Avista Submits 2017 Electric Integrated Resource Plan

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Plan shows adequate resources to meet customer needs through 2026

SPOKANE, Wash., Aug. 31, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Looking to the future, Avista Utilities, an operating division of Avista Corp. (NYSE:AVA), projects having adequate resources between company-owned and contractually controlled generation, combined with conservation and market purchases to meet customers' energy needs through 2026. The information is included in Avista's 2017 Electric Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) which was filed today with the Washington and Idaho public utility commissions.

As required by the commissions, Avista produces an electric IRP every two years detailing projected growth in demand for energy and the new resources needed to serve customers over the next 20 years. The IRP is developed through a public process that includes customers, environmental organizations and business groups, elected officials, utility commission staff, and Avista's energy resource analysts.

The first anticipated resource acquisition is expected in 2026 with the return of demand response programs. The programs will temporarily reduce demand during times of peak energy use which helps delay the acquisition of new generation. Other anticipated future resources are updates to existing thermal plants and a natural gas-fired peaking facility.

In the 2018-2037 IRP timeframe, Avista anticipates customer load growth of 0.5 percent, replacing the 0.6 percent projected growth in the 2015 IRP. The lower load growth and addition of new hydropower contracts are contributing to the delay in the date for new resources which was projected in the 2015 IRP to be by the end of 2020.

"The IRP is a 20-year plan to meet customers' needs for safe, reliable energy while balancing environmental responsibility, energy efficiency and cost," said Jason Thackston, Avista's senior vice president of energy resources. "Avista's projected greenhouse gas emissions associated with the generation portfolio in this IRP is 29 percent lower than the projected greenhouse gas emissions associated with the portfolio identified in the 2015 IRP. We are pleased to have a plan that builds on our already important commitment to the environment."

Some highlights of the 2017 IRP include:

- Avista's current generation resources remain cost effective and reliable sources of power to meet future customer needs over the next 20 years.
- Energy storage costs are significantly lower than the last IRP which for the first time makes the technology operationally attractive in meeting energy needs in the 20-year timeframe of the 2017 IRP.
- Avista has released a Request for Proposals to develop up to a 15 MW (DC) solar facility for the company's new Solar Select Program for commercial and industrial customers.
- This study estimates conservation will serve 53.3 percent of future load growth.

Over 50 percent of Avista's company-owned and contracted generation is from renewable energy, including hydro, wind and biomass. These current generation sources, plus new solar resources represent renewable options available to Avista. More information on Avista's diverse energy mix and the IRP is available at myavista.com/IRP.

About Avista Utilities
Avista Utilities is involved in the production, transmission and distribution of energy. We provide energy services and electricity to 379,000 customers and natural gas to 342,000 customers in a service territory that covers 30,000 square miles in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and parts of southern and eastern Oregon, with a population of 1.6 million. Avista Utilities is an operating division of Avista Corp. (NYSE:AVA). For more information, please visit www.myavista.com.

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This news release contains forward-looking statements regarding the company's current expectations. Forward-looking statements are all statements other than historical facts. Such statements speak only as of the date of the news release and are subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond the company's control, which could cause actual results to differ materially from the expectations. These risks and uncertainties include, in addition to those discussed herein, all of the factors discussed in the company's and the Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2017, and its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2016.

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