

Feeding the Beast That Will Eat Us

Players and Personnel

A working guide to the companies advocating for, proposing, or building large-scale energy projects in Idaho, and the state officials who regulate them. Entries are grounded in public records and company filings, with anything that could not be confirmed from a primary source flagged as such.

JEFF A. PIERSON · JEROME, IDAHO · JEFFAPIERSON.COM · JEFFAPIERSON.SUBSTACK.COM

Advocacy organizations

Renewable Northwest (RNW). Nonprofit renewable-energy advocacy organization, founded 1994, headquartered in Portland, Oregon, working across Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Its membership is a mix of renewable and storage companies, engineering and law firms, ratepayer advocates, and environmental groups. Its Idaho Policy Manager is Aaron Menenberg (joined January 2025), and its Regulatory Affairs Director is Mike Goetz. RNW engages before state utility commissions, the Bonneville Power Administration, and regional market forums. (Source: renewablenw.org.)

Idaho Energy Freedom (IEF). A business coalition and nonprofit formed in September 2022 and based in Boise, chaired by longtime energy attorney Peter Richardson. It advocates for clean-energy development and for changes to Idaho siting and permitting, and it runs an annual "Energy Freedom Day" at the Capitol. More than twenty organizations have participated, among them Clenera, Avista, Idaho State University's Energy Systems Technology and Education Center, NorthRenew, and the City of Boise. Its registered address, 515 N. 27th Street in Boise, is the same as the law firm Richardson Adams PLLC (confirmed). The series treats IEF as a developer-aligned front group; that characterization is the series' analysis. What is documented is the shared address, Richardson's dual role as chairman and utility attorney, and the participation of developers that stand to benefit from the policies IEF promotes. (Sources: idahoenergyfreedom.org; Idaho Capital Sun.)

Developers and builders of large-scale projects

KEY NUMBERS

\$67B
NextEra's pending all-stock acquisition of **Dominion Energy**, announced May 2026

23%
Idaho Power's stake in **SWIP-North**, for 500 MW northbound

77%
CAISO's share of SWIP-North funding

145k
Avista electric customers in northern Idaho

PARTIES TO WATCH

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Lodge, Hammond, Hardie

OEMR
Cally Younger, administrator

Idaho Energy Freedom
Peter Richardson, chairman

LS Power
Magic Valley Energy, Great Basin Transmission

Clenera. Boise-based utility-scale solar and energy-storage developer and independent power producer, and the U.S. subsidiary of Israel's Enlight Renewable Energy (Nasdaq: ENLT). Founded in 2013 by Jason Ellsworth (CEO) and Adam Pishl, with roughly 120 employees, about 90 percent of them in the Treasure Valley, and a multi-gigawatt national development pipeline. Clenera participates in Idaho Energy Freedom. (Sources: clenera.com; Enlight; IEF business spotlight.)

NextEra Energy Resources. The competitive generation and development arm of NextEra Energy (NYSE: NEE), and the world's largest developer of wind, solar, and battery storage. In Idaho, it won Power County approval in 2022 for the Moon Crater Solar and Storage Project, roughly 300 MW of solar paired with storage, described at the time as Idaho's largest solar project, and it has pursued battery-storage proposals in the Magic Valley region. NextEra Energy Resources CEO: Rebecca Kujawa. NextEra Energy chairman and CEO: John Ketchum. (Sources: nexteraenergyresources.com; Idaho State Journal; newsdata.com.)

Pending acquisition of Dominion. On May 18, 2026, NextEra Energy announced an agreement to acquire Dominion Energy in an all-stock transaction valued at about \$67 billion, the largest power-sector acquisition on record. The combined company would be the largest regulated electric utility in the United States, serving roughly 10 million customers across Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, with a very large data-center load pipeline. The deal is pending multiple state and federal regulatory approvals as of mid-2026. (Sources: Bloomberg; Utility Dive; company announcement.)

