APPLICATION OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER

20-035-04

March 05, 2020

ADVANCED REPORTING SOLUTIONS

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March 05, 2020

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8	20-035-04
9	Application of Rocky Mountain Power for Authority to
10	Increase its Retail Electric Utility Service Rates in
11	Utah and for Approval of its Proposed Electric Service
12	Schedules and Electric Service Regulations
13	
14	Hearing on Request for Approval of Test Period
15	March 5, 2020
16	8:57 to 9:13 a.m.
17	
18	State of Utah Public Service Commission
19	Thad LeVar, Commission Chair
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22	
23	Location: Heber M. Wells Building 160 East 300 South, 4th Floor, Room 403
24	Salt Lake City, Utah
25	Reporter: Tracy E. Barksdale, RPR, CCR

1	АРР	EARANCES
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Τ	PROCEEDINGS
2	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Good morning. We'll be on
3	the record in public service commission docket 20-035-04,
4	application of Rocky Mountain Power for authority to
5	increase its retail electric utility service rates in
6	Utah and for approval of its proposed electric service
7	schedule and electric service regulations.
8	This is a hearing on the request for approval
9	of a test period. My name's Thad LeVar, I'll be the
LO	presiding officer this morning.
L1	And why don't we start with appearances for
L2	Rocky Mountain Power.
L3	MR. MOSCON: Thank you. Good morning. Matt
L4	Moscon on behalf of Rocky Mountain Power.
L5	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
L6	MS. SCHMID: Good morning. Patricia E.
L7	Schmid with the Utah Attorney General's Office on behalf
L8	of the Division of Public Utilities. And with me as the
L9	division's witness is Dr. Abdinasir Abdulle.
20	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
21	MR. MOORE: Robert Moore on behalf of the
22	Office of Consumer Services. We have on the phone our
23	witness, Donna Ramas.
24	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. I'm assuming none of
25	the other intervening parties are in the room, no one

1	else provided testimony on this issue.
2	Any preliminary matters?
3	Okay. Mr. Moscon.
4	MR. MOSCON: Thank you.
5	We call Mr. Steven McDougal as a witness.
6	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Is there any objection to
7	keeping the witnesses at the table?
8	Let me ask the court reporter. Are you okay
9	if the witnesses stay where they're sitting?
10	THE REPORTER: Everyone has a mic; right?
11	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Yes.
12	THE REPORTER: That's perfectly fine.
13	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Let me swear Mr. McDougal.
14	(Oath administered to the witness)
15	EXAMINATION
16	BY MR. MOSCON:
17	Q. Mr. McDougal, would you please state your
18	name for the record.
19	A. Yes, my name is Steven R. McDougal.
20	Q. Mr. McDougal, have you prepared and filed any
21	testimony in this matter?
22	A. Yes, I have.
23	Q. Would you please identify what you filed in
24	this initial proceeding.
25	A. I filed direct testimony.

1	Q. And do you have any corrections to that, or
2	are you aware of any errors in that testimony?
3	A. I do not have any corrections.
4	Q. If I were to ask you the questions as set
5	forth in your direct testimony, would your answers today
6	be the same as they are in the pre-filed direct
7	testimony?
8	A. Yes.
9	MR. MOSCON: Rocky Mountain Power moves for
10	the submission of the direct testimony of Steven R.
11	McDougal.
12	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: If anyone objects, let me
13	know and I'm not seeing any objection. So the motion's
14	granted.
15	(Rocky Mountain Power Exhibit admitted)
16	MR. MOSCON: Thank you.
17	BY MR. MOSCON:
18	Q. Mr. McDougal, have you had an opportunity to
19	prepare a summary of your pre-filed testimony?
20	A. Yes, I have.
21	Q. Would you please share that with the
22	commission and parties.
23	A. Yes. Chairman LeVar, staff, parties, Rocky
24	Mountain Power is preparing to file a general rate case
25	on approximately May 5th, 2020, for new rates to be

effective on January 1st, 2021.

My testimony explains why the company is seeking a test period determination prior to filing the company's general rate case application and explains the reasons for the company's proposed test period that uses the 12-month period ending December 31st, 2021, with a 13-month average rate base referred to as the 2021 proposed test period. The DPU and OCS have both filed testimony supporting the test period, and no other party has filed testimony that is opposed to the test period.

As described in my testimony, a test period determination prior to filing the general rate case will simplify the filing process and allow parties to more effectively focus their resources on the relevant aspects of the case. My testimony explains why, after evaluating a variety of different factors, using the 2021 proposed test period that aligns with the rate-effective period is the test period that produces rates that properly reflect the costs of providing service to our customers during the time frame for which the rates are in effect.

