



## State of Utah

### Department of Commerce Division of Public Utilities

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## Action Request Response

**To:** Utah Public Service Commission

**From:** Utah Division of Public Utilities

Chris Parker, Director

Artie Powell, Manager

Brenda Salter, Utility Technical Consultant

Lane Mecham, Utility Analyst

**Date:** December 12, 2018

**Re:** Rocky Mountain Power Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan, Utah Energy Efficiency and Peak Management 2019 Plan and Budget, **Docket No. 18-035-45**

### Recommendation (Approval)

The Division of Public Utilities (Division) has reviewed the filing and verified that it complies with Public Service Commission's (Commission) order in Docket No. 09-035-36. The Division recommends that the Commission approve Rocky Mountain Power's (Company or RMP) Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan, Utah Energy Efficiency and Peak Management 2019 Plan and Budget.

### Issue

On November 28, 2018, the Company provided its proposed year ten plan and budget for January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019. The Company is proposing a budget of \$1.5 million for year ten with a January 1, 2019 effective date. On November 28, 2018, the Commission issued an Action Request for the Division to review and make recommendations regarding the Company's 2019 DSM Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan and Budget (2019

Campaign) by December 28, 2018. Subsequently, the Commission issued a Notice of Filing and Comment Period for interested parties to submit comments by December 12, 2018, with reply comments due on December 19, 2018. This memorandum represents the Division's response to the Commission's Action Request.

## **Background**

On June 11, 2009, in Docket No. 09-035-36, the Commission issued an order approving the implementation of an outreach and communications program in Utah for the Company's energy efficiency and peak management programs ("Campaign") for a period of three years ending June 30, 2012. The Company proposed continuing the Campaign and requested an 18-month implementation period for year four to align the Campaign with the Company's annual planning effort and Energy Efficiency and Peak Reduction report. In subsequent dockets, the Commission has approved the Company's Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for years five through nine.

## **Discussion**

The Campaign's objective is to promote energy efficiency and energy conservation through education as well as increased awareness of the benefits associated with the efficient use of energy. The Campaign's focus for the 2019 year is on efficient energy use for all customers with an emphasis on "being *wattsmart*", which further aligns with the Company's "Powering Your Greatness" brand shifting. The 2019 messaging approach will remind and empower customers that being energy efficient will help them to realize long-term financial savings as well as help the environment. The media focus of the Campaign will continue with TV, radio, digital media and social media, along with increased direct email contact with customers. The 2019 Campaign will also increase the focus on the next generation of energy-savers by increasing the number of schools earmarked for in-classroom energy efficiency education.

The Company's 2019 Campaign includes customer survey results aimed at determining the outreach and communication program's impact and summarizes DSM related outreach efforts conducted by the Company. The surveys include an online MDC Research Report completed in September 2018 and the 2017 MSI National Benchmarking Database Study previously provided

in the Company's 2018 report. The results of the surveys are included in this filing and more comprehensively in the DSM Annual report filed with the Commission in May of each year.

The Division notes the majority of the 2019 Campaign is based on 2017 survey data and is comparatively similar to the 2018 Campaign. Through discussions with the Company, the DSM Program is moving away from the Company specific survey and will provide a more focused DSM survey in the 2020 Campaign. This change is reflected in the increased 2019 research budget amount. The Division will work with the DSM Steering Committee to design a survey that provides the needed feedback to facilitate the Campaign.

The proposed budget for 2019 of \$1,500,000 is consistent with past Campaign budgets. Included in the forecasted budget is a high level allocation of funds for proposed tactics. A more detailed cost allocation is provided in the DSM Annual report including budgeted amounts compared to actual costs. Past performance indicates the Company is conscientious of the budget and strives to stay within budget.

On November 15, 2018, the Company's survey results along with the 2019 action plan and budget were provided to the DSM Steering Committee for review and comment. The Division discussed various aspects of the proposed filing with the Company and received timely and well informed responses.

## **Conclusion**

The Division understands that energy efficiency improvements and market transformation require informed customers. The Company's Campaign appears to support this endeavor. The Division recommends that the Commission approve the Company's 2019 Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan and Budget for its Demand-Side Management Program.

Cc: Michael Snow, Rocky Mountain Power  
Michele Beck, Office of Consumer Services  
Service List