Magic Valley Energy / LS Power. Magic Valley Energy LLC is the Idaho development affiliate of the private energy company LS Power. It submitted the Lava Ridge Wind Project to the Bureau of Land Management in 2020; the federal approval for Lava Ridge was later cancelled. A separate LS Power subsidiary, Great Basin Transmission LLC, owns the Southwest Intertie Project-North (SWIP-North). LS Power Development president: Paul Thessen. (Sources: lspower.com; Idaho Power; magicvalley.com.)

Dominion Energy. Virginia-based utility and energy company (NYSE: D). It is not an Idaho-regulated utility, but it has two Idaho-relevant lines of business. First, it owns western solar generation, including the 240 MW Escalante Solar Project in Beaver County, Utah, whose output is sold to Rocky Mountain Power, the utility

that serves eastern Idaho. Second, it owns a renewable natural gas business that captures methane from livestock operations through anaerobic digesters (biodigesters): the Align RNG joint venture with Smithfield Foods on hog farms, and a partnership of more than \$200 million with Vanguard Renewables to build manure-only dairy digesters, with early projects in Georgia, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. Idaho is major dairy country, which makes the dairy-digester model regionally relevant, although no specific Idaho Dominion biodigester was confirmed for this guide. Dominion is the target of NextEra's pending acquisition described above. (Sources: dominionenergy.com; BioCycle; Align RNG; Wikipedia/Escalante.)

Triple Oak Power. A renewable-energy developer identified in the series' reporting as an IEF-linked developer. Its specific Idaho project footprint could not be independently verified for this guide and is flagged for confirmation.

Utilities

Idaho Power (IDACORP, NYSE: IDA). Investor-owned utility serving southern Idaho, including the Magic Valley, regulated by the Idaho Public Utilities Commission. It is a co-owner of SWIP-North, holding roughly a 23 percent stake for about 500 MW of northbound import capacity, alongside the California Independent System Operator's roughly 77 percent. Idaho Power publicly disputes the framing that SWIP-North is a California export line, stating its ownership only allows importing power from south to north. The IPUC granted SWIP-North a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity in December 2025. (Source: idahopower.com.)

Avista (Avista Corp, NYSE: AVA). Investor-owned utility headquartered in Spokane, Washington, serving northern Idaho (about 145,000 Idaho electric customers) plus eastern Washington and parts of Oregon, regulated by the IPUC, with recent Idaho rate increases taking effect in 2025 and 2026. President and CEO: Heather Rosentrater. Avista participates in Idaho Energy Freedom. (Source: myavista.com; IPUC filings.)

Transmission developers

LS Power / Great Basin Transmission (SWIP-North). SWIP-North is a transmission line of more than \$1 billion, running 285 miles at

500 kilovolts from Idaho Power's Midpoint substation near Twin Falls to the Robinson Summit substation near Ely, Nevada, enabling roughly 2,000 MW of bidirectional flow. It was selected for a U.S. Department of Energy Transmission Facilitation Program capacity contract, with a federal loan of up to \$331 million reported, and it was conditionally approved in the CAISO transmission plan. Funding is split roughly 77 percent CAISO and 23 percent Idaho Power. Construction is moving toward a late-2020s in-service target. (Sources: lspower.com; Utility Dive; CPUC filing.)

Grid United. An independent transmission developer founded by Michael Skelly. Its flagship is the North Plains Connector, a roughly 420-mile high-voltage direct-current line linking the Eastern and Western grids across Montana and North Dakota, developed with ALLETE and Berkshire Hathaway Energy's transmission arm. Grid United's direct Idaho project role could not be independently confirmed for this guide. (Source: Grid United; BusinessWire.)

Legal, finance, and institutional

Richardson Adams PLLC. Boise energy-law firm; principal Peter J. Richardson (Idaho Bar No. 3195). By his firm's own account, Richardson served in the IPUC Deputy Attorney General's office from 1984 to 1988, then built a private practice representing large industrial customers, consumer-owned utilities, and independent power producers before the same commission. He chairs Idaho Energy Freedom, and the firm shares its 515 N. 27th Street address with IEF. (Source: richardsonadams.com.)

