

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE THE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

Great Basin Transmission, LLC

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Docket No. EL24-127

**MOTION TO INTERVENE AND COMMENTS OF
THE CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR
CORPORATION**

The California Independent System Operator Corporation (“CAISO”) submits this motion to intervene and comments in response to the Petition of Great Basin Transmission, LLC (Great Basin) for a Declaratory Order Approving Incentive Rate Treatment.¹ Great Basin’s petition seeks an order authorizing abandoned plant and regulatory asset transmission incentives for the Southwest Intertie Project–North Transmission Line (SWIP-North) and certain associated upgrades to the existing One Nevada 500 kV Transmission Line (ON Line) (collectively, the project). Any order addressing Great Basin’s petition should clarify that Great Basin may not recover any abandoned plant costs associated with the project from CAISO transmission customers until the CAISO and Great Basin have executed a project sponsor/entitlements agreement associated with SWIP-North and the Commission has accepted that agreement.

¹ The CAISO submits these comments pursuant to Rules 212 and 214 of the Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedure, 18 C.F.R. §§ 385.212, 385.214.

I. Motion to Intervene

Great Basin's petition concerns two transmission incentives for the SWIP-North, a project Great Basin proposes to build between the existing Robinson Summit Substation in Nevada and the existing Midpoint Substation in Idaho. If constructed, the project will facilitate the ability of California load serving entities to access out-of-state resources, including wind resources located in Idaho. As described in the petition, the CAISO Board of Governors (Board) identified the project for inclusion in the CAISO's 2022-2023 Transmission Plan for purposes of regional cost allocation provided the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) affirmed the need for Idaho wind in its integrated resource planning resource portfolios and subject to other specific conditions. Not all of these conditions have been met. In addition, prior to CAISO transmission customers facing any cost responsibility for the project, the CAISO needs to execute, and the Commission to approve, a project sponsor/entitlements agreement with Great Basin. The CAISO and Great Basin have yet to finalize or execute such an agreement. Because no other party can adequately represent the CAISO's interests in the proceeding, the CAISO's intervention is in the public interest and should be granted.

II. Comments

The CAISO submits these comments to clarify certain matters raised in the Petition, including the status of including Great Basin's project in the CAISO's transmission plan for purposes of regional cost allocation. As described in Great Basin's Petition, the CAISO identified that acquiring operational control of

entitlements on SWIP-North and developing the proposal with Idaho Power as a joint regional policy-driven project is the most cost effective way of addressing regional needs identified in the CAISO planning process by importing wind resources from Idaho based on the CPUC's integrated resource planning resource portfolios.² In December 2023, the CAISO adopted an addendum to the 2022-2023 Transmission Plan³ on an expedited basis to approve the project for inclusion in the transmission plan subject to several conditions. These conditions included Idaho Power filing and receiving approval to proceed with the project from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission by September 30, 2024.⁴ The CAISO Board took this expedited action in order to meet the timeline requested by Idaho Power.⁵

In the intervening months, Idaho Power and Great Basin have not reached an agreement with respect to the project and Idaho Power has not made such a filing. Great Basin's petition asserts that the Department of Energy's (DOE) selection of Great Basin for a capacity contract for 500 MW will address the

² Specifically, the 2022-2023 sensitivity portfolio and 2023-2024 base portfolio identify 1,000 MW of Idaho wind resources to be imported into the CAISO.

³ On December 14, 2023, the CAISO Board conditionally approved Addendum 1 to the 2022-2023 Transmission Plan, subject to several specific conditions. 2022-2023 Addendum 1 – Draft (Dec. 11, 2023), available at <https://www.caiso.com/documents/addendum1-draft2022-2023transmissionplan.pdf>. (Addendum).

⁴ Addendum at 6.

⁵ The conditions to include the project in the CAISO transmission plan included (1) the CPUC reaffirming the need for Idaho wind in its 2024-2025 transmission planning process portfolio decision; (2) Great Basin declaring its intent to become a Participating Transmission Owner (PTO) by July 1, 2024, submission and approval of its application in accordance with the CAISO Tariff and Transmission Control Agreement; (3) Idaho Power filing and receiving approval for its SWIP-related case from the IPUC by September 30, 2024 and (4) the Commission accepting Great Basin's transmission owner tariff and a transmission revenue requirement rate structure. Condition 1 has been met. The CAISO anticipates presenting to the Board Great Basin's application to become a PTO in the third quarter of 2024.

condition related to Idaho Power's involvement in the project.⁶ The CAISO has yet to determine if removing Idaho Power's involvement and substituting the DOE funding is a sufficient alternative approach to satisfy the condition for including the project in the CAISO's transmission plan for purposes of regional cost allocation. The CAISO intends to present this question to its Board later in the third quarter of 2024 and commits to update the record of this proceeding with any action the CAISO takes.

In its Petition, Great Basin states that satisfaction of the specified conditions approved by the CAISO's Board, or revision or removal of the conditions, are sufficient for the CAISO to accept cost responsibility for a portion of the costs of SWIP-North.⁷ Again, the CAISO emphasizes the conditions for including SWIP-North in the CAISO transmission plan for purposes of regional cost allocation have not been met. In December 2023, when the Board conditionally approved including SWIP-North in the CAISO transmission plan, the CAISO stated that cost containment measures also need to be specified in definitive agreements with Great Basin and filed with the Commission as appropriate.⁸ The CAISO is separately negotiating with Great Basin a project

⁶ Exhibit No. Great Basin-100: Direct Testimony and Exhibits of Mark D. Milburn, EL24-127 (July 11, 2024) at 11.

⁷ See, *for example*, Great Basin Petition at 11 (stating that it "recognizes that its ability to recover costs under the CAISO tariff, including potential abandonment costs will be subject to the satisfaction of the CAISO Board of Governors' conditions set forth in its approval of the Project, or in the alternative, compliance with a subsequent CAISO Board of Governors' approval to accept cost responsibility by revising or removing such conditions."),

⁸ See Board Memorandum re: Decision on Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP) North (Dec. 11, 2023) at 5, available at <https://www.caiso.com/documents/decisiononsouthwestintertieprojectnorth-memo-dec2023.pdf>. (Board Memo).

sponsor/entitlements agreement that discuss the relevant roles and responsibilities of each party during the development of the project and will include cost-containment measures. The CAISO will not accept any cost responsibility for SWIP-North until such an agreement is accepted by the CAISO Board and the Commission. Any order addressing Great Basin's petition should reflect that CAISO transmission customers will bear no cost responsibility for SWIP-North until and the Commission has accepted a project sponsor/entitlements agreement for SWIP-North between the CAISO and Great Basin.

III. Communications

In accordance with Rule 203(b)(3) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, the CAISO respectfully requests that service of all pleadings, documents, and all communications regarding this proceeding be addressed to the following individual:

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IV. Conclusion

The CAISO appreciates the opportunity to comment on Great Basin's Petition, and clarify the ongoing process in which the CAISO is assessing

whether to include this project in its transmission plan for purposes of regional cost allocation. Any order addressing Great Basin's petition should reflect that CAISO transmission customers will bear no cost responsibility for SWIP-North until and the Commission has accepted a project sponsor/entitlements agreement for SWIP-North between the CAISO and Great Basin.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Andrew Ulmer

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Dated: August 12, 2024

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have served the foregoing document upon the parties listed on the official service list in the captioned proceedings, in accordance with the requirements of Rule 2010 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 C.F.R. § 385.2010).

Dated at Folsom, California this 12th day of August, 2024.

/s/ Ariana Rebancos

Ariana Rebancos
An employee of the California ISO