

## **Idaho Energy Complex announces new location for 1,600-megawatt nuclear reactor**

*1,400-acre site in Elmore County is now under option and offers better geology, easier construction*

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The Idaho Energy Complex has announced a new Southwest Idaho location for its 1,600-megawatt nuclear reactor.

The new 1400-acre site is in Elmore County, near the north shore of the Snake River, and only 15 miles upstream from the original site in Owyhee County on the south shore of the Snake River.

“When you add it all up, the Elmore site has pretty much all the advantages of the Owyhee site, none of the disadvantages and a number of extra advantages that will simplify construction of what is arguably the most complex single land-based structure humans typically build,” Gillispie said. “We are ambitious and we are constantly striving to improve what we are doing.”

Gillispie said no one single reason prompted the move to the Elmore site, which is currently farmed for hay. Preliminary geologic studies a year ago found old underground faults at the Owyhee site but they were not serious enough to stall the project. However, they are adding significantly to analytical and construction expense. This fact, coupled with the high land costs, makes the Owyhee site less attractive.

“Nuclear plants operate safely in some of the most seismically active places in world such as California and Japan,” Gillispie said, “But we are an investor-owned company and as CEO, my first responsibility is to my shareholders. If we can offer a better product at a lower cost at a different location, I have to go to that location.”

Gillispie and company representatives will be making an informal presentation to the Elmore County Commission soon, date and time to be announced. The company will also announce a new timeline for the project.

The Elmore site has a number of other important advantages over the Owyhee site, including:

- The Elmore site is level, simplifying development
- A rail line and highway run to the Elmore site. No bridge will need to be purpose-built over Bureau of Land Management property for transporting the millions of tons of building materials and thousands of workers that will be employed assembling the plant.
- The site is north of the Snake River so the reactor vessel and other large components, which weigh thousands of tons, will not need to be transported across Snake River bridges.

- The Elmore site is lower, with a 380-foot lift from the Snake River, compared to 480 for the Owyhee site.

Gillispie said that moving a plant a few miles isn't going to change the regional economic benefits significantly. An economic study calculated the IEC would grow employment in Elmore and Owyhee counties by 25 percent and produce total annual labor income impacts in Owyhee and Elmore counties of \$52.3 million during operation. Building one reactor would contribute \$2.6 billion to the State's economy, boosting it by nearly 6 percent, while its operation will generate \$74 million in state tax revenues a year.

"The people and leadership in Owyhee County have been extremely supportive of us and we are sad to pull up our stakes there," Gillispie said. "However, while the reactor won't be located in Owyhee County, Owyhee will be close enough to share in the economic benefits of the plant's construction, operation and payroll and we look forward to working with Owyhee people as our plant progresses."

As it turns out, the Owyhee County Planning and Zoning commission on Thursday unanimously approved a request by the IEC to construct two trailers and meteorological towers on the former site. The IEC made the application months ago and the planning and zoning commission took the matter under advisement. Gillispie also gave Owyhee County \$50,000 to cover initial application costs associated with the IEC. Now that the IEC is moving to a neighboring county, Gillispie said Owyhee County can keep the \$50,000 and use it for future growth-related needs.

Gillispie said the pioneering biofuels component of the IEC – piping excess reactor heat at an adjacent biofuels plant which uses local ag waste and crops – will remain the same at the new site. Local entrepreneurs have also expressed interest in building greenhouses to make further use of the hot water. As before, market interest will be the determining factor for the biofuels plant and other hot water uses.

Idaho Energy Complex ([www.idahoenergycomplex.com](http://www.idahoenergycomplex.com)) will be a 1,600-megawatt; \$4.5-billion advanced nuclear reactor with low cooling water requirements located about 65 miles southeast of Boise, in Elmore County. The plant will also include a biofuels component, using excess reactor heat to produce fuels from local ag waste and crops. Company officials plan to submit a Combined Operating License Application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in late 2008. The approval process is expected to take three years and cost \$80 million. Construction could begin as soon as 2011 and finish with power generation beginning in late 2015.