

GB ENERGY PARK, LLC  
PUBLIC MEETING

In Re: Gordon Butte Closed Loop )  
Pumped Storage Hydro Project ) FERC No. P-13642

Taken at: 204 3rd Street  
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TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC MEETING

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ALSO PRESENT: PAUL BOCKUS, ELI BAILEY, KELCIE NICE

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1 Thursday, August 22, 2013

2 MR. BORGQUIST: Welcome, everyone. Thanks

3 for coming. We are really excited about the Gordon

4 Butte project. I want to start by kind of going through

5 the series of events today. We are going to go through

6 and talk about the project today. To help explain,

7 we've got some visual aids. I've got a panel of experts

8 here who can answer your questions. Once we're finished

9 with the meeting, we'll be available to meet with you

10 individually for questions or other comments. We've

11 ordered up some lunches, so we'll have lunch available.

12 Please take us up on that, and make yourselves welcome

13 to have lunch with us.

14 Then we have maps at the table here. We are

15 going to have an open house at the top of Gordon Butte,

16 and a site visit. We've got the upper reservoir staked

17 off at the top of the butte. We'll be there from 1:30

18 to 3:30, and that 3:30 will be a hard stop point. If

19 you have any questions about getting up to the top

20 there, please, after this official part of the meeting,

21 come pull us aside, and we'll help you get directions to

22 get up there.

23 I want to introduce, before we get started

24 -- before I start talking about the project as a whole,

25 -- I want to introduce the panel that's sitting up here,

5

1 as well as the folks from Absaroka Energy. I am Carl

2 Borgquist. I'm the president and CEO of Absaroka

3 Energy. We are the project developer for Gordon Butte.

4 From Absaroka Energy, I have Rhett Hurless sitting at

5 the front table here. He's the engineer. He's our

6 project manager. I have Eli Baily sitting at the table.

7 He is the assistant project manager. Paul Bockus is our

8 business development officer. Kelcie Nice is our intern

9 from MSU engineering. We all work for Absaroka Energy.

10 Up here at the front I have Steve Padula

11 with McMillen and Associates. Steve and Heidi Wahto,

12 who is in the back, are helping us with the Federal

13 Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, process of

14 obtaining a license for the project.

15 Wendy Roberts and Pam Spinelli are with

16 Garcia and Associates. They have, in the past, engaged

17 with us to look at the environmental impacts on the

18 project, and they've been involved in the studies and

19 the information gathering we're going to do going

20 forward.

21 Martin Weber is with Stanley and Associates

22 out of Minneapolis. They are an international

23 engineering firm and have worked with us to put together

24 the design and engineering features of the project.

25 So we're going to have some comments and

6

1 discussion here. We'll stop, again, and have an

2 opportunity for you to come and pull us aside and ask

3 questions. We'll have some lunch. And then, again,

4 we've got the site visit availability from 1:30 to 3:30.

5 Any questions about the logistics before I jump into the

6 project?

7 Okay, we are here to talk about the build of

8 a closed loop pumped storage project. They say a

9 picture is worth a thousand words. When you get a

10 chance after the meeting, if you haven't already, please

11 take a look at the visual aids we've put together. You

12 can see in the middle visual aid a mock-up that we've

13 put together of the two reservoirs on top of Gordon

14 Butte. Gordon Butte is about a mile west of

15 Martinsdale, probably you all know that. There's about

16 1,000 feet of elevation difference between the top of

17 the butte and the bottom of the butte where we'll put

18 the lower reservoir.

19 What we will do in order to accomplish this

20 closed system is drill a penstock down, a vertical shaft

21 in the ground, about 1,000 feet. That penstock will be

22 18 feet in diameter, and it will be steel and concrete

23 lined. This is where the water will move back and forth

24 between the upper and lower reservoir. That penstock

25 will then be extended from that vertical shaft out to

1 the lower reservoir. And if you look -- when you come  
 2 up here, if you look, you can see sort of a dotted line,  
 3 which is an indication of where the penstock will be.  
 4 And then the powerhouse at this point is designed to sit  
 5 at the back of the lower reservoir. That penstock --  
 6 excuse me -- that powerhouse will be about 100-plus-feet  
 7 deep, and will accommodate the pump turbine generator  
 8 set that you see in the blowup over on the left there  
 9 (indicating).