The company has identified the major drivers that necessitate the need for its general rate case to be the capital projects associated with the wind repowering docket, new wind and transmission projects that have been heard before this commission, and the implementation of

1	the new depreciation rates, which is currently
2	outstanding.
3	As discussed in my testimony, the 2021
4	proposed test period is the only test period that fully
5	includes these three main drivers noted in my testimony
6	and provides the company the ability to recover its
7	prudently incurred costs related to the wind repowering
8	projects, the new wind and transmission investments, and
9	the depreciation rate changes.
10	I recommend that, based upon the reasons
11	above, the commission approve the company's 2021 proposed
12	test period.
13	Thank you.
14	MR. MOSCON: Mr. McDougal is available for
15	any questions.
16	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. Thank you.
17	Ms. Schmid, do you have any questions?
18	MS. SCHMID: No questions.
19	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
20	Mr. Moore?
21	MR. MOORE: No questions, thank you.
22	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. I just have one.
23	Do you disagree with the assertion of
24	Ms. Ramas that if the rate case filing date is not on the
25	date that everyone is expecting it to be, there might

1 need to be a modification to the test period? 2 MR. McDOUGAL: Not necessarily the test Yes. 3 period but the base period, which is what she was 4 referring to. Yes. 5 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. Thank you. I don't 6 have any other questions. 7 Anything else, Mr. Moscon? No, thank you. 8 MR. MOSCON: 9 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Ms. Schmid? 10 MS. SCHMID: Thank you. The division would 11 like to call as witness Mr. Abdulle. May he please be 12 sworn. 13 (Oath administered to the witness) 14 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you. 15 EXAMINATION 16 BY MS. SCHMID: 17 Q. Good morning. 18 Good morning. Α. 19 Could you please state your name, title, 0. 20 employer, and business address for the record. My name is Abdinasir Abdulle. I work for the 21 Α. 22 division of public utilities, and I am testifying on behalf of the division. And I'm the technical consultant 23 24 for the division. 25 Q. Thank you.

1	Have you participated on behalf of the
2	division in this docket?
3	A. Yes, I did.
4	Q. Did you prepare and cause to be filed your
5	testimony on February 26th?
6	A. Yes, I did.
7	Q. Do you have any changes or corrections to
8	that testimony?
9	A. Yes, I do.
10	Q. Could you please tell us what they are.
11	A. Yes. On page 6 of my direct testimony, lines
12	106 to 109, I have listed a number of facilities that the
13	commission has approved for powering. One of them is
14	not should not be included here. The Leaning Juniper
15	facility in Oregon on line 107 should not be included in
16	the list and should be stricken.
17	Thank you.
18	Q. With that change, do you adopt your pre-filed
19	testimony as your testimony here today?
20	A. Yes, I do.
21	MS. SCHMID: The division would like to
22	request that DPU Exhibit number 1.0-DR be admitted.
23	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: I'm not seeing any
24	objections, so the motion is granted.
25	(Division Exhibit 1.0-DR admitted)

BY MS. SCHMID:

- Q. Mr. Abdulle, do you have a summary to present?
 - A. Yes, I do.
 - Q. Please proceed.
- A. I have reviewed Rocky Mountain Power's request for commission approval of this proposed test period and the accompanying direct testimony of Mr. McDougal filed with the commission on January 17, 2020. Rocky Mountain proposed a fully forecasted test period, which is the calendar year 2020, using a 13-month average rate base. Rocky Mountain will use this test period in its next general rate case, which it intends to file on May the 5th, 2020. In this general rate case, Rocky Mountain Power intends to request rate-effective date of January 1, 2021.

Rocky Mountain Power is requesting commission approval of its proposed test period prior to the filing its next general rate case to simplify the process. If the test period is not identified prior to the filing of a general rate case, the Utah Administrative Code would require Rocky Mountain Power to file multiple potential test periods, and other parties will have to review them, thus complicating the process.

Rocky Mountain Power is applying for the

commission approval of this proposed test period prior to its general rate case application. Because of that, Rocky Mountain Power did not file the forecasts and all of the assumptions that Rocky Mountain Power used to construct this test period; hence, the division did not get the opportunity to review those materials. the division will make necessary adjustments that it deems appropriate as the division views Rocky Mountain Power's filing, including adjustments to forecasting issues.

To determine that appropriateness of the proposed test period, the division performed a compliance review of Rocky Mountain Power's application and determined that it complies with the relevant Utah administrative codes and Utah statutes. The division also considered the factors that the commission identified in its 2004 order of test period. Here the division determined that, as was indicated in the Governor's 2020 State of the State address, the economy of Utah is thriving. The division also determined that Rocky Mountain Power is deploying incremental capital because of investments in the commission approved wind powering and new wind and transmission projects. These capital investments, coupled with the implementation of new depreciation rates are the major drivers of the rate

