



PublicService Commission <psc@utah.gov>

Public Comment in Docket Number 25-035-61

1 message

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I have just published (1.7.26) in the Salt Lake Tribune a letter to the editor regarding Rocky Mountain Power's request for approval of the wildfire fund. Here is text and the link:

Letter: Rocky Mountain Power shouldn't be rewarded — at the expense of Utah consumers — for short-sighted thinking

<https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/letters/2026/01/07/letter-rocky-mountain-power/>

Are you tired of seeing your electricity bill rise each year and cautiously optimistic that 2026 will bring some relief? Well, think again. Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) has other plans.

In 2025, the Utah Legislature authorized RMP to establish a catastrophic wildfire liability fund as a form of "self-insurance" to supplement its commercial insurance. RMP has since filed a proposal to raise electricity rates by roughly 4.5% for up to ten years to fund this supplemental fund. This comes despite clear evidence that continued reliance on fossil fuels exacerbates the very climate-driven risks customers are now being asked to insure. Yet RMP's 2025 Integrated Resource Plan does not prioritize a sufficiently accelerated transition away from fossil fuels toward lower-risk, non emitting alternatives such as wind, solar, and battery storage. That's simply wrong.

We should not be rewarding RMP — or any business — for short-sighted thinking and decades of ignoring what climate science has long made clear. And yet here we are in 2026, with RMP cap in hand, asking customers to underwrite its wildfire liability because commercial insurance has become too expensive.

While the Legislature approved the wildfire fund, responsibility now rests with the Utah Public Service Commission (PSC), whose duty is to ensure that everything customers are required to pay — both base electricity prices and added fees — is just, reasonable, and in the public interest.

The PSC should condition approval of any wildfire fund on a requirement that RMP evaluate wildfire risk under forward-looking climate scenarios and demonstrate how its resource planning decisions — including those reflected in its IRP — are mitigating, not compounding, those risks. Absent such conditions, customers would be required to assume escalating wildfire liability with no assurance that RMP's planning choices are reducing the long-term drivers of those costs. That is something Utahns should not accept.

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