is 750 to 1,000 megawatts seems  
16 appropriate to us.

17 Where we have concerns is as identified  
18 earlier. The -- the big radical shift, if you will,  
19 on reliability modeling to go from discussion of  
20 black-out risk exceeding 25 percent to now saying  
21 everything is just fine. It just doesn't comport  
22 with the near-miss events we've seen.

23 And -- and, furthermore, talking about  
24 addition -- the addition of 3,500 megawatts  
25 renewables, while that may be the direction the

1 region is heading, you know, largely by, you know,  
2 policy inertia, I think it's very important that the  
3 plan explore the implications of that.

4           You know, we think, again, with the near  
5 miss events dispatchable capacity resources are --  
6 are going to be necessary. To have them, you know,  
7 unmentioned, you know, in the -- in the plan, you  
8 know, we can't just keep retiring, you know, coal  
9 and -- and challenging the need for natural gas or,  
10 you know, losing our hydro capacity and finding a  
11 way to integrate 3,500 megawatts of wind and solar.  
12 It just physically seem like an impossibility to me.

13           So, you know, the other -- the other  
14 implication is, you know, I was -- I was  
15 disappointed that the plan did not do a better job  
16 of highlighting the transmission challenges in the  
17 region. You know, having that -- having that small  
18 section buried in the -- in the R&D portion of the  
19 plan, I think, is a -- is a missed opportunity.

20           If, you know, many of us, I think, believe  
21 the Northwest really needs to explore and look into  
22 an RTO. It would be nice to see the council, you  
23 know, weigh in on that question in some fashion.

24           Finally, and do want to mention that, you  
25 know, we'll be submitting detailed written comments.

1 Another -- another missed opportunity of a resource  
2 potentially available to Northwest that -- that I  
3 couldn't find mentioned in the plan is the -- is the  
4 overpayment of the Canadian entitlement under the  
5 Columbia River Treaty. This could be an important  
6 resource that could be retained for use in the  
7 Northwest. And that -- and that council rather than  
8 just having that, you know, buried in the modeling  
9 assumptions should -- should consider some -- some  
10 inclusion of that effort and -- and what it might  
11 mean to the Northwest power supply.

12 I'll -- I'll conclude there for the sake  
13 of brevity and will be submitting additional written  
14 comments. Thank you.

15 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** We next have Mr. Mark  
16 Johnson. Mr. Johnson, are you ready and with us?

17 **MR. JOHNSON:** I am ready. My name is Mark  
18 Johnson, J-o-h-n-s-o-n. I'm the general manager at  
19 Flathead Electric Cooperative. And we serve over  
20 71,000 meters in Northwest Montana.

21 Flathead County has a poverty level of  
22 nearly 10 percent with a per capita income of only  
23 \$31,700. So the cost of electricity matters  
24 especially to those who live near this poverty line.  
25 It is very important that the council protects our

1 members' access to clean, renewable, affordable, and  
2 reliable hydropower and nuclear power.

3           One of the most important concerns to  
4 Flathead Electric and its members is resource  
5 adequacy. The council's Draft 2021 Plan summary  
6 states and I quote "Increasing our dependence on  
7 sunshine and wind to make electricity has risks,  
8 primarily, the risk of reduced output when the sun  
9 goes down and the wind stop blowing."

10           Therefore, it is understandable why we are  
11 very concerned about confusion created by the  
12 council in the last few months related to  
13 reliability. The council, as recently as last year,  
14 issued warnings about loss of load probability  
15 exceeding 25 percent. It now produces modeling in  
16 the draft plan concluding that the reliability  
17 standard of 5 percent loss of load probability is  
18 being met. This is in direct contradiction to  
19 multiple reliable studies being done in the region  
20 and by utilities themselves who are forecasting  
21 increasing capacity shortfalls year after year  
22 starting with the next few years.

23           In fact, the Northwest Power Pool reports  
24 that participants in its Resource Adequacy Program  
25 have already relied on other participants for

1 capacity resources to avoid emergencies. And we  
2 have not even entered the timeframe contemplated by  
3 the draft plan.

4 Council's draft plan summary also states  
5 that the council "Recognizes existing thermal  
6 plants, coal natural gas, nuclear as an important  
7 component of the power supply"

8 We will all recognize these base resources  
9 as critical to maintaining a stable power system.  
10 These baseload resources also contribute to the  
11 integration of intermittent resources like wind and  
12 solar. With the regions cold fleet set to decline  
13 by 60 percent over the first phase of the draft  
14 plan, a more thorough evaluation of the need for  
15 dispatchable capacity resources appears appropriate.

16 The Northwest Hydro System is the best and  
17 most effective battery in the world. Avoiding Texas  
18 and California loss of power events is imperative  
19 especially in Montana where temperatures can be  
20 below zero for weeks and a blackout during these  
21 times could result in Montanans dying.

22 The council needs to address its lack of  
23 concern for regional liability swiftly and with more  
24 transparency as the credibility of the council is in  
25 question here.

1 Energy efficiency also seems to be  
2 aggressive although we support and appreciate the  
3 council's development of a more realistic range of  
4 future energy efficiency acquisition. The regional  
5 range of 750 to 1,000 megawatts might still be  
6 somewhat high, but appears more appropriate than  
7 ranges in previous plans.

8 Flathead Electric has seen the energy  
9 efficiency low-hanging fruit diminish significantly  
10 after decades of promoting energy efficiency and  
11 reimbursing thousands of energy efficiency projects  
12 using millions of our rate-payers' dollars.

13 Each kilowatt hour of energy efficiency is  
14 not just getting harder to acquire, each kilowatt  
15 hour is also more expensive as materials become more  
16 scarce and costly, it takes more promotion and  
17 advertising to encourage adoption. And our  
18 employees are spending more time getting buy in from  
19 our members.

20 Large industrial projects in our area also  
21 are shrinking. And many of them already have been  
22 implemented over the past decade. We would note  
23 that PBA share a regional load was identified in the  
24 draft plan as declining to 32 percent over time,  
25 yet, the draft plan anticipates fixing BPA's share

1 at 36 percent. This does not appear appropriate.

2 Thank you for the opportunity to comment  
3 on the Draft 2021 Power Plan. We hope that the  
4 council will be transparent with its assumptions and  
5 work with the region to correct some of the  
6 deficiencies noted in the draft plan.

7 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

8 I believe we'll go to three-and-a-half  
9 minutes now. We have a long ways to go and a short  
10 time to get there.

11 Chad, do you have anyone teed up -- teed  
12 up on the phone to go right off the bat?

13 **MR. MADRON:** So, we have six folks  
14 connected by phone. If you have called in by phone  
15 tonight and have not signed up via website, could  
16 you please speak up? If you did sign up via our  
17 website, we will call on you in the order in which  
18 people signed up. And you can see that on our  
19 webpage.

20 Is there anyone that's just called in and  
21 wants to give comment?

22 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, queue them up if  
23 they do and interrupt me, Chad, if you want between  
24 speakers because we do want the phone people to have  
25 an opportunity.

1           **MR. MADRON:** Sure.

2           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** But we must keep going  
3 here. So we're going to --

4           **MR. MADRON:** We have six folks connected  
5 by phone and none of them are speaking up, so,  
6 hopefully, they're happy with their situation.

7           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Okay. We're going to go  
8 to three-and-a-half minutes now.

9           Rex Griffin is next in the queue. Please  
10 go and give some comment, Mr. Griffin.

11           **MR. GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I'm -- I'm Rex  
12 Griffin, G-r-i-f-f-i-n. I think you could spell  
13 Rex.

14           I'm a director on Ravalli Electric Coop.  
15 We serve over 11,000 members in Southwestern  
16 Montana. And I also sit on the board at  
17 Washington/Montana G&T. They currently represents  
18 all of the Montana BPA customers.

19           And I want to thank you for the  
20 opportunity to speak. And Terry and Mark have done  
21 a great job of talking about a lot of what I'm  
22 going. So, for the sake of time, I'll jump to mine  
23 a little bit.

