

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

PROCEEDING NO. 20M-0005E

IN THE MATTER OF THE YEAR 2020 FILINGS BY COLORADO ELECTRIC UTILITIES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 4 CCR 723-3-3206 FOR THE DESIGNATION OF
ELECTRIC UTILITY TRANSMISSION FACILITIES WHETHER THE FACILITIES ARE IN
THE NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS OR AN APPLICATION TO OBTAIN A
CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY IS REQUIRED.

**DECISION REGARDING
CERTIFICATION OF FACILITIES**

Mailed Date: July 1, 2020
Adopted Date: July 1, 2020

I. BY THE COMMISSION

A. Statement

1. Rule 3206 (d) of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission's (Commission) Rules Regulating Electric Utilities, 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations* (CCR) 723-3, requires each Colorado electric utility to file with the Commission, no later than April 30 of each year, information on proposed new construction or extensions of transmission facilities for the next three calendar years.

2. The following utilities filed Rule 3206 reports into this proceeding:

- Black Hills Colorado Electric Utility Company, LLC (Black Hills)
- Intermountain Rural Electric Association, Inc. (IREA)
- Public Service Company of Colorado (Public Service)
- Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State)

3. Commission Decision No. C20-0361-I issued May 13, 2020 provided notice of the filings, informed parties that specific information of each utility's filings was on file with the Commission, and established an opportunity for interested parties to file comments on or before June 15, 2020.

4. IREA's report contained no new proposed construction or extensions of transmission facilities for the next three calendar years.

5. On June 4, 2020, Tri-State filed a correction to the description of the Panorama Wind Farm Interconnection.

6. On June 15, 2020, the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) filed comments into this Proceeding. These comments addressed, among other things, the difficulty in verifying, on an annual basis, the cost and scope of projects contained in the Rule 3206 reports. The OCC made specific recommendations addressing the Weld – Ennis 230/115 kV Transmission, Bluestone Valley Substation, and Weld County Load Serving projects.

7. New projects that were filed in 2019 under Rule 3206 (d) are listed below by utility with a brief description of each project:

Black Hills Colorado Electric Utility Company, LLC

- Pueblo West 115 kV Distribution Substation, consists of constructing a new distribution substation by intersecting BHCE's planned West Station-Hogback 115 kV transmission line near Pueblo West, CO. The substation will be built to ultimately accommodate two 115/13.2kV, 25 MVA transformers, but only one bank will be installed initially. This new substation is required to serve new industrial agriculture load as well as contingency back-up for existing distribution infrastructure. This facility will be designed by the utility to meet the Rule 3206 noise and magnetic field requirements. The utility requested the Commission find this project to be in the ordinary course of business.

- North Penrose Area 115 kV Distribution Substation, consists of constructing a new distribution substation by intersecting BHCE's planned West Station-Hogback 115 kV transmission line on the north side of Penrose, CO. The substation will be built to ultimately accommodate two 115/13.2kV, 25 MVA transformers, but only one bank will be installed initially. This proposed distribution substation would provide an additional source to the community of Penrose. This facility will be designed by the utility to meet the Rule 3206 noise and magnetic field requirements. The utility requested the Commission find this project to be in the ordinary course of business.

Public Service Company of Colorado

- Weld – Ennis 230/115 kV Transmission Project, consists of constructing approximately thirty-eight (38) miles of new 230/115 kV transmission lines between Weld and Ennis Substations near Greeley, CO. The project will interconnect at two new "greenfield" substations – Beebe Draw Substation and "new" Box Elder Substation. The proposed project will be built to meet all prudent avoidance requirements for noise and magnetic fields. The Company has determined that this project may require a CPCN.

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.

- Carey T2 Transformer Addition, consists of the addition of a 230-24.7 kV 24/32/40 MVA transformer, to the exiting Carey substation near Fort Collins, Colorado. The transformer addition is required to accommodate load growth. Tri-State will ensure that this project meets noise and magnetic field level requirements as per CPUC Rule 3206(e) and (f). The utility requests the Commission waive the CPCN requirement for the addition of a 230 kV transformer to an existing substation (*see* Decision No. C14-0732) and find that this project is in the ordinary course of business.
- Reunion 230/13.2 kV T3 Transformer Addition, consists of the addition of a 230-13.2 kV 24/32/40/ MVA transformer at Reunion Substation in Commerce City, Colorado. The transformer addition is required to accommodate load growth. Tri-State will ensure that this project meets noise and magnetic field level requirements as per CPUC Rule 3206(e) and (f). The utility requests the Commission waive the CPCN requirement for the addition of a 230 kV transformer to an existing substation (*see* Decision No. C14-0732) and find that this project is in the ordinary course of business.
- Last Chance 12.47 kV Delivery Point, consists of adding a 115-12.47 kV, 20 MVA transformer at Last Chance switching station. It will include one (1) 115 kV breaker and associated switches and controls. The transformer

addition is required to accommodate load growth. The project is located near Last Chance, Colorado. Tri-State will ensure that this project meets noise and magnetic field level requirements as per CPUC Rule 3206(e) and (f). The utility considers the project to be “in the ordinary course of business” since the facilities will be designed for 115 kV and below.

