### BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH

In the Matter of the Application of	)	Docket No. 09-035-15
<b>Rocky Mountain Power for Approval</b>	)	
of its Proposed Energy Cost Balancing	)	Rebuttal Testimony of
Account Mechanism	)	Philip Hayet for the
	)	<b>Utah Office of</b>
	)	<b>Consumer Services</b>

November 16, 2016

### 1 I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

- 2 Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, BUSINESS ADDRESS, TITLE AND COMPANY.
- 3 A. My name is Philip Hayet, and my business address is 570 Colonial Park Drive, Suite 305,
- 4 Roswell, Georgia, 30075. I am Vice President of J. Kennedy and Associates, Inc.
- 5 (Kennedy and Associates).
- 6 Q. PLEASE STATE ON WHOSE BEHALF YOU ARE TESTIFYING.
- 7 A. I am appearing on behalf of the Office of Consumer Services ("Office").
- 8 Q. DID YOU PREVIOUSLY FILE TESTIMONY IN THIS DOCKET?
- 9 A. Yes, I filed direct testimony on September 21, 2016 on behalf of the Office.
- 10 Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY?
- 11 A. The purpose of my testimony is to respond to the direct testimonies of PacifiCorp (also
- referred to as "Rocky Mountain Power" or "the Company") witness Mr. Michael Wilding,
- and the Division of Public Utilities ("Division") witnesses Mr. David Thomson and Mr.
- 14 Charles Peterson. Each of the parties provided recommendations to the Commission
- regarding the Energy Balancing Account ("EBA") Pilot Program, which is now set to
- expire in 2019. The following lists the witnesses and the topics that I address.
- Mr. Peterson Extension of time to review the Company's EBA filing
- Mr. Thomson Exclusion of prior period benefits and/or costs from the EBA
- Mr. Thomson Imprudent forced outages

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• Mr. Wilding – Include additional costs and credits in the EBA

#### II. EVALUATION OF PARTIES' POSITIONS

### 23 Extension of Time to Review the Company's EBA Filing

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### 24 Q. PLEASE EXPLAIN MR. PETERSON'S RECOMMENDATION TO EXTEND THE

### TIME FOR THE DIVISION TO REVIEW THE COMPANY'S EBA FILING.

A. Mr. Peterson explains that the Division does not believe that the four-month period available each year to conduct the audit of the Company's annual EBA filing is sufficient "to do even the spot checking that the Division attempts to do." As such, the Division recommends that the Commission permit more time for the Division to conduct its audit of the Company's annual EBA filing, and to consider setting interim rates. The Division's Evaluation Report stated that "this compressed time is not necessary and that an interim rate process would provide for relatively contemporaneous payments to either the Company or customers while allowing for a more thorough review."

## Q. WHAT CHANGES TO THE EBA DOES MR. PETERSON RECOMMEND TO EXTEND THE AUDIT PERIOD?

The Company would continue to make its EBA filing on March 15. Because of the extension, the Division would initially perform a preliminary review and would provide a preliminary conclusion as to whether the Company's EBA filing appears to be consistent with previous years' filings. Assuming no issues are found with the Company's EBA filing based on the Division's preliminary review, interim rates would go into effect on May 1 and would be amortized through April 30 of the following year. However, if the Division finds that the Company's filing is a "departure from past filings", it would petition the Commission to suspend the date interim rates would go into effect. Instead of filing its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Charles Peterson's September 21, 2016 Direct Testimony, line 146.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Division's May 20, 2016 EBA Evaluation Report, Docket No. 09-035-15, at page 5.

audit report on July 15 as it had done in the past, the Division's filing deadline would be extended by four months to November 15.

### 46 Q. WHAT CHANGES TO THE EBA HEARING PROCESS DOES MR. PETERSON

#### RECOMMEND?

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A. After the Division files its audit report, the Commission would schedule dates for comments and reply comments to be filed, and it would hold a hearing on or about February 1 of the following year. Mr. Peterson proposes that if true-ups to the interim rates were approved by the Commission, they would go into effect on March 1 and be amortized through April 30. Mr. Peterson states that if the Commission determined the true-up was a large amount and would be burdensome, the Commission could consider extending the true-up period.