24           My same concern is -- is resource  
25 adequacy. It seems like a proposed power plan

1 appears to -- to me to be short on reality and long  
2 on wishful thinking. The system is already under  
3 extreme power shortages as in the summer of 2021 and  
4 winter of 2019.

5 I'll -- I'll skip through a little bit  
6 here. Technology hasn't really got up to speed to  
7 make the intermit renewables firm. It just isn't  
8 here yet. And, you know, who knows how soon it will  
9 be and -- and the forms of battery, et cetera they  
10 have now are extremely expensive.

11 So, hydro is a firm, cheap reliable carbon  
12 free source of power that is already in place and be  
13 at ease to blend in the unfirm renewables. I think  
14 it needs more -- more support. The Columbia River  
15 hydrosystem is under attack, both, for dam removal  
16 and excessive spill at a time when the environmental  
17 should be supporting hydro to back up the  
18 renewables.

19 I'll skip down three. You've done a good  
20 job of mentioning a lot of the fossil fuel being  
21 eliminated and mandates requiring clean energy. But  
22 I don't feel that you've done a great job in  
23 analyzing possibilities of reduction in our  
24 hydrosystem. I -- I think that's going to have a  
25 huge effect on the reliability of the system as we

1 go ahead.

2 And that -- with that I'll say Terry and  
3 Mark did a great job explaining my other points.  
4 And I'll sign off now. Thank you, again, for  
5 letting me speak.

6 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Griffin. I  
7 apologize that I had to shorten the time. I know it  
8 interrupted your flow.

9 We'll next go to Mr. Hugo Anderson. Hugo,  
10 are you with us? Mr. Hugo Anderson.

11 **MR. ANDERSON:** I'm here. I'm here. I  
12 just had to find the mute button, Mr. Grob. Sorry  
13 about that. It's Anderson with an O, Glacier  
14 Electric Cooperative general manager.

15 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** It is, yes.

16 **MR. ANDERSON:** Yeah, Mr. Johnson noted the  
17 poverty level in the Flathead County. Well, Glacier  
18 County is our base income is right around \$18,000.  
19 So, affordable hydropower is very important to our  
20 members especially on the Blackfeet Indian  
21 Reservation.

22 Our weather here goes from 100 in the  
23 summertime to 50 below in the wintertime weeks on  
24 end at times. So, it's very important to have a  
25 reliable resource on the Bonneville power supplies

1 us through Northwestern. I know transmission was  
2 brought up, but I think that's a key issue in our  
3 area here. We're on the end of the line. It's very  
4 important. So I hope that the council would look at  
5 that.

6 And, also, I would like to comment as Mr.  
7 Lukas did. I think the Columbia River Treaty really  
8 needs to be in focus here and get some of that back  
9 to Northwest consumers.

10 That's it. That's all I have three  
11 minutes.

12 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Anderson.  
13 Don't mean to rush you guys quite so much. It's  
14 three-and-a-half minutes. So we'll keep -- keep  
15 going forward here.

16 I have next on my list if Chad doesn't  
17 interrupt me with a phone call, interrupt me  
18 anytime, Chad, with a phone call between  
19 presentations.

20 We'll go to a Mr. Ross Holter, I believe.  
21 Are you with us, Ross? Mr. Ross.

22 **MR. HOLTER:** Yes, this is Ross. I'm just  
23 by phone, so hopefully you can hear me. It's  
24 Holter, H-o-l-t-e-r.

25 **MR. MADRON:** We can hear you, Ross, go

1 ahead.

2 **MR. HOLTER:** Okay. Thank you. Well,  
3 thanks, council, for your hard work on this plan. I  
4 know it takes a lot of time and effort. And I will  
5 make some brief comments.

6 But I have 20 years of experience in  
7 involvement in energy efficiency in the Northwest.  
8 And I've been involved in the Demand Response  
9 Advisory Committee and also the Conservation  
10 Resource Advisory Committee. And -- but I plan to  
11 limit my comments really just to the energy  
12 efficiency portions of the plan. Although I do have  
13 the same concerns that have already been echoed  
14 regarding capacity issues going forward.

15 But from a boots on the ground  
16 perspective, I can tell you that EE is getting much  
17 more difficult and expensive to acquire. Over the  
18 last 10 years or so we've gone from easily utilizing  
19 our energy efficiency budget for Bonneville Power  
20 each year and also doing 20 to 40 percent more than  
21 that in terms of self-funding on -- on different  
22 measures.

23 And now we're at a point where we struggle  
24 to fully utilize our EEI budget. And we really  
25 don't do any self-funding. It's just that much

1 harder to obtain cost-effective energy efficiency.

2 And my colleagues across the region share  
3 with me that they are in the same predicament. If  
4 it weren't for extraordinary efforts like we've done  
5 recently where we've mailed out LED bulbs to our  
6 members and -- and done things like that which are  
7 happening across the whole Northwest, I think you  
8 would see even lower EE numbers.

9 And as the regional technical forum  
10 removes measures like these and others from our tool  
11 bag in the future, I'm certain you will see a  
12 continued and possibly dramatic decline in cost-  
13 efficiency achievements. So I'm concerned that the  
14 EE targets in the 2021 plan, even though they've  
15 been reduced from the previous estimates and  
16 previous plans are still overly aggressive.

17 But much like our regions, coal plants, I  
18 will be retired in the near future. However, that  
19 may enable me to be more involved and more vocal in  
20 this process.

21 Thank you very much for your time and  
22 effort.

23 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** And thank you, Mr. Holter.  
24 We'll now go onto a -- I believe it's Cilimburg,  
25 Amy. And if I've mispronounced your name please

1 correct us. And go ahead.

2 **MS. CILIMBURG:** Okay. Can you folks hear  
3 me now?

4 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** We can.

5 **MS. CILIMBURG:** Great. Yes, I am Amy  
6 Cilimburg. And thank you for pronouncing that just  
7 right. The last name is C-i-l-i-m-b-u-r-g. And I  
8 am the Executive Director at Climate Smart Missoula.

9 So we're a small Montana based non-profit  
10 organization that works to reduce energy use in our  
11 region and build resilient and equitable  
12 communities. So I thank you for the robust work to  
13 develop this Draft 2021 Northwest Power Plan and the  
14 opportunity to speak to this council regarding the  
15 draft plan this evening.

16 Given we're based in Western Montana, I'll  
17 share some brief comments today and we'll submit  
18 some additional comments in writing.

19 We are heartened to see the draft plan is  
20 clear that we need to accelerate renewable energy  
21 with all the challenges that they provide. But we  
22 do have great solar and wind resources. And we find  
23 it appropriate that this plan also considers the  
24 impacts of climate change on an electricity system,  
25 so that utility planning can meet the region's

1 future energy needs adequately.

2           So we're an organization that's been  
3 increasingly working to accelerate energy efficiency  
4 and health homes especially for our low-income  
5 residents. We are a bit disheartened to see in this  
6 draft the reduced regional target for energy  
7 sufficiency and the more limited role for demand  
8 response.

9           These strategies, although difficult, and  
10 I heard that from the last couple speakers, with  
11 increased interest at the federal level and  
12 increased, you know, combination of funding sources,  
13 I do think they will be increasingly crucial for  
14 reliability and saving residents money. So we have  
15 to consider how these will be paired with other  
16 resources to accelerate energy efficiency.

17           So I hope the council will consider  
18 revising the draft plan in order to allow for an  
19 energy strategy that -- just a couple of points.  
20 One, about a better energy efficiency target that  
21 accurately values this resource, a target more  
22 consistent with the trajectory from the Seventh Plan  
23 would be appropriate.

24           Two, better values, the availability  
25 demand response and better reflects analysis by the

1 council staff, the Demand and Response Advisory  
2 Committee. That's something that, again, is going  
3 to grow in these future years rapidly.

4 And then, finally, increases the clean  
5 energy technologies, particularly, energy storage  
6 and renewable clutch storage systems. We know we  
7 need those storage systems to make renewable, so  
8 they work best. They are available and they are  
9 becoming increasingly cost effective in the  
10 necessary part of the targets.

