

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

PROCEEDING NO. 24A-0131E

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF COLORADO FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY FOR THE 345 KV SANDSTONE SWITCHING STATION AND ASSOCIATED FINDINGS REGARDING NOISE AND MAGNETIC FIELD REASONABLENESS.

**INTERIM DECISION
CLARIFYING DECISION NO. R24-0549-I**

Issued Date: July 31, 2024

I. STATEMENT

1. On March 19, 2024, Public Service Company of Colorado (“Public Service” or “the Company”) filed its Verified Application (“Application”) requesting that the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (“PUC” or “the Commission”) grant a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (“CPCN”) to construct the 345 kilovolt (“kV”) Sandstone Switching Station and find that the proposed substation’s projected noise and magnetic field levels are reasonable and require no further mitigation. Public Service maintains that the Sandstone Switching Station is a more cost-effective alternative to the Tundra Switching Station expansion approved in Proceeding No. 21A-0096E.¹

2. Contemporaneously with its Application, Public Service filed the Direct Testimony of Heather C. Brickey, Project Manager the Colorado’s Power Pathway Project for Xcel Energy

¹ This Decision only addresses the procedural history relevant to it. For a more complete recitation of the procedural history of this Proceeding, please review Decision Nos. R24-0368-I, issued May 31, 2024; R24-0510-I, issued July 16, 2024; and R24-0549-I, issued July 30, 2024.

Services, Inc. (“XES”); Aaron D. Wilson, Senior Manager, Substation Engineering for XES; and, Hari Singh, Consulting Engineer for XES.

3. On July 17, 2024, Intervenor Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate (“UCA”) filed the Answer Testimony of Chris Neil, along with Attachments CN1 through CN9.

4. After reviewing the prefiled Direct and Answer Testimony, the undersigned ALJ and Commission Advisory Staff determined that neither the testimony filed by Public Service nor the testimony filed by UCA addressed an apparent decline in risk reserves between the originally planned Tundra Switching Station and the now proposed Sandstone Switching Station.

5. The ALJ therefore issued Decision No. R24-0549-I on July 30, 2024, asking the parties to address the following issue:

Please explain the decline in risk reserve amounts in the Engineering, Permitting, Project Management and Construction categories between the CPCN column (column B) and the “with Sandstone” column (column D) on the “Estimate Comparison” tab of Hr. Ex. 101, Attachment HCB-4. In doing so, please include the original CPCN risk reserve amounts from Proceeding 21A-0096E and the current estimates of corresponding risk reserve for each risk category presented in Hr. Ex. 115, Executable Attachment BJR-14HC submitted in Proceeding 21A-0096E or any other relevant exhibit submitted in that Proceeding.

6. Rather than having the issue being addressed for the first time in Rebuttal Testimony, the ALJ will order that such additional information about the decline in risk reserves should first be addressed by Public Service as Supplemental Direct Testimony, which Public Service may provide at the same time that it submits its Rebuttal Testimony, or on or before August 21, 2024.

7. If any Intervenor wishes to supplement its Answer Testimony in response to Public Service’s Supplemental Direct Testimony, such Intervenor(s) will be ordered to file such

supplemental Answer Testimony, within the scope of the Supplemental Direct Testimony, within 14 days of Public Service filing any Supplemental Direct Testimony.

8. Finally, should Public Service wish to rebut any supplemental Answer Testimony filed in response to its Supplemental Direct Testimony, it may do so by filing Rebuttal Testimony within the scope of Supplemental Answer Testimony within seven days of any such Supplemental Answer Testimony.

II. ORDER

A. It Is Ordered That:

1. The parties to this Proceeding are asked to address the question identified in ¶ 5 above through supplemental testimony.

2. Applicant Public Service Company of Colorado is to supplement its Direct Testimony to address the issue identified above on or before the deadline for Rebuttal Testimony, August 21, 2024.

3. Intervenors may file Supplemental Answer Testimony to any Supplemental Direct Testimony within 14 days of the filing of any Supplemental Direct Testimony.

4. Applicant may file Rebuttal Testimony addressing the discrete issue identified above within seven days of the filing of any Supplemental Answer Testimony pertaining to the above question.

5. This Decision is effective immediately.

(S E A L)



THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

ALENKA HAN

Administrative Law Judge

ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

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

Rebecca E. White,
Director