10 If you take a look at this when you come up  
 11 here, you can see the human figure right here  
 12 (indicating). So we've got quite a bit of equipment  
 13 stacked on a single shaft. I'll talk about the  
 14 capabilities of the equipment in a minute. But the top  
 15 of the powerhouse will be open, though, it will be  
 16 buried in the ground. This will be to facilitate  
 17 cranes, and whatnot, to be able to access the equipment,  
 18 pull the equipment apart if there's any problem with it,  
 19 and put it back together. We'll have four shafts, so  
 20 four 100-unit machines that look, in fact, similar to  
 21 like that over there (indicating).

22 The material from the removal of the tunnel  
 23 for the penstock development will be used principally to  
 24 build the rolled and compacted concrete embankments at  
 25 the top and the bottom. And let me refer you now to

1 this visual aid. This was put together by Garcia and  
 2 Associates and is to scale. So that lower reservoir  
 3 will sit against the toe of that alluvial fan on Gordon  
 4 Butte and be excavated back and a roller compacted  
 5 concrete embankment extended in order to create a  
 6 reservoir that will hold about 4,000 acre-feet -- 4,050  
 7 acre-feet of water. So, again, we'll remove the  
 8 material from the power station dig, and from the  
 9 penstock development, to use to create this roller  
 10 compacted embankment.

11 I've got Marty here. I'm going to ask Marty  
 12 to just, if you would, take a few minutes and explain  
 13 what that embankment -- what the creation of that  
 14 embankment looks like from a structural engineering  
 15 standpoint.

16 MR. WEBER: Okay. The upper reservoir, the  
 17 geology up there is basically about -- on top of the  
 18 butte is basically about four feet of overburden, and  
 19 under that is very hard rock, bedrock. So the idea is  
 20 to dig down into that upper reservoir area, remove that  
 21 rock, process the rock and create this roller compacted  
 22 concrete embankment that will form the upper reservoir.

23 Roller compacted concrete is basically a  
 24 low-cement, low-water mixture of concrete that is very  
 25 commonly used for embankments like this. It's a proven

1 technology since the '60s, since it first started. So  
 2 it forms a very solid embankment. So what we're going  
 3 to do is take advantage of that material that's  
 4 available up there and use it to construct that upper  
 5 embankment.

6 The lower reservoirs, depending on the  
 7 material that's available there, that could be roller  
 8 compacted concrete, or it could be an earthen fill, or a  
 9 combination of that. And, again, embankments are dams,  
 10 are commonly made of, you know, concrete and dirt. You  
 11 know, what ever material is available you can make a  
 12 competent and safe dam or embankment out of that  
 13 material.

14 MR. BORGQUIST: Thanks, Marty. Let me talk  
 15 a minute about the closed nature of this system. So  
 16 we're creating these two reservoirs, brand new  
 17 reservoirs. They'll be lined to prevent seepage. We  
 18 will do a fill in one reservoir, which will comprise the  
 19 initial fill. And the purpose of the equipment and the  
 20 purpose of the plant, in general, is to move water back  
 21 and forth between the two reservoirs. Obviously, if we  
 22 were to move all that water to the upper reservoir, we'd  
 23 have quite a lot of energy potential stored in that  
 24 capability of releasing that back and running it as  
 25 generation.

1 All of you know that our grid is now  
 2 populated in terms of energy production by a disparate  
 3 number of generation resources: We have coal, gas,  
 4 renewables. All of this is creating a lot of stress on  
 5 that operation of the grid. And so around the world,  
 6 not necessarily in the U.S. -- there isn't a power plant  
 7 like this in the U.S. There are in other parts of the  
 8 world. These facilities are used as a shock absorber  
 9 and essentially by utilities and other users. Water  
 10 gets moved back and forth hundreds of times a day in  
 11 order to keep the grid healthy, manage the transmission  
 12 assets, and make sure that the lights don't flicker and  
 13 stay on and that system operates reliably. So that's  
 14 the purpose of building a facility like this.

15 Once we get the facility built, I think  
 16 you'd be hard pressed -- and, again, take a look at the  
 17 mock-up. Please do when you come up after the meeting  
 18 -- be hard pressed to understand what is buried and all  
 19 the concrete and equipment that's buried in the ground.