### 55 Q. DOES THE OFFICE SUPPORT THE DIVISION'S RECOMMENDATION TO 56 EXTEND THE EBA AUDIT EVALUATION TIMELINE?

- The Office is sympathetic to the Division's concern that the EBA has a major impact on its staffing requirements and is performed in a compressed time, however, the Office would like to ensure that that the Division's request for an extension, which would add additional time to the process, would in fact lead to the Division being able to perform "a more thorough review." It seems reasonable that with the extension, the Division would be able to submit more discovery, would conduct additional and more thorough investigations, and would likely reach additional conclusions that might not otherwise be determined with the shorter evaluation period.
- Q. DID THE DIVISION PROVIDE ANY SUMMARIES OF ITS POSITION THAT
   MAY INFLUENCE THE OFFICE'S DECISION TO SUPPORT ITS EXTENSION
   REQUEST?

A. Yes, one of the Division's summary statements in its May 20, 2016 EBA Evaluation Report was:<sup>3</sup>

In sum, given that the EBA taxes Division staffing and consultant funding resources along with the lack of Division expertise as explained above, the Division's review of the EBA is limited and imprudent costs could elude review. For example, the Division has never attempted to apply the results of its spotcheck of a relatively few transactions to the universe of the Company's several tens of thousands of transactions during a given year. While the term "audit" has been used with the Division's annual review of the EBA, it is not an audit in the sense that the Division is making an attestation that the EBA amounts filed by the Company are "materially" correct (except for some few proposed adjustments). Instead the Division's audit means that other than the adjustments to the Company's filing that it brings before the Commission in a given EBA docket, it did not find any other problems with the filing as a result of its fairly limited review.

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The Office believes that the Division should provide an explanation of how it anticipates these expectations might change if its request for an extension in its audit review period is granted.

## Q. DOES THE OFFICE HAVE ANY OTHER CONCERN WITH THE DIVISION'S EXTENSION RECOMMENDATION?

Yes, if the Commission were to authorize an extension, the Office is unconvinced that interim rates would necessarily have to be incorporated in the process. Currently, the Company makes its EBA filing in March of a given year and new rates do not go into effect until November of that year. The Division's extension request would simply push out the date that rates would be made final by about four months. There is no compelling reason that interim rates should immediately go into effect just because the procedural timeline is extended by about four months. During that time, the Company would still be entitled to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Division's May 20, 2016 EBA Evaluation Report, Docket No. 09-035-15, at page 46.

collect carrying charges on the under-collected balance, or ratepayers would be entitled to receive carrying charges on the over-collected balance.

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### Exclusion of Prior Period Benefits and/or Costs from the EBA

- Q. PLEASE EXPLAIN MR. THOMSON'S RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING
  THE EXCLUSION OF PRIOR PERIOD BENEFITS AND/OR COSTS FROM THE
  EBA.
- 103 A. Mr. Thomson discussed this recommendation as follows:<sup>4</sup>
- "...benefits and/or costs from prior periods where the deferral amount has, by
  Commission order, been closed or made final, should not be allowed in future
  deferral periods, even if the benefit or cost is according to GAAP correctly
  accounted for in that future period. Not allowing benefits/costs from prior periods
  will not prevent Rocky Mountain Power putting on its books and records prudent
  Net Power Costs (NPC) booked according to GAAP."

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#### 111 Q. HAS THE OFFICE TAKEN A POSITION ON THIS MATTER TO DATE?

- 112 A. Yes, in testimony that I filed in the 2016 EBA Proceeding (Docket No. 16-035-01) on
  113 behalf of the Office, I supported the Division's recommendation to remove prior period
  114 benefits and costs that the Company proposed for inclusion in the 2016 EBA. In that
  115 testimony, I explained that once the Commission finalizes rates from prior periods, the
  116 Company should not retroactively adjust those rates, which is effectively what it does by
  117 introducing benefits and costs from a finalized prior period into a future period.
- 118 Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMMISSION'S
  119 OBJECTIVES FOR THE EBA?
- 120 A. Yes, I do. In its order on the EBA Interim Rate Process issued August 30, 2012 (Docket Nos. 12-035-67, 09-035-15, and 11-035-T10), the Commission stated it would "implement

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> David Thomson, September 21, 2016 Direct Testimony, at line 19...

a process requiring one annual rate change, following completion of the Division's audit."

I agree with the Commission's preference for having only one annual rate change with each

EBA, and I am opposed to the Division's recommendation to introduce interim rates, even

if the EBA proceeding was extended by a short four-month period.

