



## 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 Supervisor

Paul Hicken, Technical Consultant

Mark Long, Utility Analyst

**Date:** January 13, 2020

**Re:** **Docket No. 19-035-44**, Rocky Mountain Power Eleventh-Year Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management.

### 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 2020 Plan and Budget.

### Issue

On December 20, 2019, the Company provided its proposed eleven-year plan and budget for January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The Company is proposing a budget of \$1.5 million for year eleven with a January 20, 2020 effective date. On December 20, 2019, the Commission

issued an Action Request for the Division to review and make recommendations regarding The Company's request for approval of its Eleventh-Year Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management (2020 Campaign) by January 13, 2020. Also on December 20, 2019, the Commission issued a Notice of Filing and Comment Period for interested parties to submit comments on or before Monday, January 13, 2020.

## **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 Annual Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget.

## **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 and participation in the Company's programs. The Company developed an action plan that outlines the various strategies and goals to be accomplished during 2020. The Company also included a draft budget detailing the allocation of funds into each budget item.

The 2020 Campaign will continue using the "wattsmart" campaign to create wider visibility of the benefits energy efficiency provides businesses and residential customers in Utah. Also, the 2020 Campaign will highlight accomplishments and innovative practices through storytelling and by providing recognition to engage business and residential customers.

The Company will use market research to continually improve awareness efforts for energy efficiency to support "wattsmart" programs and energy conservation in general. Specifically, the strategy going forward is as follows:

- Continue to promote “being wattsmart” to support Rocky Mountain Power’s “Powering Your Greatness” brand essence that empowers customers with options to save energy and money.
- Maintain targeted media channels with adjustments for trends, cost and impact.
- Engage customers online and through direct email.
- Increase outreach to the next generation of energy savers with engaging energy efficiency education.

The Company continues to conduct customer surveys using third-party independent marketing research firms. Survey results show that over 80% of residential customers say the Company does a good job of offering solutions that help customers use energy efficiently and in providing information on how to control electricity costs. Likewise, about 73% of commercial customers reported positively regarding the Company’s efforts in offering solutions that help customers use energy efficiently and in providing information on how to control electricity costs. The Company is also increasing its “Be wattsmart, Begins at Home” campaign by increasing its one-hour interactive assemblies from 175 schools to 200 schools. This is a popular program and fills up quick, often creating a waiting list.

The proposed budget for 2020 of \$1.5 million is consistent with past Campaign budgets and is also in compliance with the budget amount of \$1.5 million set in the 09-035-36 docket of June 11, 2009.

The Division notes that the 2020 Campaign is comparatively similar to previous years and seems to be effectively accomplishing the goals of the program. Various aspects of the proposed filing including forecasted budgets were reviewed and discussed with the Company and timely, well informed responses were received.

## **Conclusion**

The Division recognizes that energy efficiency improvements and market transformation require informed customers. The Company’s Campaign appears to support this effort. The Division

recommends that the Commission approve the Company's 2020 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