20 From an electrical interconnection  
 21 standpoint, this is an overview of the project  
 22 boundaries. We will be moving that energy back to the  
 23 500 kV and interconnecting with the 500 kV, which will  
 24 give us access to sort of the larger aspects of the  
 25 northwest -- not NorthWestern -- but northwest grid.

1 The panel of experts, did I miss anything on sort of the  
2 overall guts and construction of the project?

3 Any questions? And I'll ask you, by the  
4 way, because we have to record this for the purposes of  
5 FERC, if you'd stand up and tell us your name so the  
6 court reporter can take your name down and who you  
7 represent. I'd appreciate it. Thank you. Yes, in the  
8 back of the room, you had a question?

9 MR. WALDNER: I have a question. Where is  
10 the water coming from for this project?

11 MR. BORGQUIST: That's a very good question.  
12 And we are in the process right now of talking to water  
13 user associations, the State, and stakeholders in  
14 developing a plan for that initial fill and that  
15 operation. At this point, we haven't finalized  
16 anything, and I don't want to speculate about exactly  
17 how that plan will come together. If that's something  
18 you're concerned about, please let us know. We'll keep  
19 you informed as we start and continue to talk about that  
20 and get ready for that initial fill.

21 MR. WALDNER: And another question is how is  
22 it going to affect irrigation systems?

23 MR. BORGQUIST: Well, again, we're talking  
24 to the water users in the system. We want to develop a  
25 plan that doesn't have any impact on the existing use of

1 that system. Again, I don't want to speculate about  
2 what that would be right now. But we'll continue to  
3 work on that, and talk to folks, like yourself, and make  
4 sure we come up with a competent and responsible plan  
5 for the initial fill.

6 MR. WALDNER: Thomas Waldner, W-a-l-d-n-e-r.

7 MR. BORGQUIST: Thank you, sir. Yes, sir.

8 MR. TOLIVAISA: My name is Peter Tolivaisa.  
9 I own Cottonwood Cabinets, LLC, 2262 State Highway 294.  
10 What parts of the world are these systems used in? You  
11 said they were used in other parts of the world. What  
12 are they?

13 MR. BORGQUIST: Well, I've actually stood in  
14 several of these in Europe, Germany in particular. But  
15 they are very prevalent in Europe. And Europe has, even  
16 more than we have, interconnected and is using a lot  
17 more renewables, a lot more variable generation in their  
18 system, and these plants are being used by the utilities  
19 to keep that system healthy. Again, think of it like a  
20 shock absorber, and there's constant movement of water  
21 to create -- either take electricity off the system if  
22 there's too much, or excess energy, or put it back in  
23 when there's a need to keep the system back up.

24 MR. TOLIVAISA: Thank you, sir.

25 MR. BORGQUIST: Any other questions about

1 sort of the project characteristics?

2 Okay, so I want to talk about the site a  
3 little bit. We've got the mock-up here that shows the  
4 land use, the landowners around the project boundary.  
5 This project will be built on 71 Ranch, LP. In fact,  
6 the entire project and the interconnection back to the  
7 500 kV is on this single private landowner's land. That  
8 land is being used for ranching. We've also now -- many  
9 of you know there's a 10 MW wind farm on the east side  
10 of the butte. A road has been put in to access that  
11 wind farm.

12 Again, the site has got a unique feature,  
13 and that unique feature is that we've got this 1,000  
14 feet of elevation difference and a very precipitous drop  
15 between the upper and lower reservoir. The tunneling,  
16 as you might imagine, it's a bore, an 18-foot hole in  
17 the ground. It's expensive. And the closer you can  
18 stack those two reservoirs together, the more  
19 cost-effective you can make the project. And that's one  
20 of the characteristics of this geologic feature that  
21 helps us have a plan, and have a project that's  
22 economically viable.

23 We've had environmentalists and others out  
24 to look at the project site and determine if we're going  
25 to affect any critical habitat or any other issues.

1 That information is in our preliminary application,  
2 which you can find on the FERC website. We've also got  
3 hard copies up here (indicating). Garcia and Associates  
4 took a look at that for us. And, Pam, I'd ask you to  
5 just, at this point, comment on what you've seen in your  
6 studies of the site in terms of its environmental  
7 impacts.

