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UTAH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Division of Public Utilities

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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
Abdinasir Abdulle, Utility Technical Consultant Supervisor
Justin Christensen, Utility Analyst

Date: May 3, 2023

Re: **Docket No. 23-035-19**, Rocky Mountain Power Major Event Report for March 10-11, 2023.

Recommendation (Approve)

The Division of Public Utilities (Division) recommends that the Public Service Commission (Commission) approve Rocky Mountain Power's (RMP or Company) application for Major Event exclusion for the event that took place on March 10 through March 11, 2023. The System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) value for the event exceeded the threshold that defines a major event under the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers' (IEEE) 2.5 Beta method adopted by the Commission in 2005 (Docket No. 98-2035-04).

Issue

On April 11, 2023, RMP filed with the Commission its Major Event Report for the event that took place on March 10 through March 11, 2023, requesting that this event be excluded from its network performance reporting and customer guarantee failure payments. On April 11, 2023, the Commission directed the Division to review the Company's application and determine if the event qualifies for exclusion under the 2.5 Beta method. On April 12, 2023,

Division of Public Utilities

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the Commission issued a Notice of Filing and Comment Period in which it indicated that any interested person may submit comments on RMP's Request on or before May 11, 2023, and may submit reply comments on or before May 26, 2023. This memorandum represents the Division's comments and recommendations.

Event Description and Restoration Effort

A windstorm moved into Salt Lake Valley, Northern Utah, and Central Utah on March 10, 2023, and continued into March 11, 2023. Wind gusts were observed between 35 to 70 mph. The restoration was coordinated locally in the field with workers clearing branches, debris, and making repairs to distribution lines and restoring power by replacing blown junction fuses. Efforts were challenging due to continued wind gusts, crews would make repairs then debris and limbs would fall, taking service back offline.

In addition to the windstorm, another event that led to power outages was a car hitting a transmission pole the evening of March 10th, resulting in the loss of Kearns Substation. This impacted around 15,000 customers and power was restored to most within three hours. The remaining customers were restored after the transmission pole was replaced. The two events resulted in 4,647,491 customer minutes lost, with 27,347 customers experiencing sustained interruptions.

According to the Company, a total of 97 employees and contractors were mobilized in the restoration efforts. The Company replaced approximately 100 feet of conductor, 2 distribution poles, 2 transformers, 3 crossarms, 5 insulators, along with other materials, and completed 11 line splices. During the restoration effort, approximately 81% of all customer outages were restored within 3 hours and 100% were restored within 24 hours.

Discussion

The Division reviewed the Company's calculations of the threshold that defines a major event under the IEEE 2.5 Beta method adopted by the Commission in 2005 in Docket 98-2035-04. Based on the data the Company provided, the Division determined that the threshold for the Daily SAIDI value for the year calculated by the Company 4.31 minutes, is correct. For this event, the Company calculated the daily SAIDI value for Utah to be 4.62

minutes. Based on the above discussion, the Division concludes that the event exceeded the daily SAIDI value threshold.

The Company's Network Performance Standard No. 4 states that "*The Company will restore power outages due to loss of supply or damage to the distribution system within three hours to 80% of customers on average.*" The Division understands this standard to be applicable to normal conditions. In the case of a Major Event, the Division would determine whether a satisfactory level of effort was expended by the Company to restore power to comply with this standard. Given the nature of the event and having reviewed the Company's filing, including its restoration efforts, the Division concludes that the Company's restoration efforts were adequate.

Conclusion

Given the Utah SAIDI value for this event, 4.62 minutes, exceeded the daily SAIDI value threshold limit of 4.31 minutes, and the restoration effort was adequate, the Division concludes that this event was a Major Event and should be excluded from the network performance reporting.

cc: Jana Saba, RMP
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