



December 12, 2017

Tillamook People's Utility District
Board of Directors
c/o General Manager Todd Simmons
P.O. Box 433
1115 Pacific Avenue
Tillamook, OR 97141-0433

Via email: tsimmons@tpud.org

RE: Tillamook PUD Proposed Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Simmons,

The Oregon Farm Bureau Federation (OFB), Tillamook County Farm Bureau (TCFB) and Oregon Dairy Farmers Association (ODFA) write to urge the Tillamook PUD to avoid condemning valuable agricultural land for the new Tillamook to Oceanside transmission line and to reconsider both the need for the proposed transmission line as well as the route for any new transmission line that needs to be constructed.

By way of background, OFB is a voluntary, grassroots, nonprofit organization representing Oregon's farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas. As Oregon's largest general farm organization, its primary goal is to promote educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement for its members and the farming, ranching, and natural resources industry. Today, OFB represents over 7,000-member families professionally engaged in the industry and has a total membership of over 60,000 Oregon families. TCFB is the voice of agriculture in Tillamook County, representing members across Tillamook County, including several who would be impacted by this project.

The ODFA was founded in 1892 to work on behalf of the Oregon dairy farmers. Today, ODFA represents Oregon's 240 dairy farming families. Dairy farms are located in 20 counties and approximately 125,000 cows call Oregon "home." ODFA works to create an atmosphere that is conducive for Oregon dairy producers of all sizes and types of production in all areas of the state.

We believe that the transmission line proposed by Tillamook PUD has not been well vetted with agricultural landowners and will negatively impact agricultural lands in the county. We believe that transmission lines should be located to avoid losses of farmland and associated agricultural activities and remain within existing utility corridors, where those corridors are available. We also believe that an agricultural landowner should not be forced to accept a utility easement

when there are other siting options available to the utility. In short, we do not think you have met the very high burden of demonstrating that you need to site the new transmission line through agricultural land, nor do we think that siting this transmission line on agricultural lands is necessary for your operations. We have recently submitted comments on your application to the Public Utilities Commission and have asked to intervene in that case because of these issues. I have attached a copy of our comments as well as a copy of Oregon Farm Bureau's policy on utility siting for your review.

Tillamook PUD has failed to secure approval of most of the farmers whose property and livelihood will be impacted by the line nor have you accurately captured the myriad of negative impacts the proposed transmission line could have on agricultural operations within the line's route. Tillamook PUD has not addressed farming practices along the route, any conflicts with the transmission line, any potential mitigation it will provide for the farmers, and a myriad of other issues associated with agricultural compatibility.

Given that the construction and operation of the transmission line will be severely disruptive to the agricultural operations along the route, Tillamook PUD should not move forward with this proposal, which would result in the condemnation of large swaths of critical agricultural land. Construction of a transmission line will preclude impacted farmers from utilizing large portions of their property and require significant changes in farming practices during construction. Operation of the line can impact the ability to apply nutrients, aerially address pest and weed issues, and utilize drone technology to assist their operations. Additionally, we have had several reports of impacts to cattle from stray voltage along Tillamook PUD lines that the utility has not addressed.

We request that Tillamook PUD go back to the planning stage and more fully evaluate both the need for the transmission line and alternative routes that do not involve condemning valuable agricultural land. Agriculture is the backbone of Tillamook County, and we cannot afford to lose any farmland in the county. This proposal will impact multiple farms that are critical to our County's dairy industry, the largest employer in the County.

In the event that Tillamook PUD does secure approval to condemn agricultural land, we request that Tillamook PUD not resort to condemnation, but instead negotiate an easement with impacted landowners based on market rates for industrial/commercial land within the city. We also request that Tillamook PUD fairly compensate landowners for any loss in value to their operations or changes in practice associated with the utility line.

We urge the Tillamook PUD Board of Directors to withdraw its application to the Public Utility Commission, continue to engage with the public on an alternative route that will not impact agricultural land, and construct its route to utilize existing utility corridors. We also request that any easements acquired from agricultural land be negotiated with impacted landowners and be based upon market rates for commercial/industrial land.

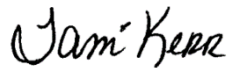
Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Tillamook PUD's proposed transmission line.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mary Anne Cooper at maryanne@oregonfb.org or Tami Kerr at Tami.kerr@oregondairyfarmers.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Anne Cooper', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mary Anne Cooper
Public Policy Counsel
Oregon Farm Bureau Federation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tami Kerr', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tami Kerr
Executive Director
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association