1 case, as was indicated by Rocky Mountain Power. 2 Therefore the division concurs with Rocky 3 Mountain Power that, based on the timing of the wind 4 repowering, new wind, and transmission projects, and the 5 increases in the depreciation expenses, a 2021 test period best reflects the conditions that Rocky Mountain 6 Power will face during the rate-effective period and 7 would allow it a reasonable opportunity to recover the 8 9 costs associated with these projects. 10 Regarding the risks associated with 11 forecasting error, the certainty of the data in 12 historical testing periods needs to be balanced against 13 the goal of choosing the test period that best reflects 14 the rate-effective period. The division believes that the proposed test year in this case reflects a fair 15 16 balance of these compelling interests because of the 17 capital additions. 18 And that concludes my summary. 19 Thank you. MS. SCHMID: 20 Dr. Abdulle is available for 21 cross-examination questions and questions from the 22 presiding officer. 23 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you. 24 Mr. Moore, do you have any questions? 25 MR. MOORE: No questions, thank you.

1	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Mr. Moscon?
2	MR. MOSCON: No questions.
3	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: I don't either.
4	Thank you for your testimony this morning.
5	MR. ABDULLE: Thank you.
6	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Anything further,
7	Ms. Schmid?
8	MS. SCHMID: Nothing further from the
9	division. Thank you.
10	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. Thank you.
11	Mr. Moore?
12	MR. MOORE: We call Dr. Donna Ramas and ask
13	she be sworn.
14	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Okay. Are you on the phone,
15	Ms. Ramas?
16	THE WITNESS: Yes, I am.
17	(Oath administered to the witness)
18	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
19	EXAMINATION
20	BY MR. MOORE:
21	Q. Could you please state your name for the
22	record and for whom you are testifying.
23	A. Yes. My name is Donna Ramas, and I'm
24	testifying on behalf of the Utah Office of Consumer
25	Services.

1 Did you prepare and file testimony on Ο. 2 February 26, 2020? 3 Α. Yes, it was filed February 26, 2020. 4 Do you have any changes to this testimony? 0. 5 Α. No, I do not. 6 If I ask you the same questions in your Q. testimony, would your answers be the same? 7 Yes, they would. 8 Α. MR. MOORE: The office moves to admit the 9 10 testimony. 11 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: I'm not seeing any objection 12 from any party, so that's granted. 13 (Office of Consumer Services' Exhibit 14 admitted) 15 If I can ask the question of the MR. MOORE: 16 commission here. I'm not sure Rocky Mountain Power asked 17 to submit their testimony. I think we did. 18 CHAIRMAN LeVAR: 19 MR. MOORE: I apologize. 20 BY MR. MOORE: 21 0. Do you have a summary for your testimony? 22 Yes, just very brief. Α. 23 Will you please proceed. 0. 24 Α. Yes. In my testimony I explained that, based 25 on my review of the company's application and review of

1	the direct testimony of Steven McDougal in this docket,
2	that I found no reason to object or challenge the test
3	year requested by the company, which is the future test
4	period ending December 31st, 2021, based on a 13-month
5	average rate base.
6	I also explained in my testimony that I found
7	no reason to object to the company's intent to utilize a
8	historic base period ending December 31st, 2019, in
9	upcoming filing, with the only caveat being that if the
10	timing of the rate case filing is delayed substantially
11	from the currently anticipated date of early May 2020,
12	then a more recent base year may be appropriate with the
13	filing.
14	And that completes my summary.
15	MR. MOORE: Ms. Ramas is available for
16	examination or questions from the chair.
17	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
18	Ms. Schmid, any questions?
19	MS. SCHMID: No questions, thank you.
20	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Thank you.
21	Mr. Moscon?
22	MR. MOSCON: No questions.
23	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: I don't have any.
24	Thank you, Ms. Ramas.
25	MR. MOORE: Nothing further.

1	CHAIRMAN LeVAR: Anything further from
2	anyone?
3	Okay. We will issue an order on this soon.
4	That order will approve the requested test period subject
5	to the caveat expressed by the office that that order
6	should be out very soon.
7	We're adjourned.
8	(End of proceeding at 9:13 a.m.)
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1	CERTIFICATE
2	State of Utah)
3	County of Utah)
4	T. Erroger E. Dominadolo o Dominatorod
5	I, Tracy E. Barksdale a Registered Professional Reporter and Certified Court Reporter in the State of Utah, do hereby certify:
6 7	That the foregoing proceeding was held on March 5, 2020;
8 9	That the proceeding, including sworn testimony of three witnesses, was reported by me in stenotype and thereafter transcribed into typewritten form;
10	That the same constitutes a true and correct transcription of said proceeding and all testimony so
12	taken and transcribed as in the foregoing annexed pages set out.
13 14	I further certify that I am not of kin or otherwise associated with any of the parties of said cause of action and that I am not interested in the event thereof.
15 16	WITNESS MY HAND at Lehi, Utah, this 10th day of March 2020.
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18	Tracy & Bartsdale
19	Tracy E. Barksdale, RPR
20	Utah License No. 5104100-7801
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