Milner Gas Power Plant (South Hills): Inconsistencies in the Record

Mini brief. Research file. Status as of November 19, 2026, 5 a.m. Mountain. Rev 2 adds answers found the same morning.

Each item puts two statements side by side that can't both be fully right as written. Intent isn't established for any of them. Where the record now settles the question, the item says so.

Idaho Power against itself

#	One statement	The other	Status
1	South Hills page: DEQ "would review and issue an air quality Permit-to-Construct before the plant begins operating."	Bennett Mountain page: the permit "must be approved before construction can move forward." Idaho rule IDAPA 58.01.01.201 agrees with the Bennett page. Site prep at Milner is planned for January 2027	Open. Ask DEQ whether the application is in
2	One version of the South Hills page: "up to 220 MW"	The other version and the PUC application: up to 222 MW	Use 222 MW, the filed figure
3	Site described as "the northwest corner of Milner Road and 5200 N E Road"	No road by that name on county maps. Idaho Power's own map circles the field at Milner Road and E 3610 N	Use Milner Road and E 3610 N
4	Brandon Prescott to KIVI, June 26, 2026: the plant is "to serve the customers within our service territory within the Magic Valley."	Reply comments, Aug. 14, p. 13: "The Company does not dispute that large loads are contributing to the capacity needs." Q3 call, Oct. 29: residential is "right around a percent" of the growth (third-party transcript)	Settled by the record. The need is driven by large loads
5	IDACORP CEO, Oct. 29: "We're strong advocates of Idaho's Growth Pays for Growth regulatory approach."	Staff asked for a reliability study without the Micron fab load and "the Company declined" (Production Request No. 25)	Answered, and worse. Idaho Power ran exactly that comparison when it wanted the Micron contract approved: Order 37039 (IPC-E-24-44, May 8, 2026) describes a "base case" with Micron and a "counterfactual, without the Micron FAB forecasted load." It ran the study to win the contract and declined it when the study would show who drives the plants
6	Hackett Direct, p. 27: renamed South Hills "to prevent confusion internally" with Milner hydro	Every PUC notice and news release since says Twin Falls County and never says Milner	Rename reason is plausible. The notices still left neighbors guessing

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#	One statement	The other	Status
7	Idaho Power says its supply and construction contracts carry overrun protections (as reported by a parallel review)	Staff, p. 18: the only contractual protection is in EPC agreements, which "only address a portion of the overall project value." South Hills' EPC wasn't signed as of Oct. 29	Open. Staff wants a hard cap
8	Project timeline graphic (Oct. 20) lists "public meetings and community outreach" in October 2026	No meeting date, place or notice found in county records, news or Idaho Power releases	Open. Ask Brady Lang, the project manager
9	Idaho Power says Order 36898 doesn't reach an RFP begun in 2024	Order 36898 took effect Jan. 2, 2026, and Idaho Power filed South Hills March 10, 2026, with no waiver. Rocky Mountain Power asked for and got a waiver under the same order (Order 37049)	Open. The final order should decide it

One company, two counties

#	Peregrine, Elmore County	South Hills, Twin Falls County
10	Conditional use permit, neighborhood meetings, a P&Z hearing Apr. 2, 2026, two board variance hearings May 15, 2026	Building permit only. Idaho Power says "power generation is a permitted use at the proposed site." No hearing, notice or written county determination found in 1,207 county PDFs
11	Published noise (variance to 75 dBA at 750 feet) and stack height (about 160 feet)	No noise or height numbers; stacks "comparable in height with existing transmission line towers and other structures in the area such as grain silos"

Twin Falls County itself is inconsistent here. Ordinance 282 requires a conditional use permit and a hearing for every wind or solar project. Ordinance 294 (Aug. 26, 2026) keeps "Public utility buildings and facilities" as a permitted Agricultural use. A solar array gets a hearing. A 222 MW gas plant doesn't.

The Feb. 11, 2026 commission agenda says Idaho Power met the board "to discuss Battery Storage Facilities." Idaho Power's own Milner battery bid had become a 222 MW gas plant four months earlier, in October 2025. The agenda line may have covered other battery projects. It didn't mention gas.

Timing that doesn't line up

#	Item	Conflict
12	Plant online June 1, 2029	Silver Spur, where NGI reports Idaho Power signed for 175,000 Dth/d, targets the second quarter of 2030
13	Idaho Power applied Jan. 2, 2026 for lot line adjustment Z2026-0001 at the site	The PUC application came ten weeks later. The April 9 P&Z agenda listed the item with no location. The county's acreage description (54.117 and 68.89 acres before the change) doesn't match the 2025 GIS roll (about 100 and 127 acres)

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#	Item	Conflict
14	HB 911 protects other customers from large-load costs	Only for contracts signed on or after July 1, 2026. Micron's fab contract, the main cause of the deficit per Staff, was signed November 2024
15	Money committed: engine deposit June 2026, equipment agreements for all three plants, $1.6 billion in fuel agreements April 2026	No PUC approval yet. Staff accepts the timing and still wants AFUDC denied until a certificate issues