Hawley Troxell. One of Idaho's largest law firms. The series' reporting identifies it as the private-representation leg of a set of overlapping roles that also includes advocacy (IEF) and state bonding (IERA). That characterization is the series' analysis; the firm itself is a real and prominent Idaho firm, and any specific tie should be sourced to filings or engagement records before publication.

Idaho Energy Resources Authority (IERA). An independent public authority created by the Legislature that can issue bonds to help finance energy facilities and transmission in Idaho. Confirm current membership and any project-specific bonding against IERA records before publishing specifics.

BlackRock and Vanguard. The two largest asset managers. Through index and other funds they hold significant minority stakes in most large public companies, including Idaho Power's parent IDACORP and NextEra Energy. The series treats this common ownership as a link between nominally competing firms. One accuracy note the reporting should keep: these are overwhelmingly passive, diversified holdings spread across the entire market, not operational control, and that distinction matters if the claim is going to hold up.

Key Idaho state personnel and bodies

Governor. Brad Little.

Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC). Three governor-appointed commissioners regulate investor-owned electric, gas, water, and telecommunications utilities in Idaho. As of 2026 they are Edward Lodge (President, appointed February 2023), John Hammond (a former lead Deputy Attorney General for the PUC), and Dayn Hardie. Commission Administrator: Taylor Thomas. The IPUC granted the SWIP-North CPCN in December 2025. (Source: puc.idaho.gov.)

Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (OEMR). Coordinates state energy and mineral policy, permitting, and grid-resilience funding, and prepares the annual Idaho Energy and Mineral Landscape. It oversees the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance and the Idaho Advanced Nuclear Energy Task Force. Administrator: Cally Younger (appointed February 2025), who also chairs the Governor's SPEED Council. Her predecessor was Richard Stover; before him, John Chatburn. (Source: oemr.idaho.gov; Office of the Governor.)

SPEED Council. Created by executive order in 2025 to expedite state permitting on large projects, chaired by the OEMR administrator and composed of several agency directors. Relevant to any fast-tracked energy, transmission, or data-center project. (Source: Office of the Governor.)

Also relevant, and worth adding as reporting requires: the Idaho Attorney General, the Department of Lands (state-land siting), and the Department of Water Resources (water rights and data-center loads).

Individuals: verification status

A quick status check on individual names, so the confirmed ones can go straight into print and the rest can be pinned down before publication.

- **Peter Richardson.** VERIFIED. Richardson Adams principal; former IPUC deputy attorney general (1984 to 1988); Idaho Energy Freedom chairman.
- **Aaron Menenberg.** VERIFIED. Renewable Northwest Idaho Policy Manager since January 2025.
- **Ron Williams.** NOT CONFIRMED for this guide. Reportedly connects IEF advocacy, state bonding (IERA), and private legal representation (Hawley Troxell). A Ron Williams is a known Idaho lobbyist and attorney; the specific roles were not verified from public records here.
- **Kyle Unruh.** NOT CONFIRMED. Reportedly holds roles at both IEF and Renewable Northwest. RNW's public staff listing does not show him, so treat the dual-role claim as unverified until sourced.
- **Leon Letson (Idaho Power) and Ufuoma Ojumah (NextEra).** NOT CONFIRMED here. Identified as the companies' representatives at the Jerome County Planning and Zoning hearings.
- **Max Stein (Clenera) and Scott Kringen (Triple Oak).** NOT CONFIRMED here. Identified as developer representatives on the IEF board.
- **Jerome County commissioners.** Confirm the current commissioners and the exact terms of Emergency Ordinance 2025-01 against county records before printing names.

Feeding the Beast That Will Eat Us · Working Reference · July 2026

Jeff A. Pierson · Jerome, Idaho · jeffapierson.com · jeffapierson.substack.com

© 2026 Jeff A. Pierson · Republication permitted with attribution.