11 So in sum, I encourage the council to take  
12 this draft plan with its strong elements and revise  
13 it to strengthen our leadership in energy efficiency  
14 and ensure PPE continues to do their share in  
15 providing equitable energy.

16 So thank you. I know this is a lot of  
17 work. And I'm really interested to see -- hear what  
18 other folks have to say to see where the draft or  
19 where the plan develops as it finalizes. Thank you  
20 so much.

21 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Ms. Cilimburg.

22 We'll now go to a Conor Ploeger -- Ploeger  
23 I believe the name is unless it's missing. Please  
24 go ahead, Conor, and correct us on your name.

25 **MR. PLOEGER:** No, it's totally fine. Good

1 evening. My name is Conor Ploeger. That's P as in  
2 Paul, l-o-e-g-e-r. And I am here on behalf of the  
3 Montana Environmental Information Center.

4 MEIC believes there are aspects of the  
5 Draft 2021 Northwest Power plan that deserve  
6 recognition. But there are some that require your  
7 reevaluation.

8 For example, the plan calls for 3,500  
9 megawatts of new renewable energy in the region by  
10 2027. The council is right to include more renewal  
11 energy than any previous plan because our region has  
12 extensive opportunities to develop additional cost-  
13 effective wind, solar, and other renewal resources.

14 This is good for Montana because Rosebud  
15 County does offer a \$12 million budget for the  
16 county. And should a currently wind farm go  
17 through, that will add an additional 4 million for  
18 Rosebud and 6 million for Treasure County annually.  
19 That's a lot of resources for one of the poorest  
20 counties in the state.

21 However, there are aspects of the 2021  
22 plan that should be improved to benefit Montana.  
23 One of the aspects of the 2021 plan is its failure  
24 to call for any energy storage. According to a June  
25 2021 analysis from Wood MacKenzie, the US storage

1 market will grow to 8.5 billion a year by 2026.  
2 Storage systems charge by renewables are already  
3 under development in the region and continue to make  
4 incredible strides every year. With such rapid  
5 advancements through the industry, it is misguided  
6 for the council to ignore the potential for storage.

7 Another troubling aspect of the plan is  
8 its proposals for energy efficiency. The 2021 plan  
9 decreases the role of energy efficiency in the  
10 region for the next five years, almost reducing the  
11 target and app from the previous plan.

12 So the Northwest Power Act established  
13 council and the planning process went into effect,  
14 over 7,000 megawatts of energy efficiency have been  
15 achieved making it our second largest energy  
16 resource behind hydropower. This means that the  
17 Northwest has long been a leader in energy  
18 efficiency which is one of the major reasons utility  
19 rates and bills in the region are among the lowest  
20 in the country.

21 In the 2017 fact sheet published by  
22 Bonneville Power, the utility claims that  
23 electricity customers in the Northwest save nearly  
24 3.5 billion and avoided electricity pause due to  
25 energy efficiency programs, annually. Not only are

1 these programs popular with rate payers due to  
2 decreased utility bills, but they also provide  
3 significant employment and willful economic benefits  
4 to communities and the region. Thus, now is not the  
5 time to be backing off this most valuable resource.

6 The 2021 plan also reduces Bonneville  
7 Power's role in providing resources for energy  
8 efficiency to small rural utilities. Many rural  
9 areas rely on Bonneville Power's program as the only  
10 source of funding for energy efficiency. Absent  
11 these programs, rural electric customers will have  
12 no utility programs to assist in making energy  
13 efficiency investments in their homes and  
14 businesses. And that not only lowers their bills,  
15 but keep costs lower for everyone.

16 Therefore, we urge you to reconsider the  
17 role of energy efficiency and energy storage in the  
18 2021 plan. In order to --

19 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thirty seconds.

20 **MR. PLOEGER:** In order to (crosstalk)  
21 otherwise utilize the potential and continues to be  
22 a leader in this area.

23 That's all the time I have. Thank you for  
24 this opportunity.

25 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, thank you, Mr.

1 Ploeger very much.

2 Next we have a, I believe, Schneider, Mr.  
3 Dennis Schneider. Are you with us, Dennis?

4 **MR SCHNEITER:** Yes, I am. And you spell  
5 Schneider, S-c-h-n-e-i-t-e-r. I'm a trustee at  
6 Ravalli Electric Cooperatives, about 11,000 meters.

7 I want to thank the council for the  
8 opportunity to comment on this power plan.

9 The power plan screwed up a perfect  
10 weekend at the cabin. And I even came home to  
11 speak. But I found it very interesting and -- and  
12 much in -- in -- in that plan is really good.

13 At Ravalli, we've experienced, like many  
14 parts of Western Montana, high residential growth  
15 over the last 12 to 18 months. In short, we've been  
16 discovered. That's good and it's bad.

17 This power plan, however, causes many  
18 worries going forward especially about resource  
19 adequacy. And that's been touched on.

20 Over the weekend I said, okay, what  
21 bothers me about this plan. And it's -- it's not  
22 renewables per se, it's renewables without a  
23 foundation. The acquisition of 35 megawatts of  
24 renewable energy coupled with the decarbonization,  
25 increased electrification, and possible dam

1 breaching and spilling -- spillage could be a recipe  
2 for disaster.

3 I think that the council needs -- I would  
4 think that the council will put more time in the  
5 area of improved transmission. And I also believe  
6 that we cancel ourselves short, we always need to  
7 have firm power. In the absence of those, I really  
8 fear that we'll have an increase loss of load  
9 probability.

10 Now, the second thing that -- that  
11 bothered me and I'm all for energy efficiency, but  
12 we are rate payers who, by the way, are rate payers  
13 in the state of Montana, the medium household income  
14 is the lowest among the four states on the council.  
15 Ravalli County is even lower than that. And 1 in 8  
16 in the state in Ravalli County are under the poverty  
17 level.

18 Energy-efficiency dollars that we pay to  
19 Bonneville should be used in our jurisdiction. And  
20 they should be rolled over from year to year, so  
21 that we can target specific areas of energy  
22 efficiency. I think if that happened -- happened  
23 we'll see a greater energy efficiency expenditures.

24 Again, I want to thank the council for  
25 allowing me to -- to comment on your hard work.

1           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Schneider.

2           We'll now go to a Bob Popham. Bob, are  
3 you available?

4           **MR. POPHAM:** Yes, I'm here. Can you hear  
5 me?

6           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** We can. Thank you.

7           **MR. POPHAM:** My name is Bob Popham spelled  
8 P-o-p-h-a-m. I'm from -- I'm a trustee with Ravalli  
9 Electric in Western Montana.

10           The main thing that I -- I've got four  
11 points that I feel our members are worried about and  
12 are concerned about. And they watch us very  
13 closely.

14           The first one is resource adequacy which  
15 has been mentioned several times. I just want to  
16 say that that is the big one. And that we believe  
17 hydro is number one as far as the way to go and keep  
18 the adequacy. And that that will -- that we need to  
19 save the lower Snake River dams.

20           The second thing that they look at when  
21 they look at the trustees is reliability. We need  
22 power to be available when it's needed, not just a  
23 nameplate. But we have to have it there when it's  
24 needed. Solar and wind are very intermittent. And  
25 we need firm power.

1 The third thing is is they talk about what  
2 are we doing for energy efficiency. Well, they get  
3 light bulbs every now and then. And that just  
4 doesn't pack up with them. We need to be able to  
5 accumulate that and roll it over, so that we can  
6 target some areas that -- that will work better.

7 And the number four thing that I've got  
8 down that they probably complain about more than  
9 anything is transmission. We are a transfer  
10 customer. We rely on Northwestern Energy to give us  
11 our -- bring us our power to our substations. And  
12 most of the time they do all right. But when we  
13 have an outage, they count us, even though we're  
14 over 11,000 meters, they count us as one customer.  
15 So we don't quick service to take care of the  
16 transmission line that goes down.