### Q. WHY DID THE COMMISSION WANT TO AVOID HAVING MULTIPLE CHANGES IN RATES?

The Commission explained that a process that allowed multiple changes in rates would result in litigation of the same issues on multiple occasions<sup>5</sup>, which could conceivably happen if a cost from a prior period was accounted for in a future period. It is conceivable that with out-of-period adjustments, the Company could finalize rates for one EBA period, and then try to move costs from that period into a future EBA period. In effect, parties might have to litigate the same issues in multiple EBA proceedings. The Commission found that multiple rounds of litigation of the same issues would be inefficient and unjustified.

## Q. ARE THERE ANY OTHER REASONS WHY OUT OF PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED?

Yes, and the Division pointed this out in its 2016 EBA Audit Report, in which it stated that, "hypothetically, if the EBA had sharing bands until 2025, then the true-up or adjusting of costs from October 1, 2011 to January 1, 2024 could be done in the 2025 deferral period." While the Company might not necessarily attempt to make prior period adjustments spanning more than a decade, the Company did, in fact, attempt to make adjustments that spanned more than just a few years in the 2016 EBA proceeding. I agree

<sup>5</sup> Commission's August 30, 2012 Order at page 12.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> David Thomson Exhibit 1.2, Docket No. 16-035-01, Division's 2016 EBA Audit Report, at page 29.

with the Division that the Company should not be permitted to do this, and I believe that the Commission has established a preference for bringing finality to the rate setting process. I believe the Company should respect the fact that once final rates are approved no further costs or revenues should be introduced retroactively in a later EBA calendar year period.

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### **Imprudent Forced Outages**

### Q. PLEASE EXPLAIN MR. THOMSON'S RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING IMPRUDENT FORCED OUTAGES.

Mr. Thomson recommends "that the Commission should specifically clarify that ratepayers should not pay outage-related expenses for imprudent outages, whether the imprudence is due to the Company's direct actions or the actions of its agents or contractors." Mr. Thomson includes with his testimony, DPU Exhibit 6.1 Dir, which is a memo that its consultant, Daymark Energy Advisors ("Daymark") provided entitled "Prudence Review and Treatment of Forced Outages in the EBA." Daymark's memo focuses on imprudent outages and explains that net power costs typically are higher than they otherwise would have been had the imprudent outages been avoided. The Daymark memo refers to the Utah Code Ann. § 54-7-13.5(2)(b), which is the enabling statute for the EBA. The statute only permits prudently incurred costs to be recovered through the EBA, and Daymark argues that additional net power costs arising from imprudent outages should not be recovered through the EBA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> David Thomson, September 21, 2016 Direct Testimony, at line 183.

# Q. AT THIS TIME, IS THERE ANY REASON THAT THE COMMISSION SHOULD SPECIFICALLY CLARIFY THAT RATEPAYERS SHOULD NOT PAY OUTAGE-RELATED EXPENSES FOR IMPRUDENT OUTAGES?

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A. I completely agree with the Division that ratepayers should not be required to pay for outage-related expenses for imprudent outages, and I believe it would be fine for the Commission to confirm this; however, I have no reason to suspect that the Commission does not already agree with this.

### 172 Q. NEVERTHELESS, CAN YOU THINK OF AN EXAMPLE IN WHICH CLARITY 173 FROM THE COMMISSION WOULD IN FACT BE WORTHWHILE.

Yes. As the Daymark memo notes, some of PacifiCorp's generating unit outages have been either caused by non-affiliated plant operators at jointly owned plants, or by negligence on the part of an outside contractor hired by PacifiCorp to work on one of the Company's units. Typically, as Daymark notes, the Company would argue "that it is unreasonable to penalize PacifiCorp for a third party's performance when PacifiCorp has no contractual ability to seek recourse from that third party." I disagree with the Company's statement, and I believe the Commission should make it clear that besides potentially being held responsible for imprudent outages that the Company's own employees might cause, the Company could potentially be held responsible for imprudent outages caused by outside contractors working for the Company, and by outside operators of jointly owned plants. But, in fairness to the Company, I think that the Commission should also make it clear that it would evaluate all proposed imprudence disallowances based on the facts and circumstances of each outage.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> David Thomson Exhibit 6.1, Docket No. 09-035-15, Daymark Memo, at page 4.

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## WHY DO YOU BELIEVE PACIFICORP SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR IMPRUDENT OUTAGES CAUSED BY OUTSIDE CONTRACTORS AND OUTSIDE PLANT OPERATORS?