8 MS. SPINELLI: Sure. Now, what we did is,  
9 we did a fatal flaw analysis just to see if there was  
10 anything that was, you know, you're not going to be able  
11 to build here. And we looked at habitat and  
12 agricultural use: Prime farmland. We looked at  
13 wildlife habitat and the possibility of sensitive or  
14 listed species. We looked at aquatic habitat, and we  
15 also did, through a subcontractor, a Phase 1 assessment  
16 of hazardous materials, and cultural resources as well.  
17 And we didn't find -- we didn't do sensitive ground  
18 studies. Again, it was just kind of a broad overview  
19 fatal flaw analysis. We did not find anything that was  
20 a huge red flag to this project.

21 MR. BORGQUIST: Thanks. In terms of the  
22 capability of the equipment, it appears -- really, to  
23 get more specifically to your question -- pumped storage  
24 hydro has been around for 100 years. But over time, the  
25 equipment has evolved to allow -- and, again, take a

1 look at the mock-up -- the stacking of all of that on a  
2 single shaft that runs -- all of it runs in the same  
3 direction. So when you think of pumped storage that's  
4 been built in the United States in the past, that pumped  
5 storage was always -- or more often tied to a base load  
6 type plant: Coal or often nuclear.

7 So what they do with that pumped storage  
8 plant, they would pump water all night, then they would  
9 release water during the day to create generation at  
10 peak loads. They would have to actually dewater the  
11 machine and all of the equipment in order to make the  
12 switch from pumping to generating.

13 The equipment we're proposing to build is  
14 fast-acting pumped storage. So we can actually pump and  
15 generate at the same time. Now, that's not efficient in  
16 terms of the use of electricity to move the water back  
17 and forth. But the purpose of the plant is for the  
18 utilities, who are the customers of this, to be able to  
19 call in for a mode that says generate pumped energy and  
20 do this hundreds of times a day.

21 So we'll have two machines in our proposed  
22 set that can run at viable speeds, which is another  
23 unique feature of the newer equipment. You can idle  
24 them and then start increasing the speeds and pump more  
25 to generate electricity, run the turbine more and create

1 electricity. We'll also have two machines that have the  
2 ability to pump and generate at the same time. Again,  
3 the purpose is to move water back and forth as needed in  
4 order to create a shock absorber for the system.

5 Did I miss anything, panel, on kind of the  
6 characteristics of the site or the capability of the  
7 equipment? Any questions from anybody about --

8 MR. TOLIVAISA: Peter Tolivaia, 2262 State  
9 Highway 294, representing Cottonwood Cabinets, LLC.  
10 What is a fatal flaw study, Ms. Spinelli?

11 MS. SPINELLI: What is a fatal flaw study?

12 MR. TOLIVAISA: Yes, ma'am. And was my  
13 property included in that study?

14 MS. SPINELLI: No, your property was not  
15 included. We looked within that study down grade from  
16 what's identified on there. And, you know, honestly,  
17 I'm not sure if it was included in the hazard assessment  
18 or not. If it was, you would have been contacted and  
19 interviewed. But as far as for each of those resource  
20 areas, we defined what we would consider, and is  
21 generally considered from a regulatory standpoint, as a  
22 fatal flaw, something that would be very, very difficult  
23 to overcome from a permitting standpoint. And we looked  
24 to see if there was anything like that there in this  
25 area.

1 MR. TOLIVAISA: So I'm under that little  
2 corner of the project.

3 MS. SPINELLI: Oh, you're in the project  
4 area? Then it was included. I'm not sure exactly where  
5 that is.

6 MR. TOLIVAISA: I'd like to see the results  
7 of that study, please. Another question, who are going  
8 to be the final-use customers of the power generated  
9 from this? Are they going to be local, or is the final  
10 power generated going to go to other places?

11 MR. BORGQUIST: We don't know who that is  
12 going to be at this point, so we can't answer that  
13 question. I think it's likely that it would be  
14 potential users in the northwestern part of the country,  
15 utilities and others that need the capability to either  
16 take or produce electricity or take or produce energy  
17 quickly.

