



**VOTE SOLAR**

*VIA ELECTRONIC FILING*

Utah Public Service Commission  
Heber M. Wells Building  
160 East 300 South, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

**June 29, 2021**

**RE: Docket No. 17-035-61: Application of Rocky Mountain Power to Establish Export Credits for Customer Generated Electricity**

## **INTRODUCTION**

On October 30, 2020, the Utah Public Service Commission (“Commission”) issued an Order that established an annually updating Export Credit Rate (“ECR”) for Rocky Mountain Power’s (“RMP”) Schedule 137. On April 28, 2021, the Commission established a comment period for the timing, procedure, and scope of annual updates, with initial comments due June 8, 2021 and reply comments due June 29, 2021. Utah Clean Energy (“UCE”), the Officer of Consumer Services (“OCS”), the Division of Public Utilities (“DPU”), and RMP submitted initial comments. Vote Solar appreciates the parties’ efforts to define the annual update process thus far and respectfully submits these reply comments in response.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Timeframe for historical data collection***

Both the DPU and RMP supported the historical data collection process needed to inform the ECR update to conclude by the end of June of each year. RMP called for historical data to be collected “for the twelve months ending in June”<sup>1</sup> to allow the Company time to incorporate this in the October annual update. The DPU additionally noted that “RMP requires approximately 3 months to collect the necessary data for its filing” and thus envisions the data collection timeframe to reflect the “12 months ending June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RMP Comments at 1, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> DPU Comments at 3, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

Vote Solar supports this proposed timeframe as it facilitates a timely filing by October of each year and does not appear to adversely impact the adequacy of historical data collected.

### ***Timing of ECR Filing***

The DPU and RMP also supported an annual ECR filing by October, with RMP proposing it makes a filing “on or around October 15 of each year,”<sup>3</sup> and the DPU recommending that RMP “file its proposed updates to Schedule No. 137 by October of each year with an effective date of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.”<sup>4</sup>

Vote Solar supports this proposed timing of the annual filing as it allows necessary data collection to take place and allows for sufficient time for parties to provide comments before the updates become effective on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

### ***Party Comment Period***

UCE recommended that the ECR update process “provide stakeholders with a reasonable amount of time to review the initial ECR filing and provide comments before the rate is approved and goes into effect.”<sup>5</sup> It also recommended “three to four weeks between the initial filing and the due date for the first round of comments, and two additional weeks before the second round of comments are due.”<sup>6</sup> The OCS similarly asserted that “it makes sense for routine updates to be reviewed and implemented relatively quickly, within 30 to 60 days.”<sup>7</sup>

The DPU on the other hand described a more expedited process where “[i]nterested parties would have fifteen days to review the application and file comments.”<sup>8</sup>

Vote Solar supports the comment process recommended by UCE. The two rounds of comments would allow for the potential resolution of any issues that would otherwise be carried over to other dockets or Commission processes. UCE’s proposed comment process could also be administered in a manner consistent with the 60-day timeline called for by OCS. In contrast, the “single round” and two-week comment period proposed by the DPU carries with it a higher likelihood that potential disputes remain unresolved.

### ***Potential ECR workgroups***

The DPU indicated that it was “amenable to a limited number of workgroup sessions for the remainder of this year with other parties to collaborate to ensure a smooth process for parties to

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<sup>3</sup> RMP Comments at 1, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> DPU Comments at 1, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> UCE Comments at 3, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> OCS Comments at 2, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> DPU Comments at 3, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

review Schedule No. 137 annually.”<sup>9</sup> It further explained that “[t]he goal of this collaboration is to avoid lengthy litigation processes each year.”<sup>10</sup>

Vote Solar believes that a small number of workgroup sessions could serve as a great complement to the party comment period. Ideally, one or more of these sessions could take place after RMP makes its annual ECR filing, but before the party comment period concludes. This would allow parties to achieve greater clarity and consensus around issues that could readily be resolved, as well as a deeper understanding of issues that remain outstanding.

For instance, RMP indicated that its “Export Profile will reflect an average value from all customers enrolled in Schedule 136.”<sup>11</sup> It added that to “control for changes in customer count, export volumes will be reported as an average for the customers participating on each calendar day of the historical period, divided by the average installed customer generation capacity, again as of that day. This produces weighted-average exports for a single typical customer.”<sup>12</sup>

Without additional information, it is unclear if RMP is describing a process that may be considered a substantive change by the Commission or an approach that substantively does not deviate from the Commission’s Order and just simply requires greater discussion of the rationale behind this weighted-average presentation of exports. A collaborative workgroup session would provide the parties valuable insight on this issue and others similarly situated. Vote Solar thus fully supports the DPU’s suggestion for putting in place a limited number of workgroup sessions that contribute to a smooth ECR update process.

### ***Historical Record of Past ECR Components***

Lastly, UCE recommended that the ECR update “include a historical record of past ECR components until a historical record of the ECR itself is available,” at which point the update should include the historical record of past ECRs.<sup>13</sup> This would serve to “provide solar installers with a basis for meeting their disclosure requirements” as required under local law, “and to provide sound information that can inform a potential solar customer’s own evaluation of solar.”<sup>14</sup>

Additionally, given that the ECR is set to be updated every year, it may be useful to begin tracking information of the ECR component values over time and to make this available to interested parties. Since this process is still novel, a look back at the historical record of what past ECR components may have been could provide some indication of the sensitivity of each component in response to various changing conditions. Vote Solar supports UCE’s proposal to include a historical record of past ECR components as part of the annual update.

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<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> RMP Comments at 2, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> UCE Comments at 9, Docket No. 17-035-61 (June 8, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 10; 2018 S.B. 157, Residential Solar Energy Amendments, <https://le.utah.gov/~2018/bills/static/SB0157.html>.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Vote Solar recommends the following regarding RMP's annual ECR update:

- Establish a historical data collection process to inform the ECR update that concludes by the end of June of each year.
- Require RMP to file an ECR filing around October of each year.
- Include two rounds in the party comment process with “three to four weeks between the initial filing and the due date for the first round of comments, and two additional weeks before the second round of comments are due” as outlined by UCE.
- Establish a limited number of workgroup sessions that contribute to a smooth ECR update process, as described by the DPU.
- Include a historical record of past ECR components as part of the annual update until a historical record of the ECR itself is available.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Ronny Sandoval  
Regulatory Director, Interior West

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**  
**Docket No. 17-035-61**

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of Vote Solar's reply comments on the Annual Update to Export Credit Rate was served by email this 29<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021, on the following:

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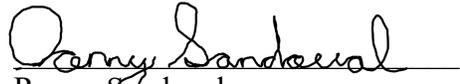
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