

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSIONER OF OREGON
INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
(NOT FOR MAILING)

GURU file
JUL 2 1982

DATE: July 1, 1982
TO: Pat Amedeo, Assistant to the Governor
FROM: Gene Maudlin, PUC (Ext. 8-6629)
SUBJECT: Wasco Electric Co-op Condemnation of Land to Serve Big Muddy and Others

The Wasco Electric Cooperative needs to increase the size of its electric line serving an area east of Antelope. This will benefit both the Big Muddy Ranch and about 12 ranchers in the area.

Wasco needs easements across several pieces of property, including the Scenic River section of John Day River and BLM land. It has been given the okay to cross the John Day, and it has an okay from BLM. It is being told, firmly, "No" by a private land owner, named McGreer.

You probably are aware that a McGreer daughter-in-law is among the opponents of the Big Muddy "city" proposal. The McGreer land cannot be farmed, except that it might be used for pasture. It is not now being used and it is not fenced. Basically it is scrubland. Wasco Electric wants to get an easement on 800 feet of McGreer land.

PUC will become involved because state law gives PUC authority to issue a certificate of "public necessity and convenience." With this certificate in hand, the applicant can condemn land needed for a right-of-way. Wasco has not yet filed, but intends to. We will make a study, and as part of this we will look for alternative routings.

There are two possible alternatives: One is to cross the John Day River twice rather than once. Wasco doubts they could get approval of that from the Scenic River folks. Second is to cross 730 feet of John Day Wilderness. They've already been told by the federals that they cannot expect to get a permit for that. Without prejudging the case, it appears as if they have chosen the proper route. It would be nice if we find a better solution, but it does not appear likely. After we make our study, we will offer to hold a hearing, and it's my guess that the McGreers will ask for one. The hearing almost certainly will have to be held in ~~the Antelope area~~ Wasco County (The Dalles?)

Wasco asks us to move with dispatch since they have a pretty attractive bid for the project to be done this summer. If they have to wait till winter it will add \$100,000 to \$200,000 to the cost, we are told. Big Muddy people's electric demand, by the way, already exceeds what Wasco can deliver with present facilities.

I thought you would like to know.

CC: Dave Fiskum