17 The plan says that we no longer have to  
18 worry about resource or reliability in Northwest.  
19 And I strongly disagree with that. I think that is  
20 a big one. And we need to keep those dams in place  
21 to give us both of those things.

22 I want to thank you folks for letting me  
23 testify. I appreciate the work you do. And thank  
24 you again.

25 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Okay. Thank you, Mr.

1 Popham.

2           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Next we'll go to a  
3 Woldstad, a Tiffany Woldstad. Are you available?  
4 Chad, she's on the phone. Is she available?

5           **MS. WOLDSTAD:** Can you hear me?

6           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** We can.

7           **MS. WOLDSTAD:** Hi. Hi. Thanks for the  
8 chance to speak. My name is Tiffany Woldstad, W-o-  
9 l-d-s-t-a-d. Do you need my address? I'm at 111  
10 Harbin Hill in Kalispell.

11           And I just wanted to join in really quick  
12 and say thank you guys for all your hard work. And  
13 I may sound like a little bit of a broken record.  
14 But I just wanted to say how much I appreciate how  
15 hard you guys work and how low our rates or keeping  
16 our rates as low as you can. And I know that a lot  
17 of that is thanks to our hydropower. And I also  
18 appreciate the fact of that low carbon footprint.

19           I just think it's really important to --  
20 to mention and -- and talk that I think hydropower  
21 is so important to Montana. I know renewables as  
22 kind of the new thing and not (audio distortion)  
23 going for power. My concern is the expense and what  
24 happens when the wind isn't blowing and the sun  
25 isn't shining.

1 And I know that there's a lot of people  
2 here that know this subject much more than me, but  
3 just speaking as a member of an electric coop, you  
4 know, what we pay now I know is as low as we can be  
5 because I know that our local coop works really hard  
6 to keep it low. And, again, part of that is for  
7 because of and thankful to hydropower.

8 So, and the other concern is too, in  
9 Montana, if we don't have -- if we're relying only  
10 on renewables and I'm not sure how we would base  
11 things. And even our furnaces won't light anymore  
12 without electricity. And I know we all know what  
13 happened in Texas. And none of us want to see that  
14 here in Montana. And in a 40 degree below night, I  
15 just want us to know that our electricity is going  
16 to turn on and we're all going to survive it.

17 So, I just want to say that I'm really  
18 glad that we get to utilize carbon-free hydropower  
19 and the Columbia River system with the federal dams.  
20 So thank you so much.

21 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Ms. Woldstad.

22 We'll next go to a Mr. Brian Weber.

23 Brian, are you with us? Brian Weber. Maybe we  
24 could get him back. Brian, are you there?

25 Mr. Duane Braaten, Braaten. Are you with

1 us?

2 **MR. BRAATEN:** Hello. Thank you. I am,  
3 thank you.

4 And I appreciate this opportunity to  
5 comment tonight. I am commenting as a business  
6 owner in Flathead Valley as well as president of the  
7 Bioelectric Coop.

8 I am very aware of the energy efficiency  
9 programs of the past. And has been pointed out,  
10 Flathead Electric has been very active in that  
11 arena. Looking forward, as Mr. Holter pointed out,  
12 that may be difficult to continue on in the same  
13 manner.

14 I'm very concerned about the -- what I  
15 read there about the 520 megawatts that you would  
16 expect to achieve through the Demand Voltage  
17 Reduction Program. As I understand it, voltage is  
18 extremely important in the operation of motors and -  
19 - and compressors which I have a lot on -- on my --  
20 on my farm and my business. I rely on very adequate  
21 voltage. And visited with the engineers in our coop  
22 and they work very hard to maintain the integrity of  
23 the voltage on our lines. And I know every time we  
24 look at a couple construction program, that's there  
25 to maintain the voltage integrity. So, I question

1 how we can save energy efficiency through

2 (inaudible) --.

3 So, secondly, on the renewable side of  
4 wind and solar and probably especially solar, I'm  
5 aware that there's a lot of solar and even wind for  
6 that matter that's been put in for some time. Solar  
7 has a very short shelf life really. You know, 20,  
8 25 years and it's done.

9 And the plan calls for new renewables  
10 which I can appreciate. But what's going to happen  
11 if these old renewables that have been in place for  
12 some time are not restored and replaced? Flathead  
13 Electric, we have a solar program in our areas  
14 that's halfway through its life. It's about 10  
15 years old. I'm not sure if we're going to replace  
16 it or not. That hasn't even been addressed yet. So  
17 I just feel like we could be losing some also going  
18 forward, so.

19 Anyway, those would be my concerns. I do  
20 appreciate this forum to comment. And thank you for  
21 the opportunity.

22 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Braaten.

23 Okay. Mr. Weber, Brian Weber, are you  
24 around and available? If not we'll go to a Mr.  
25 Wiens, Gary Wiens. Are you with us?

1           **MR. WIENS:** Can you hear me?

2           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Yes, we can. Go ahead.

3           **MR. WIENS:** Okay. Thank you. Yeah, my  
4 name is Gary Wiens, CEO of Montana Electric  
5 Cooperatives Association. We represent all 25  
6 electric distribution coops in the state including  
7 the coops in the western part of the state that are  
8 served by Bonneville Power Administration.

9           And we appreciate Councilman Grob for the  
10 opportunity to testify and for having this Montana  
11 hearing on the 2021 Draft Power Plan. We're  
12 grateful for the -- all the hard work that's gone  
13 into this draft. And so I hope you'll view my  
14 comments as asking for improvements, not trying to  
15 be critical.

16           So I'm just three -- three key parts,  
17 power reliability, transmission, and energy  
18 efficiency I wanted to comment on. First, on the  
19 power reliability component, we're very concerned  
20 about the projections in this plan for adequate  
21 energy. We think you need to be very careful about  
22 treating reliable energy capacity such as base load  
23 generation the same as unreliable energy capacity.  
24 That's, obviously, unreliable energy capacity would  
25 be wind and solar. And those still require backup

1 resources, of course.

2           Regards to transmission, also agree that  
3 this needs to be highlighted to much greater extent.  
4 The transmission challenges that are created with  
5 the constraints, you know, with aggressive renewable  
6 energy development that's projected. And really  
7 need to explore a much greater extent, the solutions  
8 to that, those constraints and how that will, you  
9 know, those things that impact our coop consumer  
10 owners.

11           So then finally on energy efficiency. I  
12 know that, you know, in Montana, we've got coops  
13 that have worked really hard to -- to do a lot of  
14 energy efficiency. But those coops are they, you  
15 know, kind of gone after the -- the lower cost  
16 projects and those are gone now. So kind of having  
17 a one size fits all on -- on energy efficiency is  
18 not -- just not going to work for our people. And  
19 really need to pay attention just giving up  
20 flexibility to energy efficiency in the region,  
21 especially for -- at least for our people that's  
22 really a big concern how that, you know, energy  
23 efficiency programs can impact rates.

24           So with that, I will close. And thank you  
25 again for the opportunity to give you a few

1 comments.

2 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Wiens.

3 We'll go to a Rollie Miller next. Rollie  
4 are you Mr. Miller or Ms. Miller, are you with us?

5 **MR. MILLER:** Yes, I am. Thank you, Member  
6 Grob.

7 My name is Rollie Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r and  
8 I am the general manager of Vigilante Electric Coop  
9 with headquarters in Dillon and outposts in  
10 Whitehall and Townsend.

11 I appreciate the opportunity to provide  
12 testimony to the council directly and also  
13 appreciate the council allowing Montana the specific  
14 opportunity for the Montana meeting.

15 Vigilante Electric Coop is a member-owned  
16 cooperative that serves over 10,000 meters in  
17 Southwest Montana from Humphrey, Idaho to well north  
18 of Helena. We serve mostly the rural areas around  
19 the Townsend cities and have a density of over 3  
20 meters per mile wide. Our load doubles in the  
21 summer months serving irrigation load that is,  
22 through the most part, run of the river. Once the  
23 water has gone by the delivery point, it can't be  
24 used anymore, most in that area.