Because ratepayers are not involved in the operation and maintenance of generating units that serve their load, PacifiCorp is. PacifiCorp recovers the costs of its investments and earns a return on its investment, and it has the sole obligation to prudently operate its units, and coordinate the operation of its units, even if outside contractors are hired to work on its units, or outside parties operate its units. Customers do not have the right to select a different utility that they believe might operate units more reliably, and who would avoid acquiring replacement power. PacifiCorp has been granted a monopoly right to serve its customers, and with that right comes the responsibility to ensure that it operates its resources in a prudent manner. That responsibility extends to properly overseeing work that its outside contractors perform, and taking a role in the operation of jointly owned units, even if PacifiCorp is not the primary operator of the plant. Therefore, in addition to being held responsible for imprudent outages caused by its own employees, PacifiCorp must also be held accountable for imprudent outages caused by its outside contractors and outside plant operators. Given PacifiCorp's propensity for arguing it should not be held responsible when outages are caused by outside contractors or outside plant operators, it would be worthwhile for the Commission to clarify that based on the facts and circumstances associated with the outages, PacifiCorp could be held responsible for costs associated with imprudent outages caused by outside agents.

### **Include Additional Costs and Credits in the EBA**

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- 212 Q. PLEASE EXPLAIN MR. WILDING'S RECOMMENDATION TO INCLUDE
  213 ADDITIONAL COSTS AND CREDITS IN THE EBA.
- A. Mr. Wilding recommends adding chemical costs, start-up fuel/gas costs, and PTCs to the
  EBA, which he states "are either directly correlated with generation output, or are clearly
  and closely related to the generation process." Mr. Wilding also explains that these costs
  are volatile and vary with generation and weather, and that fluctuations in each of these
  costs are generally beyond the Company's control.

### Q. DO YOU AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE REASONABLE TO ADD THESE ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO THE EBA?

- A. My initial reaction is typically to react negatively to any proposal of adding additional items to fuel recovery tariffs. In my experience, I have seen utilities attempt to load in various unrelated costs into their fuel balances simply because of the ease of recovering the costs afforded by the fuel recovery tariff. However, in this case, I agree there is justification for including two of the items that the Company is requesting to add into the EBA, but I do have some concerns about the third item the Company is requesting to include.
- Q. PLEASE DISCUSS YOUR POSITION CONCERNING ADDING CHEMICAL
   COSTS TO THE EBA.
- A. To the extent that the consumption of chemical products varies with the amount of generation at the Company's units, I believe it would be reasonable to include these costs in the EBA. I recognize that the use of chemicals is increasing due to environmental installations at the Company's plants, which have been mandated by environmental

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Michael Wilding September 21, 2016 Direct Testimony, at line 183.

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regulations that the Company must follow. Both the per unit cost, and the quantity of the chemicals that will be consumed are factors that can vary over time, and will cause fluctuations in costs that PacifiCorp must pay for the chemicals. As such, I find it reasonable to include chemical costs in the EBA. However, my support is conditioned on an additional requirement that as part of the minimum filing requirements for the EBA, the Company must provide evidence that the chemical costs it includes in the EBA are "clearly correlated with generation output or were clearly and closely related to the generation process." This will help to ensure that other unrelated items PacifiCorp purchases and uses at its power plants are not also included in the EBA. Furthermore, once chemical costs are permitted in the EBA, they should be accounted for at the time of the next GRC.

## Q. PLEASE DISCUSS YOUR POSITION CONCERNING ADDING START-UP COSTS TO THE EBA.

- Fuel costs are already an important component of net power costs that are included in the EBA, and I believe it is reasonable to include start-up fuel costs as well. These fuels primarily include number two diesel fuel and natural gas, and it is necessary to use these fuels in operating the Company's generating units. Other utilities that I am familiar with can recover start-up costs in their fuel recovery tariff. Like chemical costs, once start-up fuel costs are permitted in the EBA, they should be appropriately accounted for at the time of the next GRC.
- Q. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION CONCERNING ADDING PRODUCTION TAX

  CREDITS ("PTC") IN THE EBA.
- 255 A. I neither support nor oppose including PTCs in the EBA. I understand the Company's desire to include PTCs in the EBA, given that PTCs vary with energy production; however,

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the Commission permit PTCs to be included in the EBA, I believe that it would be important to make such a change at the time of the next GRC.