18 MR. TOLIVAISA: Will any of the people in  
19 the local areas be able to use this power, or is it all  
20 going to be moved someplace else?

21 MR. BORGQUIST: Well, the power will go into  
22 the grid, which you're hooked into. And so it will be a  
23 part of the WECC grid. So, yes, in a way, you'll be  
24 connected to it by being connected to the grid.

25 MR. TOLIVAISA: And where is the excavated

1 material for these two ponds and project going to be  
2 moved, stored? You're talking about a big hole there.  
3 Where is the excavated material going to go?

4 MR. BORGQUIST: That's a good question.  
5 Again, the material from developing the penstock, which  
6 is those two big tunnels in the ground, those will go  
7 directly into creating the embankments to form the two  
8 reservoirs. I can't say that will be exactly enough, or  
9 if we'll have excess. But the idea is to first take  
10 that material from the excavation and use it to actually  
11 construct those reservoirs.

12 MR. TOLIVAISA: So the reservoirs are going  
13 above grade, not below grade?

14 MR. BORGQUIST: The lower one will be dug in  
15 in order to create a little bit more head or space  
16 between the upper and lower reservoir. But that mock-up  
17 that you see -- and, again, I would encourage you to  
18 take a look at it -- that's modeled to scale in terms of  
19 the size for the -- what would be seen from essentially  
20 your side of the property looking east.

21 MR. TOLIVAISA: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. BORGQUIST: Yes, Steve. Please come to  
23 the podium so we get you picked up on the mic.

24 MR. PADULA: I just want to answer the  
25 question in terms of the fatal flaw information. That

1 was attached to the preapplication document. And that  
2 is on the CDs that we have. So there is a CD here  
3 today, if you haven't had a chance to look at that  
4 preapplication document. And there's several attached  
5 reports that were done, so all of that information is  
6 available.

7 MR. BORGQUIST: Thank you. We definitely  
8 have the CDs. You can get it electronically online, at  
9 our site or at FERC's. And we have hard copies if you  
10 want to look at that. Okay, so I want to talk a minute  
11 -- oh, sorry.

12 MR. PIERCE: My name is Doug Pierce. I'm  
13 representing the Crazy M Ranch. I've got two questions.

14 MR. BORGQUIST: Yes, sir.

15 MR. PIERCE: Is each reservoir going to hold  
16 4,050 acre-feet?

17 MR. BORGQUIST: No, just one.

18 MR. PIERCE: That was not what you had in  
19 the initial publications. And, also, I can count the  
20 number of local people here on one hand. Why was it not  
21 publicized in a local newspaper? It was not in the  
22 Harlowton Times or the Meagher County Newspaper. The  
23 only way I found out about it was the -- where you guys  
24 invited the city council to come here.

25 MR. BORGQUIST: Well, we put it in the

1 Billings paper thinking that that would have the largest  
2 impact, and that most people in this area would pick up  
3 the Billings paper. So that was the decision we made.  
4 We tried very hard to go out and find as many  
5 stakeholders. In fact, we have a list -- we'd be happy  
6 to let you look at it after the meeting -- of folks that  
7 we've actively gone out and tried to invite in this  
8 process.

9 To get back to your question about the  
10 water, I'm not sure how that confusion occurred, but the  
11 whole point of this is to have only one reservoir  
12 filled. We can't have both filled, because we need to  
13 be able to move the water up and then release it back  
14 down. Obviously, if the upper is filled, the whole  
15 point of the project goes away. So I can say,  
16 definitively, we're going to fill one reservoir. We're  
17 going to fill the lower reservoir, and the water will  
18 move back and forth between the two.

19 MR. PIERCE: Thank you.

20 MR. BORGQUIST: Yes.

21 MS. DESCHENE: I'm Kimberly Deschene, and  
22 I'm the county attorney of Meagher County. And I guess  
23 I have a question. I knew about this meeting because of  
24 someone at work helping -- doing some legal work for  
25 this project. But otherwise, I didn't know about it

1 through the Billings Gazette. I'm wondering why this  
2 isn't being held in Meagher County where the -- the  
3 whole project seems to be occurring in Meagher County.  
4 So why are we --

5 MR. BORGQUIST: Well, we made a tactical  
6 decision that this was the closest sort of locale, more  
7 widely populated locale and a central location to hold  
8 the meeting. Again, I made the decision that Billings  
9 was the closest, largest paper. And then, again, I'd be  
10 happy to give you the list. We tried very hard to go  
11 out and invite as many people as we could think of to  
12 come in.