25 Most of the area is agriculturally based

1 and commodity prices are not increasing to the  
2 extent other costs are increasing.

3 Significant drought the last two years  
4 says depleted available water storage and  
5 substantial moistures is needed to replenish the  
6 reservoirs or next year's irrigation season will be  
7 dire.

8 BEC is committed to providing reliable,  
9 affordable power to our members. In our -- in our  
10 particular case, we have seen significant growth in  
11 new services and energy sales in the past year and a  
12 half so much so we having difficulty acquiring  
13 everything from meter pedestals to transformers to  
14 basic powerline construction material. The cost for  
15 almost all of the material we use have been  
16 skyrocketing and lead time significantly extended.

17 We are being told that ordering a  
18 replacement bucket truck now would get delivery at  
19 mid-2023, early to mid-2023. And cost for that  
20 equipment have also skyrocket all placing stress on  
21 cost to members.

22 Specifically related to the Draft 21 --  
23 2021 Power Plan, we are confused about the council's  
24 loss of load probability messaging. The messages in  
25 recent years have been conflicting. Needless to

1 say, that black outs during the summer months at any  
2 time during the day would be very detrimental to the  
3 run of the river irrigation load we serve.

4 We are also very concerned about the  
5 council's amount of renewable wind and solar  
6 acquisition goals. It appears there's a need for a  
7 full evaluation of firm dispatchable capacity. In  
8 addition, significant transmission constraints  
9 appear with large wind and solar generation  
10 interconnections.

11 What is the council doing to trust  
12 potential transmission capacity issues related to  
13 wind and solar integration? We need more firm tier  
14 -- tier one dispatchable capacity each rate period  
15 not -- not less. We are headed in the wrong  
16 direction with available tier one power.

17 Having said that, we have some very good  
18 wholesale rates in the Northwest here. We just need  
19 to do everything we can to make sure that continues.  
20 The Columbia River Treaty as others have said, the  
21 discrepancies with that also need to be addressed.

22 The breaching of the lower Snake River  
23 dams is extremely difficult to relay the value to my  
24 members. I get asked how can removable of those  
25 dams and replacing with wind and solar or any other

1 source be a benefit? I simply can't answer that.  
2 Additional spillage also creates concern and -- and  
3 comments on that with my members is difficult too.

4 On a -- on a lighter note, we greatly  
5 appreciate the support, the council's development of  
6 a more realistic range of future energy deficiency  
7 acquisition. The regional range of 750 to 1,000  
8 megawatts of energy efficiency appears appropriate.  
9 We continue to encourage the council to support a  
10 flexible approach to energy efficiency acquisition  
11 as we work closely with BPA to makes these programs  
12 effective.

13 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you.

14 **MR. MILLER:** The energy efficiency and  
15 conservation measures need to be structured to allow  
16 for equal access to the funds and programs by those  
17 paid for.

18 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you.

19 **MR. MILLER:** Thank you again for the  
20 opportunity to provide testimony on the council's  
21 draft. And thanks again for allowing Montanans the  
22 opportunity to speak for this session.

23 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Miller.

24 Next we'll go to a Diana Maneta. Diana,  
25 are you with us?

1           **MR. MANETA:** I'm here, yes. Thank you.

2           My name is Diana Maneta. That's spelled  
3 M-a-n-e-t-a. I work for Missoula County as  
4 Sustainability Program Manager.

5           As a local government, it's Missoula  
6 County's responsibility to protect and enhance the  
7 health, safety, and well-being of county residents.  
8 And we know very well that help, safety, and well-  
9 being require reliable and affordable electricity  
10 system. And also that they require that we address  
11 climate change by shifting to cleaner energy sources  
12 as rapidly as possible.

13           And for that reason, the Missoula County  
14 together with the City of Missoula have established  
15 a goal of 100 percent clean electricity for the  
16 Missoula urban area by '23. I will also note that  
17 Missoula County government and the county residents  
18 are members of the Missoula Electric Coop as well.

19           We really appreciate all the good work  
20 that went into the development of the draft plan.  
21 We're particularly grateful that the plan considers  
22 the impacts of climate change on the use of  
23 electricity and on hydropower availability rather  
24 than assuming a continuation of historical  
25 conditions. That's so important to plan for a

1 reliable system in the future. And we also  
2 appreciate the draft plan's focus on increasing  
3 solar and wind resources to cost effectively meet  
4 energy needs.

5 A couple aspects of the plan, a draft plan  
6 that do concern us. As some others have mentioned,  
7 we would like to see more energy efficiency included  
8 in the plan. We're all aware, I think, of the  
9 tremendous success of energy efficiency on the  
10 Northwest during the past several decades. And we  
11 encourage the council to maintain the trajectory  
12 laid out in the seventh plan.

13 I think it's really important as part of  
14 that to consider the full range of benefits provided  
15 by energy efficiency including reducing customer  
16 bills, creating jobs, and local economic benefits.

17 And also that expanded weatherization  
18 programs for lower-income residents are particularly  
19 crucial to protect health safety and well-being.

20 And the last thing I'll say is that I've  
21 heard a number commenters understandably express  
22 concern about reliability and resource adequacy. In  
23 that context, we would urge the inclusion in the  
24 plan of more demand response, load flexibility, and  
25 energy storage since these are clean resources that

1 have huge potential to cost effectively help  
2 integrate higher levels of intermittent ratables  
3 like solar and wind.

4 I'll stop there. But I want to thank you  
5 all so much for hosting this hearing and for the  
6 opportunity to comment.

7 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Ms. Maneta.

8 We will next go to Diego Rivas. Mr.  
9 Rivas, are you there?

10 **MR. RIVAS:** Yes. Hi. Thank you, Member  
11 Grob, Member Milburn and councilmembers and staff.  
12 Thanks for the opportunity to comment today . My  
13 name is Diego Rivas, R-i-v-a-s. I'm a senior policy  
14 associate with the Northwest Energy Coalition here  
15 in -- in Helena, Montana.

16 I want -- I do want to, like many others,  
17 thank you all, councilmembers and staff for all your  
18 hard work during the development of this plan. I  
19 know it's a huge undertaking and one that is really  
20 only done in our region. And I think we're all  
21 better off for it.

22 In certain aspects, we do believe the  
23 current draft plan continues to provide the super  
24 helpful assistance and direction to the region's  
25 power sector. They included a climate change impact

1 for the first time as well as the region plan for  
2 what the climate patterns will look like in -- in 20  
3 years and how our energy system will respond.

4 And continued discussion on how to address  
5 resource adequacy, capacity issues. And while it's  
6 at the same time bringing on more and more renewable  
7 generation online is a must in the plan and we  
8 applaud those efforts.

9 There are a few aspects of the plan,  
10 however, that we do find disconcerting. The lack  
11 of energy storage and demand response had -- have  
12 been mentioned by other commenters are key features  
13 that -- that we also agree should be beefed up,  
14 though, the drastic cut in the -- in the energy  
15 efficiency target is -- is, for sure, most shocking.

16 I join the coalition in 2010 just as the  
17 6th Regional Power Plan was being released. And the  
18 resource strategy in that plan included the  
19 recommendation to develop cost-effective energy  
20 efficiency aggressively, at least 1,200 average  
21 megawatts by 2015. And most importantly here, equal  
22 or higher amounts every five years through 2030.

23 A few years after that, despite of what it  
24 cost decreasing significantly in the region, the 7th  
25 Plan also highlighted acquiring energy efficiency as

1 the primary action because energy efficiency  
2 consistently provided or proved to be the least  
3 expensive and least economically risky resource.

4 And that has not change. In fact, I  
5 contend that it's more true than ever. Avoided  
6 costs for many utilities are going up. Concerns  
7 about how much to build, who's going to pay for it  
8 are, you know, are in every day discussions. And we  
9 want to avoid those multi-million dollar mistakes  
10 that Mr. Kujala mentioned previously.

