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# UTAH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

## Division of Public Utilities

MARGARET W. BUSSE  
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## Action Request Response

**To:** Public Service Commission of Utah

**From:** Utah Division of Public Utilities

Chris Parker, Director

Brenda Salter, Assistant Director

Doug Wheelwright, Utility Technical Consultant Supervisor

Tyler McIntosh, Utility Analyst

**Date:** November 27, 2023

**Re:** **Docket No. 23-031-02**, Mt. Wheeler Power Cooperative Wildland Fire Cost and Compliance Report.

## Recommendation (Acknowledge)

The Division of Public Utilities (Division) recommends the Public Service Commission (Commission) acknowledge Mt. Wheeler Power's November 1, 2023, filing as complying with Utah Code §54-24-203(4)(b).

## Issue

On November 1, 2023, Mt. Wheeler Power Cooperative (Mt. Wheeler) filed a copy of its annual Wildland Fire Protection Plan (WFPP) Compliance Report (Compliance Report). On the same date, the Commission issued an Action Request to the Division asking the Division to review the filing for compliance and make recommendations. The Commission asked the Division to report back by December 1, 2023. This memorandum represents the Division's response to the Action Request.

Division of Public Utilities

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## Discussion

Utah Code §54-24-203(4) requires electric cooperatives to (a) file with the governing authority an annual report detailing the electric cooperative's compliance with the WFPP; and (b) file with the Commission a copy of the annual compliance report. The Compliance Report was reviewed and approved by the Mt. Wheeler Power Board of Directors at its August 9, 2023, meeting and was filed with the Commission on November 1, 2023. The Division has reviewed the filing and recommends the Commission acknowledge that Mt. Wheeler has complied with Utah Code §54-24-203(4)(b).

The Compliance Report submitted by Mt. Wheeler has a few main points which are: <sup>1</sup>

- Pole testing and inspection:
  - The company inspected over 30 miles of 3-phase overhead lines and determined 30 poles needed to be replaced due to aging and deterioration in Tooele County. They were replaced with engineered raptor construction.
  - The company inspected over 20 miles of 3-phase overhead lines and determined 5 poles needed to be replaced due to aging and deterioration in Millard County. They were replaced with engineered raptor construction.
- System Hardening:
  - New insulators, anchors, and guys to meet MWP's new engineering construction standards.
  - Put in new insulators with higher hydrophobicity properties and fiberglass arms to help reduce tracking and arcing in Juab and Millard Counties.
  - Replaced 3 mid-point reclosers located in Nevada that feed associated equipment in Utah. Upgraded current engineering standards on new poles and equipment in Millard County, Utah.
- Operational Practices:
  - De-energized power lines and disabled reclosers to mitigate potential wildland fires.

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<sup>1</sup> 2023 Mt. Wheeler Power Cooperative Wildland Fire Protection Plan Compliance Report, Pages 4 and 5.

## **Conclusion**

Based on its review of the filing, the Division supports the filing and recommends the Commission acknowledge that Mt. Wheeler has complied with the filing requirements for Utah Code § 54-24-203(4)(b).

cc: Michele Beck, Office of Consumer Services  
Kevin Robison, Chief Executive Officer  
Trish Stanton, Finance Manager  
Shellie Watts, Member services/Communications Manager  
William Ricci, Operations Manager  
Tim Uhalde, Substation Manager