13 I will tell you this, we are happy -- for  
14 any of you in the audience -- happy to meet any of you,  
15 your neighbors, anybody else that's interested in the  
16 project and give them a brief of what's going on, and a  
17 special one. So don't feel like this is the last shot.  
18 We are going to make ourselves available to see anybody  
19 that wants to talk to us about the project or how it's  
20 coming together.

21 MS. DESCHENE: I guess the other thing I'm  
22 interested in is how will it benefit the community?  
23 Like Meagher County, how will it affect the locals? We  
24 have had this -- Errol Galt came in, I guess, a year ago  
25 and asked for a tax exemption, like a large one, like a

1 \$5 million tax exemption, which I think they -- the  
2 commissioners gave. Again, I don't have the specifics  
3 right about that. But everyone wanted that to happen.  
4 They think it's great energy and that it's good for the  
5 world. But how does it benefit the local community?

6 MR. BORGQUIST: As it turns out, I'm just  
7 about to talk about that section. And I want to  
8 encourage you -- let me -- I'll do that, and then if I  
9 didn't answer a question, please stand up and ask again.  
10 Yes, sir.

11 JOEL WALDNER: Joel Waldner.

12 MR. BORGQUIST: Hold on, sir. I didn't  
13 catch your name.

14 JOEL WALDNER: Joel Waldner. Let's say  
15 you've got the 4,050 acre-feet in the reservoir. You've  
16 got evaporation. You've got water laws. How is that  
17 going to be maintained?

18 MR. BORGQUIST: Again, today, I don't want  
19 to speak specifically about the water issue, because  
20 we're trying to develop that plan. But, obviously,  
21 we're going to try to find within the system -- we can't  
22 create new water out of the system. We'll have to  
23 purchase water within the system and within the buckets  
24 that are in the system, both for the initial fill and to  
25 deal with any evaporation. Again, I just don't want to

1 go off and speculate. If that's an issue that you're  
2 interested in, we will make sure -- please pull one of  
3 us aside, and we'll make sure that you are getting  
4 information as we're working on that plan.

5 But we're engaged with the water users right  
6 now and the stakeholders and trying to listen to  
7 everybody's concerns and develop a plan that is the  
8 movie effective that we can. Thank you.

9 So from a socioeconomic perspective, this  
10 project, from a capital -- total capital cost is about  
11 \$800 million. Which, I can't tell you exactly what the  
12 tax revenue will be from that, but let's just say the  
13 tax revenue is going to be substantial for Meagher  
14 County, it will. And we also will go through about a  
15 two-and-a-half-year period to build the project. There  
16 will be about 300 permanent workers necessary to  
17 accomplish that.

18 Then once the project is built, we would  
19 estimate between 12 and 24 permanent staff to run the  
20 facility, and those will be very high-paying jobs.  
21 Throughout the course of building this, and throughout  
22 the course of running the facility in the future,  
23 there's going to be a host of economic activity that  
24 comes out of operating an \$800 million facility. And I  
25 think that that will be much to the benefit of Meagher

1 County and Montana.

2 MS. DESCHENE: Do you expect these 300  
3 workers -- when do you expect them to be in place in  
4 Meagher County? And will they live there, or will they  
5 be these sort of transient, man-camp kind of workers?

6 MR. BORGQUIST: That's a good question.  
7 We've got, by the way, a certain time line. We're  
8 expecting the licensing process to take between two and  
9 a half to three years. So we're still two and a half to  
10 three years away from the point where we would start  
11 construction.

12 I think in terms of housing and dealing with  
13 the effects of the construction, you know, we're  
14 Montanans. I'm proud of this project, and we want to be  
15 here. We are going to work with the local community to  
16 figure out how to deal with the housing situation and  
17 any reasonable problems that come out of operating and  
18 constructing the facility. And I don't want to presume  
19 what those would be. I think the local stakeholders,  
20 politicians, jurisdictions, we will be engaging with to  
21 try to develop solutions that they are happy with and  
22 makes sense to them in order to deal with those  
23 problems.

