
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

March 7, 2013

To the Editor,

Trustee Lee Freeman's plan to "save" bankrupt Southern Montana Electric Generation & Transmission:

"Off" the hook are Highwood's bond holders and underwriters. ("Off" also are Yellowstone Valley Electric Co-op and now Great Falls: March 5 *GF Tribune*).

"On" for \$187,000,000 + bankruptcy expenses are four rural co-ops, forced into open-price (!) electricity contracts for 20-24 years.

Here's "The Math": Great Falls and YVEC (about 35% of Southern's sales) are gone. How do the remaining runt co-ops pay the bill the whole herd couldn't pay?

"The Math" is why Southern is bankrupt, why Highwood's bond underwriters got double market-rate interest for their risk, why Highwood is idle (and will remain so until scrapped), and why the remaining co-op members' electric bills will certainly double and maybe triple under Mr. Freeman's balloon.

"The Math" is what Southern's members couldn't do in 2008, preventing rational choice then. They still can't, and they'll be had again.

Tim Gregori knew not to pull the pig from the sack and then attempt a lipstick disguise in 2008. So does Lee Freeman in 2013. The pig stays in, with "SECRET" lipsticked on the sack. Hog Heaven is preached, with benefits "suggested," costs secret, and math impossible, as intended.

Tim Gregori: ". . . trust me . . . I'll free you from private power forever!"

Lee Freeman: ". . . just trust me . . . and, after 10 (?) years, you'll own Highwood, free and clear!"

Members: "Must be a good deal if you say so . . .".

Surely a seat on Modern Woodmen's, Morgan's or Prudential's board awaits.

Charlie Donnes