

Service Date: March 19, 2015

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

IN THE MATTER OF NorthWestern Energy's )  
Application for Approval of Unreflected Gas )  
Cost Account Balance and Projected Gas Cost, )  
and Gas Transportation Adjustment Clause )  
Balance )  
UTILITY DIVISION  
DOCKET NO. D2013.5.34

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UTILITY DIVISION  
DOCKET NO. D2014.5.47

**NOTICE OF STAFF ACTION**

On May 31, 2013, NorthWestern Corporation, doing business as NorthWestern Energy (NorthWestern), filed its *Application for the 2013 Unreflected Gas Cost Account ("UGCA") Balance and Projected Gas Cost; and Gas Transportation Adjustment Clause ("GTAC") Balance* with the Montana Public Service Commission (Commission). On March 14, 2014, NorthWestern filed a *Motion to Defer Proceedings and Consolidate this Docket with the 2014 Natural Gas Supply Tracker Docket*. On May 29, 2014, NorthWestern filed its *Application for Approval of Unreflected Gas Supply Cost Account Balance for the 12-Month Period Ending June 30, 2014 and Projected Gas Cost Tracking for the 12-Month Period Ending June 30, 2015; and GTAC Balance as of April 30, 2014* with the Commission. The Commission issued a *Notice of Application and Intervention Deadline* on June 16, 2014. On June 10, 2014, the Commission approved a *Notice of Commission Action* consolidating NWE's 2014 and 2013 Natural Gas Tracker Filings in Dockets D2013.5.34 and D2014.5.47. On September 4, 2014, the Commission issued *Procedural Order 7282c*, setting deadlines for data requests and testimony, and a hearing date of January 22, 2015.

On October 10 and 22, 2014, NorthWestern indicated it would not be able to adhere to the schedule established in *Procedural Order 7282c*. On October 23, 2014, the schedule in

*Procedural Order 7282c* was suspended until an amended schedule could be established. Notice of Commn. Action (Oct. 23, 2014). In order to continue progress in these consolidated dockets, *Procedural Order 7282c* is hereby amended to include the following deadlines:

- (a) February 6, 2015: Final day for written discovery (including data requests) to NorthWestern on its 2014 Application and 2014 Supplemental Testimony.\*
- (b) February 23, 2015: Final day for NorthWestern to respond to discovery on its 2014 Application and 2014 Supplemental Testimony.
- (c) March 18, 2015: Final day for prefiled testimony from intervenors responding to NorthWestern's 2014 Application, NorthWestern's 2014 Supplemental Testimony, and 2013 Additional Issues. *See* Notice of Additional Issue, Dkt. D2013.5.34 (Dec. 19, 2013).
- (d) April 1, 2015: Final day for written discovery on 2014 intervenor testimony.
- (e) April 8, 2015: Final day for the Commission to identify additional issues on 2014 NorthWestern prefiled testimony, 2014 NorthWestern supplemental testimony, and 2014 intervenor prefiled testimony.\*\*
- (f) April 15, 2015: Final day for intervenors to respond to written discovery on 2014 intervenor prefiled testimony.
- (g) April 24, 2015: Final day for NorthWestern rebuttal testimony and intervenor response testimony, if any, to 2014 intervenor prefiled testimony.
- (h) May 1, 2015: Final day for discovery on NorthWestern rebuttal testimony and intervenor response testimony, if any.
- (i) May 8, 2015: Final day for NorthWestern to respond to discovery on its rebuttal testimony and intervenors to respond to discovery on intervenor response testimony, if any.
- (j) May 12, 2015: Final day for all parties to file pre-hearing memoranda.
- (k) May 19, 2015: Hearing commences.

\* Data requests issued in response to 2014 NorthWestern prefiled testimony pursuant to *Procedural Order 7282c* that the requesting party still wants answered must be reissued to the utility.

\*\* If the Commission identifies additional issues, it will issue a modified procedural order and schedule, likely changing some of the deadlines f through k.

*See* Or. 7282c ¶ 10 (Sept. 4, 2014). As amended, *Procedural Order 7282c* “remains effective unless [again] modified by the Commission or staff.” *Id.* at ¶ 9.

In order to promote the efficiency of the administrative process, staff attorney Jeremiah Langston will act as examiner for the limited purpose of disposing of discovery disputes (including objections to data requests and motions to compel) and motions for protective order in this proceeding. Mont. Code Ann. §§ 69-2-101, 69-3-103 (2014); *see also* Admin. R. Mont. 38.2.306, 38.2.1501 (2014). “Any party may apply for reconsideration in respect to any matter determined” in a Commission order or decision, including the examiner’s final written decision. Admin. R. Mont. 38.2.4806.

BY THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

BRAD JOHNSON, Chairman  
TRAVIS KAVULLA, Vice Chairman  
KIRK BUSHMAN, Commissioner  
ROGER KOOPMAN, Commissioner  
BOB LAKE, Commissioner