

Decision No. R24-0549-I

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
REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT
OUTSTANDING ISSUE**

Issued Date: July 30, 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 projected noise and magnetic field levels associated with the Sandstone Switching Station are reasonable and require no further mitigation. Public Service seeks approval of the Sandstone Switching Station as a more cost-effective alternative to the Tundra Switching Station expansion originally approved as part of Proceeding No. 21A-0096E.

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

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

3. On March 20, 2024, the Commission issued a Notice of Application Filed establishing deadlines for the filing of intervention pleadings.

4. The Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate (“UCA”) and Trial Staff of the Commission (“Staff”) timely intervened as of right. In addition, two entities moved to permissively intervene in this Proceeding: Colorado Energy Consumers (“CEC”) and Climax Molybdenum Company (“Climax”).

5. On May 1, 2024, the Commission deemed the Application complete and referred the Proceeding by minute entry to an Administrative Law Judge (“ALJ”) for disposition. The Proceeding was subsequently assigned to the undersigned ALJ.

6. The interventions as of right were acknowledged and recognized by Decision No. R24-0368-I, issued May 31, 2024, which also granted the motions for permissive intervention filed by CEC and Climax. The parties to this Proceeding are thus Public Service, Staff, UCA, CEC, and Climax.

7. On June 27, 2024, Public Service filed a Notice of Conferral and Unopposed Motion to Approve Consensus Procedural Schedule and Request for Waiver of Response Time. Public Service stated that it had conferred with all parties and that all parties had agreed to the proposed procedural schedule and evidentiary hearing dates.

8. By Decision No. R24-0510-I, issued July 16, 2024, the ALJ adopted the parties’ proposed procedural schedule and scheduled a one-day, fully remote evidentiary hearing to be held September 18, 2024.

9. In accordance with the adopted procedural schedule, on July 17, 2024, UCA filed the Answer Testimony of Chris Neil, along with Attachments CN1 through CN9.

10. The undersigned ALJ and Commission Advisory Staff have now had an opportunity to review the Direct and Answer Testimonies. In doing so, a question arose which does not appear to be addressed by either the Direct or Answer Testimonies filed thus far.

11. The ALJ therefore requests that the parties, particularly Public Service, consider the following issue and, as part of Rebuttal Testimony and/or the parties' respective hearing presentations, address the following question to edify the ALJ and Commission Advisory Staff:

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.

II. ORDER

A. It Is Ordered That:

1. The parties to this Proceeding are asked to consider addressing the question identified in ¶ 11 above as part of their presentation of Rebuttal Testimony and/or evidence at the hearing scheduled for September 18, 2024.

2. 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