11 We do acknowledge that low energy cost due  
12 to cheap renewables do put pressure on the ability  
13 of energy efficiency to be cost effect, but at the  
14 same time we know that efficiency provides value  
15 above and beyond midday seasonal energy and that  
16 models have a difficult time quantifying the  
17 resiliency value of the resource.

18 There's been lots of comments today  
19 highlighting concerns about resource adequacy and,  
20 yet, there's no single better resource for  
21 California and Texas-style events than energy  
22 efficiency reducing the pressure on, both, the  
23 generation and transmission systems.

24 Slashing efficiency now is like benching  
25 your hall-of-fame player in the last week of the

1 season because the computer analytics tell you that  
2 a righty/lefty matchup is better than a righty/  
3 righty one. If it's me, I'm going with the -- the  
4 hitter that's hitting 300 with 35 homeruns and 100  
5 RBIs and I don't care which hand he hits with on top  
6 of the bat. And that -- that hall of famer is  
7 energy efficiency.

8 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thirty seconds.

9 **MR. RIVAS:** Thank you, sir.

10 To wrap up, you know, Congress was wise  
11 four years ago to sign a long-term contract with the  
12 resource of energy efficiency in order to keep rates  
13 down, reliability up. We strongly encourage the  
14 council to stay the course, return to the energy  
15 efficiency goals of previous plans. Thank you.

16 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Rivas.

17 We have next on our agenda a Ms. Linda  
18 Healow. Linda, are you here?

19 **MS. HEALOW:** Hi, there. I'm here. My  
20 name is Linda Healow. It is -- the E is silent, H-  
21 e-a-l-o-w. I live in Billings, and I'm a private  
22 citizen.

23 I do tend to follow what's happening with  
24 energy. And I'd have to agree across the board with  
25 Mr. Rivas, I think. The Northwest has looked at

1 energy efficiency for a long time. And the cut in  
2 this plan is -- is rather surprising. It's  
3 effectiveness is -- is great. It's a crowd pleaser  
4 as far as customers go. And it certainly saves  
5 money. It's also important for small rural  
6 utilities. And there's lots represented here.

7 Another thing that I would ask you to look  
8 at is energy storage needs. They're already under  
9 development and they can be certainly helpful in our  
10 region as we switch to more alternative energy.

11 So those two things to me seem to be the  
12 most important. Thank you for taking public  
13 comment.

14 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Ms. Healow.

15 We have a Kristen, Ms. Kristen Walser.

16 **MS. WALSER:** Yes, thank you.

17 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Are you with --

18 **MS. WALSER:** Yes. My name is Kristen  
19 Walser, W-a-l-s-e-r. I'm a customer of Northwestern  
20 Energy. And I'm really impressed with the detailed  
21 analysis that council has done to examine the many  
22 ways to balance the electrical load and make it  
23 reliable, affordable, and adequate when you're using  
24 renewables.

25 I really appreciate how the council has

1 taken into account the current state of -- the  
2 current state and federal policies for emissions  
3 reductions. We have to take these into account.  
4 They're happening outside our borders, but they  
5 affect us.

6 I think you also need to consider the  
7 federal carbon pricing policies being considered in  
8 congress now. These policies will include the cost  
9 of pollution into the price of fossil fuels making  
10 alternatives more cost competitive.

11 We've heard how energy efficiency is more  
12 expensive now. This price on carbon would motivate  
13 industry, business, government and consumers to find  
14 the most cost-effective alternatives for them which  
15 could definitely include more energy efficiency, so  
16 people would be motivated to become more energy  
17 efficient and find those programs that are available  
18 to help them.

19 Other programs to build reserves and  
20 balance loads will also get a boost. A lot of  
21 people have talked about energy storage, demand  
22 response, nuclear, geothermo. All of these things  
23 will become more cost effective.

24 And all of us are concerned about  
25 affordability for those people on fixed and low

1 incomes. The federal carbon pricing policies under  
2 consideration now include carbon cashback to  
3 consumers. That's a rebate they can use to offset  
4 higher prices or buy more energy efficient  
5 appliances. They can use it anyway they like. The  
6 Congressional Budget Office and many others have  
7 examined the effects of this type of rebate and have  
8 found that 60 percent or more of households get back  
9 more than they pay in in added costs. Of course,  
10 that depends on the design of the carbon price and  
11 the rebate. But that is what's in Congress right  
12 now. And -- and I think it would be in our best  
13 interest for everyone for you to analyze the effects  
14 of this policy. And that could be possibly be  
15 passed this fall. And if you want to find out more  
16 about that, you can contact me about some of these  
17 policies and what they entail.

18 Thank you so, so much for the opportunity  
19 to comment today.

20 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** And thank you very much as  
21 well.

22 Next we have on our list Reno-Morast.  
23 Morast, is that correct? Please go ahead, Ms. Reno.

24 **MS. RENO-MORAST:** Hi. My name is -- yeah,  
25 my name is Raquel. It's spelled R-a-q-u-e-l, last

1 name is Reno-Morast, R-e-n-o hyphen Morast, M-o-r-a-  
2 s-t. And I work for Vigilante Electric in Dillon,  
3 Montana. And we really pride ourselves as being a  
4 utility that provides power at or near the lowest  
5 price in our state and region. And we really want  
6 that to continue.

7 Our service area in Southwest Montana is  
8 comprised of about 70 percent residential, 30  
9 percent of an irrigation load. And over the last  
10 two years, we've seen a nearly 13 percent increase  
11 in our total kilowatt hours sold. And in July, we  
12 surpassed the normal number of new services that we  
13 install in an average year.

14 We're finding that many of those new  
15 consumers are working from home. And with the  
16 uncertainties in the economy, our largest group of  
17 members, those residential customers are dependent  
18 upon the certainty of reliable and affordable power.

19 The last point that I want to make is  
20 regarding our irrigation load. The drought that has  
21 occurred in the last couple of years has been a  
22 significant challenge for those members in the  
23 agriculture industry. If and when they have access  
24 to water, they are using it day or night. And this  
25 reliance and need doesn't follow the respected hours

1 of sunlight or stop when the wind isn't blowing.

2 We appreciate the efforts of the council  
3 to address the issues that are facing our future  
4 power supply. And we hope that a one-size-fits-all  
5 approach doesn't overshadow the specific conditions  
6 and needs of our utility. Thank you.

7 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you very much.

8 We next go to Gary Boe. Mr. Boe, are you  
9 with us? Mr. Gary Boe?

10 **MR. BOE:** Yes, can you hear me?

11 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Yes, we can.

12 **MR. BOE:** Yes. My name is Gary Boe, the  
13 last is spelled Boe, B-o-e. I'm vice president on  
14 the Board of Directors of Flathead Electronic.

15 I -- in my testimony today, I must point  
16 out to you that the number one priority of the  
17 Flathead Electric Board is resource adequacy. It's  
18 so important that we have a permanent special  
19 committee of the board to deal with this critical  
20 issue of power supply resource adequacy. This is an  
21 issue that grows more urgent by the month.

22 Flathead Electric is the second largest  
23 electric utility in the State of Montana. We have  
24 over 700,000 meters total with 55,000 being  
25 residential.

1 One of the biggest problems Montana faces  
2 is that we're near the bottom of the state in level  
3 of wages paid. We're above Mississippi, but not  
4 far. And we're a poor state, sorry to say. And we  
5 suffer a poverty rate in Flathead County of 10  
6 percent which is near -- which -- which means during  
7 the cold winter months we have members of our area  
8 that are making choices between food, medicine, and  
9 electricity and keeping the lights on. So it's  
10 absolutely imperative that we in Montana do not  
11 suffer a blackout.

12 And as a Montana native, I can -- I have  
13 lived through a period of where the temperature  
14 remained 25 degrees below zero for 10 days straight.  
15 Can you imagine what would happen to us here if  
16 there was no electricity for a period of 10 days  
17 where the electricity was -- where the power was --  
18 temperature was 25 degrees below zero? It would be  
19 an absolute disaster. We'd most certainly suffer  
20 deaths in the area. Services like hospitals and all  
21 would suffer. So that's something we can't just  
22 have happen to us.

