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STATE OF MONTANA

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April 2, 2009

Transmission Infrastructure Program
Western Area Power Administration
PO Box 281213
Lakewood CO 80228-8213

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) submits these comments in response to *Western's Notice of Proposed Program and Request for Public Comments* regarding the proposed principles, policies and practices Western will use to implement the Transmission Infrastructure Program that is meant to bring renewable energy resources to market.

Regarding Section IV-C of the Request for Public Comments concerning Western's establishment of factors to evaluate proposed transmission projects, the Montana PSC recommends that Western design its project review and evaluation process to include an advisory role for state utility commissions. State commissions' familiarity with their states' electric utility operations and transmission needs make them ideally situated to assist Western in the evaluation process. Like most state commissions, the Montana PSC has significant experience with various aspects of electricity transmission, ranging from our participation in regional transmission planning entities such as the Midwest Independent System Operator, the Northern Tier Transmission Group, and Columbia Grid to our regulatory authority over intrastate transmission.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Greg Jergeson

Greg Jergeson
Chairman