

# **YAKIMA COUNTY FARM BUREAU**

**[www.yakimacountyfarmbureau.com](http://www.yakimacountyfarmbureau.com)** **RECEIVED**

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MAY 22 2014

WASH. UT. & TP. COMM

May 19, 2014

TO: Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

FROM: Yakima County Farm Bureau  
Steven E. George, Secretary

RE: Pacific Power Rate Increase Proposal

The Yakima County Farm Bureau represents over 3,000 Yakima County members on agricultural related issues in Yakima and Klickitat Counties with the majority of members located in Yakima County. The Farm Bureau is a voluntary, grassroots advocacy organization representing the social and economic interests of farm and ranch families at the local, state and national levels. Yakima County produces nearly \$2 billion in agricultural products annually and is one the most diversified agricultural producing counties in the country.

We have been notified by an ad in the May 11, 2014 Yakima Herald Republic newspaper that Pacific Power is again asking for another rate increase. This request follows a nearly annual pattern for Pacific Power as they have requested and been granted increases for nearly a decade. The ad is very misleading by only noting a \$.60 per month cost increase for the average homeowner. This increase translates into hundreds or thousands of dollars for those of us that rely on clean electrical power to run electrical motors on our farms that do everything from pumping irrigation water to milking our cows. These rate increases that you keep allowing are very disproportionate to agriculture and business.

Agriculture is like any business, it has its ups and downs, unfortunately it seems like there are more down times than up times. We are currently in a financial

situation where agriculture continues to be a positive economic driver for our state and national economy. We know that this situation will not last forever, as forces beyond our control will affect our markets. Farmers and ranchers are price takers, not price setters. Agriculture is “input dependent”, relying on vast amounts of resources and those who supply them to produce and market crops. This “trickle down affect” is likely why a strong agricultural sector stimulates local economies so well. Everything from currency exchange rates, to the price of oil, to the mandatory minimum wage increases, effect the ability of agriculture to stay viable.

We have sent you letters for the past several years opposing these increases, yet you continue to allow them. We are again requesting that you do not grant any electrical rate increases this year.

Yakima County Farm Bureau opposes any rate increase for PP at this time. With several significant increases over the past several years, the last thing farmers need is another electrical increase from Pacific Power. Its time for PP to make due with what they have. Please do not allow another rate increase for Pacific Power.

- c. 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> District Legislators  
Yakima County Commissioners