23 In addition to all these lines, we're  
24 aware of the need to cover the wind and solar gap.  
25 We encourage the council to help us as we use the

1 present resources to cover this gap. We realize the  
2 EPA cannot provide growth -- cannot provide growth  
3 and we need more electricity to meet our rapidly  
4 growing increasing needs. We need the help in  
5 finding new energy.

6 Thanks so much for giving -- giving us the  
7 opportunity to testify. And we appreciate the  
8 council's good work in this area. Thank you.

9 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Boe.

10 We'll now go to Justin Bair. Are you  
11 there, Justin?

12 **MR. BAIR:** Yes, this is Justin Bair, B-a-  
13 i-r. I'm the engineering and operations manager at  
14 Vigilante Electric in Dillon, Montana.

15 I grew up in a small farm community in  
16 Southern Idaho and later worked as a lineman in,  
17 both, Idaho and Montana. I've been able to see  
18 firsthand, both, the struggles and successes that  
19 our small rural communities experience here in  
20 Southwest Montana.

21 Vigilante Electric Cooperative provides  
22 the electric power in nine Montana counties and one  
23 Idaho county with our main office in Dillon and  
24 outposts in Whitehall and Townsend. We provide  
25 electrical power to over 10,000 services and

1 maintain over 2,700 miles of transmission and  
2 distribution line.

3           Vigilante is a small coop. A coop where  
4 employees where many hats in order to keep our costs  
5 as low as possible for our hardworking members. The  
6 Northwest Council and BPA play a large part in our  
7 belief to keep power costs down and our liability at  
8 a high level.

9           Southwest Montana is facing many  
10 challenges at this time. To name a few, there would  
11 be drought, wildfires, cost of equipment and  
12 materials are rising monthly, and lead times  
13 continue to move farther and farther out. We're  
14 seeing growth at a rate never imagined in our area.  
15 We continue to break records monthly in new services  
16 and kilowatt hour sales. These are just a few of  
17 the challenges that we are seeing.

18           In my career, I've had the opportunity to  
19 sit and discuss power and power supply with -- with  
20 people throughout the country. And I just want you  
21 to know that that the Northwest is truly the envy of  
22 the rest of the country when it comes to -- to  
23 generation and rates and power delivery. So let's -  
24 - I would plead that we keep it that way.

25           And I would ask that we all remember that

1 our mission is simple to provide our members with a  
2 reliable source of electricity at the lowest  
3 possible cost. Thank you.

4 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** That you, Mr. Bair.

5 We have next a Mr., I believe, Telly  
6 Stanger. Are you with us, Telly?

7 **MR. STANGER:** I am. Mr. Stanger, S-t-a-n-  
8 g-e-r. I'm the general manager of Lincoln Electric  
9 Cooperative in Eureka, Montana. Lincoln Electric is  
10 a member-owned distribution cooperative in Northwest  
11 Montana which serves northern -- the northern part  
12 of Lincoln and Flathead counties.

13 We served just over 6,100 meters in our  
14 service area. And we are a member of the Portland  
15 based Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative.

16 We appreciate the work put into the eighth  
17 draft and understand the gravity of the draft based  
18 on carbon goals and policies and the high-level  
19 description of the issues we face in the northwest  
20 are understood.

21 The transition to be carbonized power  
22 supply is important and we support that direction.  
23 Clean and flexible hydropower we rely on in the  
24 Northwest is the key in helping us achieve this  
25 transition.

1 We're deeply concerned and confused about  
2 the council's recent warning of loss of load  
3 probability, but now states the reliability is being  
4 met. This raises questions about the modeling used  
5 and influence had on the council.

6 As an independent body, the council should  
7 stand on its findings and do a better job of  
8 reconciling these conflicting messages. It also  
9 raises questions about the accuracy of the data and/  
10 or the modeling used to come to these conclusions.

11 We believe there should be more emphasis  
12 on the need for dispatchable resources to replace  
13 upcoming retirements of coal fleets. This cannot be  
14 overstated as capacity and reliability are major  
15 concerns. With the near miss in March of 2019 and,  
16 again, in June of 2021, it's plain to see that  
17 Northwest is facing a capacity deficit. It's hard  
18 to believe that the transition from fossil fuel such  
19 as coal and the loss of capacity that favoring that  
20 we will not have inadequacy issues by 2021.

21 The shortcoming in the plan is the  
22 additional resources needed for transmission  
23 investment for the development of 3,500 megawatts of  
24 intermittent -- intermittent renewable resources.  
25 Lincoln Electric is served by one radio transmission

1 line owned by Bonneville Power. We see the need for  
2 more emphasis on transmission in the form of  
3 additions and building the transmission system to  
4 handle our needs. I do not speak solely for Lincoln  
5 Electric in this regard, but for all who have their  
6 unique transmission challenges as you need tonight.

7 As a general manager of a utility, my  
8 responsibility is to ensure safety, reliability, and  
9 affordability to the members of our cooperative. I  
10 can handle the safety and affordability, but I rely  
11 on others to help with reliability. Subject matter  
12 experts disagree with the direction this plan has  
13 gone and the information it provides. Power Council  
14 is not responsible for reliability and resource  
15 adequacy for Lincoln Electric, but I would remind  
16 you the discussion starts with you. Please provide  
17 accurate information for public power customers.

18 Thank you for the opportunity to provide  
19 feedback.

20 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you, Mr. Stanger.

21 Can we possibly reach a Shauna Radford?  
22 Chad, have -- can you -- have you had any success in  
23 reaching Ms. Radford and/or a Mr. Brian Weber?

24 **MR. MADRON:** Hi, Member Grob. I've  
25 emailed both of them via the emails they registered

1 with. I have not heard back. We do have two  
2 callers connected by phone. Only if Shauna or Brian  
3 if that's you, please speak up. You're both  
4 unmuted. You're unmuted.

5 They may not have just been able to make  
6 it. In my emails to them, I pointed them towards  
7 our other three hearings and also the written  
8 comment options. So, hopefully, they will be able  
9 to join us another time.

10 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, given that, how much  
11 time do we need to wrap up here or do we take  
12 comment from other areas? Do you have that lined  
13 up?

14 **MR. MADRON:** If there's anyone else who  
15 wished to give comment, but has not had the  
16 opportunity, you can email me right now or unmute or  
17 speak up, otherwise, we probably can close the  
18 hearing.

19 **ANGELA::** No, Chad --

20 **MR. MADRON:** Yes. Oh, do we need to stick  
21 around until --

22 **ANGELA::** Yes, until 7.

23 **MR. MADRON:** Okay.

24 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** But, yes, I don't know how  
25 long it takes up to close up the meeting.

1 **MR. MADRON:** So, our lawyer --

2 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Maybe we can hold it open  
3 for testimony until 7 which is fine that we do.

4 **MR. MADRON:** Yes, we do. We need to go  
5 ahead and stick around for a few minutes.

6 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Okay. Then do we have  
7 anybody else from anywhere that wishes to opine and  
8 testify? And if not, we'll take a -- take a 10-  
9 minute break or a 5-minute break.

10 **MR. MADRON:** Thanks for clarifying that,  
11 Angela. I appreciate it.

12 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, let's take a five-  
13 minute break.

14 **MR. MADRON:** Okay.

15 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Everybody, we'll be back  
16 here at 6:47 according to my phone and see if  
17 someone else is signed up and we'll take more  
18 testimony.

19 **MR. MADRON:** Okay. We'll leave the  
20 webinar open until 7 for sure. So, remember, we can  
21 hear and see you, so please mute and turn off your  
22 cameras if you wish.

23 **(Recess taken.)**

24 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Who's alive just me?

25 **CO-CHAIR MILBURN:** Member Grob, I'm here.

1           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Okay.

2           **MR. DEVLIN:** Define live, Member Grob, I'm  
3 here, but I don't know if I qualify.

4           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Anybody still alive  
5 qualifies trust me.

6           **MR. DEVLIN:** I have -- I have 6:51 for  
7 your time right now.