24 Any other questions?

25 Okay, so this meeting is part of the

1 requirements that we have with FERC. It starts at the  
2 beginning of a 60-day period where we will ask the  
3 agencies, state agencies, Native American tribes, other  
4 stakeholders and individuals to come and let us know  
5 what you're concerned about and identify areas of  
6 information and studies that we need to accomplish in  
7 order to put together a competent licensing package.

8 We will then take those comments and  
9 requests and start putting together draft study plans,  
10 and plans to produce the information. If you're a  
11 stakeholder that's been in contact with us over that, we  
12 will be back with you to discuss that and make sure that  
13 the study plans look right. I think the point of this  
14 is we want to engage with you and have that dialogue and  
15 start to work cooperatively to put that information  
16 together to complete the license application.

17 And I'm just going to turn for a minute to  
18 Steve, if you want to say -- any other thing you want to  
19 say about that process?

20 MR. PADULA: Ultimately, this licensing  
21 process does have to end up on paper. I mean, you end  
22 up with a final license application with all the  
23 supporting information. I think the intent of the  
24 Absaroka Group, though, is to do more than that. It's  
25 to engage with folks. We want to have the dialogue. We

1 want to talk with you folks and hear really what your  
2 concerns and interests are so that by the time we  
3 dedicate this to paper, we really know that we've fully  
4 addressed your issues and we're on the same page in  
5 terms of your concerns, what information needs to be  
6 developed to address those concerns, and, ultimately,  
7 does support our application to the FERC.

8 And their job is to look at the work we've  
9 done and determine whether we have adequately addressed  
10 your concerns, and we have a complete plan for  
11 development, as well as the dealing with any potential  
12 effects of the project. They have to ultimately take  
13 our project and put it through the NEPA process, the  
14 National Environmental Policy Act process. So they'll  
15 be looking at this and doing their own independent  
16 environmental assessment based on the information we've  
17 generated.

18 We want to do this once. We want to do it  
19 right and complete the first time. I think it's to  
20 nobody's advantage that we end up with incomplete  
21 information, and then folks asking us later in time, why  
22 didn't you address my concerns? So, again, I think  
23 there's going to be a lot of effort on the front end to  
24 make sure we are talking with all the right folks, so we  
25 know what your concerns are and we can address them.

1 If anybody has got any specific questions  
2 about the FERC process, I'd be happy to address those.

3 MR. FOX: Jeff Fox, with the Renewable  
4 Northwest Project. Is FERC, then, the lead agency on  
5 the NEPA process?

6 MR. PADULA: Yes, FERC is the lead under the  
7 Federal Power Act. FERC is the lead agency on  
8 non-federal hydroelectric development. So that's where  
9 we fall as a private entity proposing a hydroelectric  
10 project.

11 MR. FOX: Thank you.

12 MR. BORGQUIST: So on your agenda, No. 7,  
13 how do you get involved? It is our intention to publish  
14 everything that we're doing on our website. We can get  
15 that address for you. Just see one of us for that. We  
16 will also, please, answer and respond to an  
17 old-fashioned telephone. So if you have any questions  
18 or anything comes up, please, track us down and find us.  
19 Again, if there's any groups or anybody here that you  
20 think we ought to talk to or engage with, I want to  
21 encourage you to pull one of us aside and we're going to  
22 be very responsive to that and go out and affirmatively  
23 meet with folks to have dialogue about the project.

24 We would like -- again, what Steve said, I  
25 want to reiterate. Our whole approach to this thing is

1 we'd like to do it right the first time. We encourage  
2 any of you that are concerned about anything to track us  
3 down so we can assess and deal with any of those  
4 concerns early. We'd like to go through one process of  
5 pulling together the information, providing the studies,  
6 and getting through that -- through this. That is an  
7 effective way for us to prosecute the development of the  
8 project. Some of these projects have difficulty because  
9 they seem to go on, and on, and then a new problem  
10 arises. To the extent that we can, we want to try to  
11 identify those now and get after them. So if there's  
12 anything, please see us and we'll start to dialogue with  
13 you about that issue.

