

Decision No. C24-0574

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

PROCEEDING NO. 24A-0296E

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF COLORADO FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2025-2027 WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN, WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADJUSTMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUTOFF PLAN, AND THE RECOVERY OF ITS 2023 WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN DEFERRAL.

**COMMISSION DECISION PROVIDING NOTICE OF
EXTENDED INTERVENTION PERIOD**

TO THE PARTIES IN THIS MATTER AND ALL INTERESTED PERSONS, FIRMS, OR CORPORATIONS:

Issued Date: August 12, 2024

Adopted Date: August 7, 2024

I. BY THE COMMISSION

A. Statement

1. By this Decision, the Commission establishes an additional shortened notice and intervention period for the Application of Public Service Company of Colorado (“Public Service”) for Approval of its 2025-2027 Wildfire Mitigation Plan, Wildfire Mitigation Adjustment, Public Safety Power Shutoff Plan, and the Recovery of its 2023 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Deferral (“Wildfire Mitigation Plan”). We provide notice to all interested parties that as a courtesy, we are extending the intervention period in this proceeding an additional ten days and allow Public Service five days in which to respond to any additional interventions in this Proceeding.

2. Requests for intervention shall be filed no later than **August 22, 2024**. Public Service shall have up to and including **August 27, 2024**, to file any response to the requests to intervene.

3. The Commission originally issued a Notice of Public Service’s Wildfire Mitigation Plan Application filed on June 27, 2024, which set a 30-day intervention period that ran through July 29, 2024. In response, the Commission received requests for permissive intervention from the City of Boulder, Colorado Energy Consumers, Climax Molybdenum Company, Comcast Cable Communications Management, LLC, the Colorado Solar and Storage Association and the Coalition for Community Solar Access, the City and County of Denver, and Western Resource Advocates. In addition to granting the permissive interventions of these parties, we also acknowledged the interventions as of right of Commission Trial Staff and the Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate.

4. We note, however, that many government agencies such as the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office and many local Offices of Emergency Management, among others, which would have an interest in participating in this proceeding may not have been aware of Public Service’s filing, the subsequent Notice of Application Filed and 30-day Intervention Period that ran through July 29, 2024.

B. Public Service’s Application

5. On June 27, 2024, Public Service filed its Application supported by the direct testimony of 19 witnesses for its 2025-2027 Wildfire Mitigation Plan and a Public Safety Power Shutoff Plan (“PSPS”). Public Service seeks approval of its 2025-2027 Wildfire Mitigation Plan, including its proposed mitigation activities, scopes of work, and budget proposals. The proposed Wildfire Mitigation Plan includes an updated risk assessment which results in an expanded, three-tier wildfire risk map. Public Service also presents four categories of work—situational awareness, system resiliency, operational mitigations, and customer support—for which

investments are prioritized based on a quantitative risk assessment and other approaches. Public Service intends to invest in the use of artificial intelligence, vegetation management, targeted undergrounding, inspections with repair or replace programs for distribution and transmission equipment, Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings, targeting of resiliency rebates to customers with certain medical equipment, and creation of a new Wildfire Command Center.

6. The 2025-2027 Wildfire Mitigation Plan includes a projected budget of approximately \$1.9 billion, comprised of approximately \$1.6 billion in capital investments, largely focused on system resiliency, and approximately \$250 million in operations and maintenance.

7. Public Service also seeks approval of its proposed PSPS, which defines the conditions under which Public Service would proactively de-energize portions of the distribution and/or transmission system when there is imminent and significant risk of severe fire conditions. The PSPS Plan addresses Public Service's decision-making process as well as timelines for notification to entities such as state officials and offices of emergency management ("OEMs"), along with restoration protocols.

8. Public Service additionally seeks approval of its proposed cost recovery mechanism. Public Service takes the position that its business and financial risk profiles are affected by wildfire risk. As a result, it proposes to recover transmission costs through the Transmission Cost Adjustment consistent with previous approvals, but further seeks approval of a Wildfire Mitigation Adjustment rider that would be adjusted twice annually based on forecast and actual costs. It further seeks approval to recover the remaining deferred balance from its 2020 Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

9. Public Service proposes to track and defer costs incurred in association with preparing and litigating this proceeding in a noninterest bearing regulatory asset to be reviewed for recovery purposes in a future rate proceeding.

10. In Decision No. C24-0575-I, issued separately from this Notice, we found it was prudent to allow additional time to for state and local government agencies that may have an interest in this proceeding to file motions to intervene to become a party. We noted it was likely those government agencies typically do not receive notice of Commission proceedings and would therefore not be aware of the Public Service application filing. Therefore, we wanted to extend the courtesy to those government entities to have the opportunity to intervene.

C. Conclusion

11. We find it appropriate to provide notice of a subsequent intervention period in order to provide an opportunity for those government agencies the opportunity to intervene in this Proceeding. We therefore find it reasonable to set an additional 10-day intervention period to begin from the issue date of this Decision. Those entities wishing to intervene shall file a motion to intervene pursuant to the provisions found in the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations*, 723-1-1401(c). The Commission rules can be found on the Commission website at <https://puc.colorado.gov/pucrulespractice>. We will also provide Public Service a 5-day response time to respond to any further interventions received during the extended period.

12. Public Service's Application is available for public inspection by accessing the Commission's E-Filings System at:

https://www.dora.state.co.us/pls/efi/EFI.Show_Docket?p_session_id=573768&p_docket_id=24A-0296E.

This Decision is the Commission's Notice that Public Service's Application has been filed and an additional intervention period has been established.

II. ORDER

A. The Commission Orders That:

1. The Commission issues this Notice for additional time for parties to intervene.
2. This additional notice and intervention period shall expire at **5:00 p.m. on August 22, 2024.**
3. Any person desiring to intervene or participate as a party in this Proceeding, shall file a petition for leave to intervene, or under the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations* 723-1, file other appropriate pleadings to become a party, no later than ten days from the Issue Date of this Decision or **August 22, 2024**
4. Any responses to any petition to intervene shall be filed no later than **August 27, 2024.**
5. Any party granted late intervention pursuant to this Decision agrees to take the Proceeding as it finds it on the date of approval of its motion to intervene.

6. This Decision is effective immediately on its Issued Date.

**B. ADOPTED IN COMMISSIONERS' WEEKLY MEETING
August 7, 2024.**

(S E A L)



ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca E. White".

Rebecca E. White,
Director

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

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Commissioners