8           **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, I have 47 on my  
9 computer. Now why would my computer be wrong?

10          **MR. DEVLIN:** It shouldn't be.

11          **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, you know, my whole  
12 life is just a little bit off kilter.

13          **MR. MADRON:** If I could confirm that our  
14 IT person Tiffany is listening, I'm sure she'll be  
15 right on that.

16                I don't have any additional emails at this  
17 time.

18          **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, if there's any  
19 comment from anywhere, we'll take it. If not we'll  
20 just wait to see if somebody does --

21          **MR. MADRON:** Okay.

22          **CHAIRMAN GROB:** -- reach out.

23          **MR. DEVLIN:** Councilmember Grob.

24          **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Yes.

25          **MR. DEVLIN:** I think all the members

1 realize this and we only have -- we just picked up  
2 Guy came back is that we're still in the hearing, so  
3 everything we say is being recorded.

4 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Yes.

5 **MR. DEVLIN:** And it's also being recorded  
6 verbatim.

7 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Yes.

8 **MR. NORMAN:** I got you.

9 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** And thank you.

10 **MR. MADRON:** And for the moment, I've gone  
11 ahead and put our next three hearings dates and  
12 times up on the screen. These are -- anyone can  
13 testify at any hearing. And the next three will be  
14 in October.

15 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Do we expect additional  
16 hearings beyond those that are listed per chance?

17 **MR. MADRON:** I think we're waiting to see  
18 how attendance goes and -- and how it goes.

19 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Okay.

20 **MR. MADRON:** I don't think a final  
21 conclusion on that yet, sir.

22 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Thank you.

23 **MR. MADRON:** This is Chad from council  
24 staff. I just want to emphasize again that send me  
25 an email and you can find my email on the -- on the

1 hearing page over on the right hand side or you can  
2 just speak up right now. And we still have five  
3 minutes left on the hearing. And we have three  
4 other hearings scheduled as well.

5 **MALE SPEAKER:** It's 7 o'clock.

6 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, hello, everybody. I  
7 have a phone that says it's 6 o'clock and a computer  
8 that says it's 6:56. If anyone else in another time  
9 zone tells me it's 7 o'clock, we'll wind up this  
10 meeting.

11 **MR. MADRON:** I can agree it's 7 o'clock.

12 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** Well, thank you very much.

13 **MR. MADRON:** And --

14 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** No more Montana residents  
15 signed up to provide testimony and having nobody  
16 from any other area, we will now transition from  
17 this stating facts to and I guess we just close the  
18 meeting? We're not done? We're done.

19 **MR. MADRON:** I don't believe we have a  
20 closing statement on there.

21 **CHAIRMAN GROB:** But I don't have a closing  
22 statement with me. Oh, it's just stuck to the other  
23 page. Okay, here we go.

24 Thank you. As we do not have anyone else  
25 signed up, we will recess the hearing which we have

1 done. And having nobody coming forward with another  
2 statement, I will now close with this statement  
3 saying this concludes our public hearing on the  
4 Council's Draft 2021 Northwest Power Plan. Comments  
5 submitted to the council on the Draft Power Plan  
6 will be made available on the council's website as  
7 soon as possible.

8 On behalf of the council, I thank all of  
9 you for participating in today's hearing. Please  
10 visit the council's website for schedule of  
11 additional hearing. And this hearing is adjourned.  
12 Thank you, all.

13 **MR. MADRON:** Thank you, everyone.

14 **(Hearing concluded at 7:20 p.m.)**

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CERTIFICATE

I, Cheyne Lee, do hereby certify that I reported all proceedings adduced in the foregoing matter and that the foregoing transcript pages constitutes a full, true and accurate record of said proceedings to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am neither related to counsel or any party to the proceedings nor have any interest in the outcome of the proceedings.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2021.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Cheyne Lee', is written over a horizontal line.

Cheyne Lee

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> \$</p> <p><b>\$12</b> 48:15</p> <p><b>\$18,000</b> 41:18</p> <p><b>\$31,700</b> 34:23</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 1</p> <p><b>1</b> 52:15</p> <p><b>1,000</b> 15:19 32:15 37:5 64:7</p> <p><b>1,200</b> 68:20</p> <p><b>10</b> 34:22 43:18 58:14 76:5 76:14 76:16 83:8</p> <p><b>10,000</b> 61:16 77:25</p> <p><b>100</b> 41:22 65:15 70:4</p> <p><b>11,000</b> 39:15 51:6 54:14</p> <p><b>110</b> 22:3</p> <p><b>111</b> 20:9 55:9</p> <p><b>12</b> 51:15</p> <p><b>13</b> 74:10</p> <p><b>18</b> 51:15</p> <p><b>1990</b> 16:15</p> <p><b>19th</b> 6:20</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 2</p> <p><b>2,700</b> 78:1</p> <p><b>20</b> 11:8 43:6 43:20 58:7 68:2</p>	<p><b>2001</b> 13:20</p> <p><b>2010</b> 68:16</p> <p><b>2015</b> 68:21</p> <p><b>2017</b> 49:21</p> <p><b>2019</b> 40:4 80:15</p> <p><b>2021</b> 2:1 2:5 3:1 3:4 6:10 6:20 6:24 7:8 8:25 9:9 32:3 35:5 38:3 40:3 44:14 45:13 48:5 48:21 48:23 48:25 49:8 50:6 50:18 59:11 62:23 80:16 80:20 87:4</p> <p><b>2025</b> 26:24</p> <p><b>2026</b> 49:1</p> <p><b>2027</b> 48:10</p> <p><b>2030</b> 68:22</p> <p><b>2041</b> 16:15</p> <p><b>21</b> 62:22</p> <p><b>23</b> 65:16</p> <p><b>25</b> 32:20 35:15 58:8 59:5 76:14 76:18</p> <p><b>27</b> 2:5</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 3</p>	<p><b>3</b> 61:19</p> <p><b>3,500</b> 15:20 32:24 33:11 48:8 80:23</p> <p><b>3.5</b> 49:24</p> <p><b>30</b> 22:4 74:8</p> <p><b>300</b> 70:4</p> <p><b>32</b> 37:24</p> <p><b>35</b> 22:4 51:23 70:4</p> <p><b>36</b> 38:1</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 4</p> <p><b>4</b> 48:17</p> <p><b>40</b> 43:20 56:14</p> <p><b>47</b> 84:8</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 5</p> <p><b>5</b> 35:17</p> <p><b>5:04</b> 2:6</p> <p><b>50</b> 25:4 41:23</p> <p><b>520</b> 57:15</p> <p><b>55,000</b> 75:24</p> <p><b>5-minute</b> 83:9</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 6</p> <p><b>6</b> 7:17 48:18 86:7</p> <p><b>6,100</b> 79:13</p> <p><b>6:47</b> 83:16</p> <p><b>6:51</b> 84:6</p> <p><b>6:56</b> 86:8</p> <p><b>60</b> 36:13 73:8</p>	<p><b>6th</b> 68:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 7</p> <p><b>7</b> 7:17 82:22 83:3 83:20 86:5 86:9 86:11</p> <p><b>7,000</b> 49:14</p> <p><b>7:20</b> 87:14</p> <p><b>70</b> 74:8</p> <p><b>70,000</b> 28:10</p> <p><b>700,000</b> 75:24</p> <p><b>71,000</b> 34:20</p> <p><b>72,000</b> 13:9</p> <p><b>750</b> 15:18 32:15 37:5 64:7</p> <p><b>7th</b> 68:24</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> 8</p> <p><b>8</b> 52:15</p> <p><b>8.5</b> 49:1</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>          </u> A</p> <p><b>abide</b> 7:14</p> <p><b>ability</b> 25:24 26:1 26:2 69:12</p> <p><b>able</b> 8:6 15:22 18:15 54:4 77:17 82:5 82:8</p> <p><b>absence</b> 52:7</p> <p><b>Absent</b> 50:10</p> <p><b>absolute</b> 76:19</p>
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