14 Again, we have a site visit opportunity  
15 today at the top of the butte. If you come up, we've  
16 staked out the upper reservoir. You sort of get the  
17 view of the drop. We've cleared a little area so you  
18 can see from the top to the bottom where the project  
19 will be located. We are going to be available here to  
20 answer questions. Again, you can ask any one of us.  
21 Pull us aside, myself, Rhett, Paul and Eli in  
22 particular, if you've got any questions, you can track  
23 us down.

24 I really want to thank you for coming to the  
25 meeting. And thanks in advance for working with us and

1 having the conversation with us to help do this --  
2 prosecute this project in a responsible fashion.

3 I'm going to ask the panel if there's  
4 anything I've missed, anything that you think we need to  
5 talk about before I close the official meeting?

6 MR. PADULA: There's an information sheet  
7 which will help folks in terms of getting us  
8 information.

9 MR. BORGQUIST: These are in terms of  
10 finding us, consulting with us. These are on the back  
11 table. Please pick one up. Is there anything else?  
12 All right, anybody out there at this point have any  
13 questions for us before we kind of shut the official  
14 meeting down? Yes, sir.

15 MR. TOLIVAISA: Peter Tolivaisa, 2262 State  
16 Highway 294. Cottonwood Creek is currently dry. I  
17 would like to know if, you know, the water that is used  
18 for this project will eliminate Cottonwood Creek  
19 permanently? Or will the water be allowed to flow  
20 through? Because right now the 71 is just irrigating.  
21 Cottonwood Creek is dry. It is a pile of rocks. Now,  
22 with this added appropriation, will the water still  
23 flow? Water rights, I have water rights. They're very  
24 old. But appropriations for flow, will there be any  
25 flow through the project down to Cottonwood Creek?

1 MR. BORGQUIST: Again, I'm going to say on  
2 water rights, I'm not prepared to talk about the water  
3 rights issue with specifics right now. I will say this,  
4 Peter. There's only so much water in the system, and  
5 we're going to have to fit within the historical,  
6 practical tenets of that system. I don't want to say  
7 any more out of respect for the fact that we want to  
8 talk to you and others as we try to develop the plan.

9 Please, I would encourage you to stay  
10 engaged with us. We want to stay engaged with you, and  
11 we'll keep talking about this issue. But right now,  
12 we're still in the process of talking to the  
13 stakeholders. We've not finished that process. If I  
14 said any more, I'd just be speculating.

15 MR. TOLIVAISA: For the record, I would like  
16 to say that these are the principals of Deschene &  
17 Swandal, located in White Sulphur Springs. And I give  
18 Deschene and Swandal permission to talk to you and each  
19 other fully with my permission.

20 MR. BORGQUIST: I appreciate that, Peter.  
21 Thank you. And we'll do that.

22 MR. TOLIVAISA: I would like to know since  
23 this project is being done in Martinsdale, I would like  
24 to suggest that future meetings can be held at the  
25 Martinsdale Community Center, which is probably about

1 the size of this room and is five miles away from the  
2 site, instead of 30.

3 MR. BORGQUIST: Thank you for that. We'll  
4 take that under advisement as well.

5 MR. TOLIVAISA: Thank you, sir.

6 MR. BORGQUIST: All right, thank you all  
7 very much. Again, please track us down. We're going to  
8 be here for the next hour, hour and a half to answer  
9 your questions. Thanks very much.

10 (Thereupon, the public meeting concluded a 10:40 a.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE  
2 STATE OF MONTANA )  
: SS.

3 County of Missoula )

4 I, David E. Hix, ASCR, Freelance Court Reporter and  
5 Notary Public for the State of Montana, residing in  
6 Missoula, Montana, do hereby certify:

7 That I was duly authorized to and did report the  
8 testimony and evidence in this cause;

9 That the foregoing pages of this public meeting  
10 constitute a true and accurate transcription of my  
11 stenotype notes.

12 I further certify that I am not an attorney nor  
13 counsel of any of the parties; nor a relative or  
14 employee of any attorney or counsel connected with the  
15 action, nor financially interested in the action.

16 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and  
17 seal on this the 28th day of August, 2013.

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David E. Hix, ASCR  
Freelance Court Reporter,  
Notary Public, State of Montana  
Residing in Missoula, Montana.  
My Commission expires: August 1, 2017

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