



UTAH PUBLIC
SERVICE COMMISSION

June 7, 2011

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Utah Public Service Commission
Heber M. Wells Building
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

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RE: Comments on Docket 07-035-T14 – In the Matter of the Approval of Rocky Mountain Power's Tariff P.S.C.U. No. 47; Re: Schedule 107 - Solar Incentive Program; Request for Comments

Dear Utah Public Service Commission:

On behalf of Bella Energy, I am writing in response to your request for comments on *Docket 07-035-T14* and to encourage the continuation and expansion of Rocky Mountain Power's Solar PV Incentive Program. I appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this matter.

Bella Energy, founded in 1982, is one of the largest and oldest solar energy design and constructions companies in the Rocky Mountain west. Bella Energy was the successful bidder in Salt Lake County's 2.5MW roof-top solar PV project, located on the Salt Palace Convention Center. This project will bring more than \$10 million of economic development to Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County, while also facilitating expanded growth in convention and meeting business in the nation's largest solar-powered convention center. Utah has a tremendous solar energy resource, and Bella Energy has made a long-term commitment to do business in Utah, provided that the solar market is given a fair opportunity to flourish and compete.

We strongly encourage the continuation and expansion of Rocky Mountain Power's Solar Incentive Program, and caution that the termination or limitation of the program will thwart opportunities to expand Utah's untapped solar market potential. The Program, if expanded, could become an engine of economic development throughout the state, helping to create jobs and provide important risk mitigation benefits for the utility and Utah ratepayers. Our company has experienced tremendous growth from the creation and expansion of similar utility programs in other western states.

As one of the fastest growing states in the nation, Utah's energy demand is on an upward trajectory. We think it is practical to pursue all safe, reliable and cost-effective opportunities to build a comprehensive energy portfolio and circumvent increasing risks in the energy sector. Bella Energy believes that the utility solar incentive program can offer an economical resource for Rocky Mountain Power and its customers, while also helping to diversify our energy mix.



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We have learned that PacifiCorp conducted sensitivity analyses, as part of their 2011 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), modeling a distributed solar incentive program with incentives at \$2/watt and at \$1.50/watt. The 2011 IRP findings suggest that a solar incentive program in this range can be a low-cost resource for ratepayers – especially given the decreasing cost of PV generation equipment and the fact that customers also invest capital into the construction and ownership of energy generation equipment.

While solar energy is relatively new to Utah, solar technology has been in the commercial marketplace for more than 50 years. Solar technology continues to advance and the industry is growing rapidly, illustrated by the more than 10,000 people that attend the Solar Power International Conference annually. In March, I had the chance to present at a Solar Energy Finance Summit in San Diego that was attended by nearly 1,000 investors, bankers and developers. In short, solar energy is big business with a bright future.

In closing, we whole heartedly recommend that the Public Service Commission approve an expanded solar incentive program. An expanded utility incentive would lead to greater private investments in solar, spurring new and clean economic development in the Beehive State.

Best regards,

Ron Barness
Regional Director / Project Developer
Bella Energy Inc.