### Q. WHAT ARE PTCs?

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PTCs are tax credits allowed under Section 45 of the Internal Revenue Service Tax Code that are offered as an incentive to encourage the development of renewable resources, and act as an offset to the developer's federal income tax liability. PTCs are determined based on the generation output of the renewable resource. For example, the production tax credit for wind is an inflation-adjusted per kWH tax credit that is \$0.023/kWh in 2016. The IRS publishes the applicable inflation adjustment factors annually. PTCs are available for the first 10 years after new renewable resources become commercially operable. PacifiCorp stated that beginning in 2017, some of its PTCs will begin to expire as they have operated for more than 10 years, which will have a significant impact on the Company's revenue requirement.

#### Q. WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING INCLUDING PTCS IN THE EBA?

I have a few concerns regarding including PTCs in the EBA. First, these are federal income tax related costs/credits, and I generally would prefer to reflect tax related costs/credits in base rates, not part of net power cost recovery. Second, one of the reasons that I support including chemical costs in the EBA is that chemicals costs vary with both the per unit cost of the chemicals, and the amount of the chemicals that are used. In the case of PTCs, the per unit cost is not variable, and is known in advance, and the only thing that is variable about a wind resource that affects the amount of the credit is the wind production. This makes it somewhat easier to predict the renewable resource related PTCs compared to predicting the cost of chemicals. Also, the variability of the cost of chemicals will also influence the dispatch price of the fossil generating units, and that in turn will affect the

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dispatch of the generating units. In the case of renewable resources, PTCs do not influence the dispatch price of the renewable resources. The dispatch price of the renewable resources is essentially zero. For example, in the case of a wind generator, when the wind blows, the resource is typically dispatched.

Third, the fact that the PTCs will expire on a known schedule and will have a significant impact on PacifiCorp's revenue requirements may not be sufficient justification for including PTCs in the EBA. For example, there are other items such as depreciation that decline on a known schedule and have a significant impact on the Company's revenue requirements. If necessary, the Company could always file a new General Rate Case in the event it believed the loss of the PTCs would have a significant impact on its revenue requirements.

#### Q. WHAT ARE YOUR SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS?

Concerning the Division's recommendation to extend the time to review the Company's EBA filing, in general, the Office believes the Division's request is reasonable, however, the Office recommends that the Division try to set expectations as to what additional benefits might be derived if the time is extended. Also, the Office believes that extending the audit period by four months does not necessarily require that interim rates be incorporated as part of the EBA process, and the Office recommends that aspect of the Division's extension request be ignored.

The Office supports the Division's recommendation to exclude prior period benefits and/or costs from the EBA. The Office believes the Commission would prefer reaching finality in setting EBA rates; the Company's preference to include prior period benefits and/or costs in a future period would in fact lead to rates changing retroactively, which the Commission prefers to avoid.

The Office supports the Division's recommendation that the Commission should clarify that PacifiCorp could potentially be held responsible for imprudent outages not only caused by its own employees, but also caused by outside contractors and outside plant operators of its jointly owned plants, based on the facts and circumstances of the outage events.

The Office supports the Company's request to include chemicals and start-up costs in the EBA. Chemicals do vary with the amount of generation produced at the plants, chemical costs have increased significantly over time given the increase in environmental installations that have been added to PacifiCorp's plants, and the total cost of chemicals are hard to predict because both the per unit cost of chemicals and the volume of chemicals used can fluctuate over time. The Office also supports the inclusion of start-up costs, simply because they are fuel costs, and it is generally standard practice to capture all fuel costs in a fuel cost recovery tariff. The Office recommends that the inclusion of both chemicals and start-up costs in the EBA should take place at the time of the next GRC.

Regarding PTCs, the Office neither supports nor opposes their inclusion in the EBA. PTCs are generation related, which suggests they could be included, however, the Office has some concerns about their inclusion. PTCs are tax credits, which are generally accounted for in base rates. Compared to other costs or benefits such as chemical costs, PTCs are less variable, since the per unit cost is well known in advance based on the federal tax code. Also, the Office discounts the Company's argument that PTCs significantly impact the Company's revenue requirements and are being phased out over time as reasons for including them in the EBA. The phase out schedule is well known in advance, the per unit cost of PTCs are known in advance of the dispatch of renewable resources, and PTCs are not the only significant revenue requirement related items that decline and are phased

0	DOES THAT COMPLETE VOLID TESTIMONY?
	change should take place at the time of the next GRC.
	the Commission desire to include PTCs in the EBA, the Office recommends that such
	Company could always file a General Rate Case to attempt to adjust its rates. But, should
	out that the Company must deal with. If the phase out of PTCs is a significant issue, the

Yes it does. 335 A.

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