Inconsistencies in other agencies' paperwork

#	Item	Conflict
16	Staff on the Peregrine turbine down payment	Page 10 says June 2025. Page 17 says April 2025. Idaho Power's reply says June
17	Comment counts	Staff: 152 as of July 31. Idaho Power: 186 as of Aug. 4. The cutoffs differ. Keep the two numbers apart
18	FERC Silver Spur scoping notice	Names "Mountain Valley High School" at 512 Main Ave. N., Twin Falls. That address is Magic Valley High School
19	FERC Silver Spur project page	Lists Power County. The scoping notice doesn't. Partly answered: FERC's page says Northwest plans facilities in Twin Falls, Elmore and Power counties, including new and modified compression in Twin Falls and Elmore. What sits in Power County isn't stated. Ask FERC staff before Dec. 14
20	PUC Order 37234 (IPC-E-26-26)	Prints a comment deadline of Jan. 8, 2026, already past when issued. Likely 2027. Confirm with the Commission Secretary

Found Nov. 19

#	Item	Conflict
21	Staff in IPC-E-26-04 asked the Commission to delay new large-load contracts until the deficit is fixed	The Commission put Chobani's new energy services agreement (IPC-E-26-19) on Modified Procedure Sept. 8 (Order 37159) while the South Hills case still had no order. Micron intervened in the Chobani case
22	South Hills is sold as one 222 MW plant on 20 acres	Silver Spur adds new or modified compression in Elmore County too, the same county as Peregrine. The pipeline serving both plants is a third project with its own footprint

Still unanswered after this morning's search

- Item 1: no DEQ notice for South Hills. A call to DEQ air permitting is the only way to know if the application is in.
- Item 8: no record of any October 2026 South Hills meeting in news, Idaho Power releases or county records.
- Item 13: the Z2026-0001 staff report sits behind the county portal, which needs a browser.
- Item 18: FERC's Silver Spur page wouldn't load. Confirm the Twin Falls venue by phone with FERC's Office of Public Participation, 202-502-6595.

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- Item 20: Order 37234 wasn't reachable. Confirm the comment year with the Commission Secretary.

Inconsistencies in the research, now fixed

- The CFO's "neither of those two plants are in that CapEx forecast" was about the 2031 and 2032 plants, not South Hills or Peregrine. Earlier drafts read it the other way.
- A Feb. 29, 2024 "RFP start" date came from an AI packet. That's the date of an unrelated Idaho Power filing (Rock Creek II hydro). Dropped.
- "The fence line moves onto federal ground" overstated the FERC filing. A 0.1182-acre strip Idaho Power owns is leaving the hydro license boundary.
- IPC-E-26-11 is an unrelated customer complaint, not a South Hills lead.

Sources

- IPUC Staff Comments, IPC-E-26-04, July 31, 2026; Idaho Power Reply, Aug. 14, 2026; Orders 36898, 37048, 37049, 37231, 37234
- Idaho Power South Hills pages: https://idahopower.com/energy-environment/energy/energy-sources/natural-gas/south-hills-gas-plant/ and https://idahopower.com/about-us/energy/energy-sources/natural-gas/south-hills-gas-plant/
- Idaho Power Bennett Mountain page: https://idahopower.com/energy-environment/energy/energy-sources/natural-gas/bennett-mountain-power-plant-proposed-expansion/
- IDACORP Q3 2026 call transcript (Benzinga): https://www.webull.com/news/15833623493964800
- KIVI, June 26, 2026
- Twin Falls County agendas, minutes, Ordinances 282 and 294; permit portal record Z2026-0001 (via the Nov. 18 New Findings notes)
- Elmore County CUP-2025-32 staff report and May 15, 2026 minutes
- FERC PF26-15 scoping notice, 91 FR 74153; NGI, Oct. 8, 2026
- Idaho Code 61-335 (HB 911)
- IPUC Order 37039 (Micron FAB contract), May 8, 2026: https://puc.idaho.gov/Fileroom/PublicFiles/ELEC/IPC/IPCE2444/OrdNotc/20260508Final_Order_No_37039.pdf
- IPUC Order 37159 (Chobani, Modified Procedure), Sept. 8, 2026, as reported by Energy Central, Sept. 11, 2026
- FERC Silver Spur project page: https://www.ferc.gov/silver-spur-project
- Full citations: Milner Gas Power Plant Expanded Briefing (rev 3)

Revision block

- rev 2, Nov. 19, 2026: searched for answers. Item 5 answered (Idaho Power ran a with-and-without-Micron analysis in IPC-E-24-44); item 19 partly answered; added items 21 and 22; listed what's still open.
- rev 1, Nov. 19, 2026: first version. Pulled from the expanded briefing rev 3, the accountability repository rev 2 and this morning's primary-record checks.

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