



# Oregon

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**To:** Energy Facility Siting Council

**From:** Sarah Esterson, Senior Policy Advisor

**Date:** July 9, 2021

**Subject:** Agenda Item F (Action Item):  
Hearing Officer Appointment for Eugene to Medford Transmission Line  
Request for Amendment #4 for the July 23, 2021 EFSC Meeting

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## BACKGROUND

The Oregon Department of Energy (Department) requests that the Energy Facility Siting Council (Council) consider and appoint a hearing officer to conduct all proceedings for the Eugene to Medford Transmission Line Request for Amendment #4 (RFA4).

The Eugene to Medford Transmission Line is an operating 146-mile, 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between PacifiCorp's Meridian Substation near Medford and PacifiCorp's Spencer Switching Station south of Eugene, approved by Council in October 1981. RFA4 proposes an expansion to the site boundary; the decommissioning of an existing 115 kV transmission line; construction and operation of new infrastructure including a 17.6-mile 230 kV transmission line and a 500/230 kV substation (Sams Valley substation); upgrading the existing Grants Pass substation and reconductoring a 4.9-mile segment of existing 230 kV transmission line; and, temporary modifications to existing access roads. The proposed modifications of the RFA4 would be located within Jackson and Josephine counties and the City of Rogue River. The public hearing on the DPO is anticipated to occur in 2021, following release of the DPO. Contested case proceedings are possible but not mandatory in Council's rules for Requests for Amendment Under Type A Review, and any contested case requests will be evaluated following release of the Department's proposed order.

## HEARING OFFICER EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Department recommends Council appoint Joe Allen, Senior Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) with the Oregon Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), as its hearing officer for all the proceedings of the Eugene to Medford Transmission Line Request for Amendment #4. ALJ Allen received a Bachelor's in business administration from the University of La Verne, and his J.D. from Trinity Law School in Santa Ana, California. ALJ Allen has served the OAH since August 2007. In that capacity, he has presided over numerous contested case hearings for a variety of state agencies, boards, and commissions, including the Oregon Department of Water Resources, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of

Education, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Human Services - Employment Department Tax Section, and the Oregon State Hospital. ALJ Allen has presided over some of the most complex hearings referred to the OAH, including the water rights adjudication in the Klamath Basin, hydro-electric dam proposals/hearings, and Special Education Due Process hearings for the Department of Education. ALJ Allen has also served as a trainer, mentor, and peer reviewer for other administrative law judges. ALJ Allen recently served as the hearing officer for the Madras Solar Energy Facility Application for Site Certificate, and is currently serving as the hearing officer for the Obsidian Solar Center Application for Site Certificate.

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION**

Based upon his experience and qualifications, the Department recommends Council appoint ALJ Allen as the hearing officer for the Eugene to Medford Transmission Line Request for Amendment #4.