- Monument Substation Redesign consists of rebuilding the current 115 kV star bus configuration into an eight-position breaker and a half configuration. The redesigned station will include four 115 kV line positions, two 115-12.47 kV transformers, and two 115-69 kV transformers and two kV circuit breakers. The project is located near Monument, Colorado. Tri-State will ensure that this project meets noise and magnetic field level requirements as per CPUC Rule 3206(e) and (f). The utility requests the Commission find that this project is in the ordinary course of business similar to the Kit Carson Wind Interconnect (*see* Decision No. C10-0644).
- Panorama Wind Farm Interconnection consist of a new breaker 115 kV POI connecting the Panorama Wind Farm to Tri-State’s transmission system at the Redtail Substation. The project will be located in Yuma County, Colorado. Tri-State will ensure that this project meets noise and magnetic field level requirements as per CPUC Rule 3206(e) and (f). The utility requests the Commission find that this project is in the ordinary course of business similar to the Kit Carson Wind Interconnect (*see* Decision No. C10-0644).
- Paper Moon Substation consists of the addition of a new substation that will be a new 115-12.47 kV delivery point for Y-W Electric Association (YWEA). The delivery will consist of a new 115 kV tap along the Deering Lake-North Yuma 115 kV transmission line, approximately two miles of 115 kV transmission line and a 115-12.47 kV substation. The planned substation is near Ft Lupton, Colorado. The transformer addition is required to accommodate load growth and will increase reliability. Audible noise and magnetic fields associated with the project will not exceed the levels set forth in §3206 6 (e) and (f). Tri-State believes this project may require a CPCN application pursuant to the criteria set forth in Commission Rule 3206(b).

8. Commission Rule 3206(b)(I) states that transmission facilities designed at 230 kV or above, even if initially operated at a lower voltage, require a CPCN, unless the facility is a radial transmission line designed at 230 kV or above serving a single retail customer and terminating at that customer’s premises.

9. Pursuant to Commission rules, the Commission finds that Public Service's Weld – Ennis 230/115 kV Transmission Project requires a CPCN or a formal determination that no CPCN is required.

10. Commission Rule 3206(b)(II) (A) and (B) states that transmission facilities designed at 115 kV or 138 kV require a CPCN if the facilities do not meet the noise and magnetic field thresholds established in Commission rules, or if the Commission determines that the facilities are not in the ordinary course of business. Commission Rule 3206(d) allows utilities to request a decision that certain projects are in the ordinary course of business and do not require a CPCN.

11. Pursuant to Commission rules, the Commission finds that the Black Hills' North Penrose Area 115 kV Distribution Substation and Pueblo West 115 kV Distribution Substation projects are in the ordinary course of business and therefore do not require a CPCN.

12. Pursuant to Commission rules, the Commission finds that the Tri-State's Last Chance 12.47 kV Delivery Point, Monument Substation Redesign, Panorama Wind Farm Interconnection, and Paper Moon Substation projects are in the ordinary course of business and, therefore, do not require a CPCN.

13. Commission rules generally require a CPCN for transmission facilities designed at 230 kV or above. The Commission may waive applicable rules and not require CPCNs for specific projects, such as the addition of 230 kV transformers or other similar equipment inside of existing substations that would otherwise require a CPCN. Tri-State requests that the Commission find that the Carey T2 Transformer Addition and Reunion 230/13.2 kV T3 Transformer Addition do not require a CPCN and that Tri-State has provided justification for this request. The Commission will waive Rule 3206(b)(I) for these projects. The Commission finds that no CPCN shall be

required for the Carey T2 Transformer Addition and Reunion 230/13.2 kV T3 Transformer Addition projects.

14. Although each of the OCC's recommendations are pertinent, they all address future filings with the Commission.

II. ORDER

A. The Commission Orders That:

1. A Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN), or a formal determination that no CPCN is required, shall be required for the following Public Service Company of Colorado (Public Service) project:

Weld – Ennis 230/115 kV Transmission Project.

2. The following Black Hills Colorado Electric Utility Company, LLC projects are in the ordinary course of business and do not require a CPCN:

- a. North Penrose Area 115 kV Distribution Substation, and
- b. Pueblo West 115 kV Distribution Substation.

3. The following Tri-State projects are in the ordinary course of business and do not require a CPCN:

- a. Carey T2 Transformer Addition,
- b. Reunion 230/13.2 kV T3 Transformer Addition,
- c. Last Chance 12.47 kV Delivery Point,
- d. Monument Substation Redesign,
- e. Panorama Wind Farm Interconnection, and
- f. Paper Moon Substation.

4. The 20-day period provided for in § 40-6-114, C.R.S., within which to file applications for rehearing, reargument, or reconsideration begins on the first day following the effective date of this Decision.

5. This Decision is effective on its Mailed Date.

**B. ADOPTED IN COMMISSIONERS' WEEKLY MEETING
July 1, 2020.**

(S E A L)



ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Dean".

Doug Dean,
Director

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

JEFFREY P. ACKERMANN

JOHN GAVAN

MEGAN M. GILMAN

Commissioners