

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: March 10, 2020**

REGULAR X CONSENT _____ EFFECTIVE DATE March 10, 2020

DATE: March 2, 2020

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Jill Goatcher

THROUGH: Michael Dougherty and JP Batmale **SIGNED**

SUBJECT: OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION STAFF:
(Docket No. UM 1930)
Pacific Power Advice No. 20-003, Community Solar Program
Interconnection and Power Purchase Tariff Schedule, Application,
Procedures, and Standard Agreements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC or Commission) should suspend Pacific Power (dba PacifiCorp or PAC) Advice No. 20-003 for 90 days for further investigation under ORS 757.215.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Whether the Commission should suspend PAC's tariff regarding Community Solar Program (CSP) project interconnection and contracting for further investigation.

Applicable Law

ORS 757.386(2)(a) directs the Commission to establish a program that provides electric customers with the opportunity to share the costs and benefits of solar generation. Under ORS 757.386(2)(a)(D) and OAR 860-088-0140, PAC must enter into contracts for the procurement and purchase of energy from CSP projects. Under OAR 860-088-0120(4), an electric company must obtain Commission approval of any applicable tariffs required by the Community Solar Program rules.

ORS 757.205(1) provides that “[e]very public utility shall file with the Public Utility Commission, within a time to be fixed by the commission, schedules which shall be open to public inspection, showing all rates, tolls and charges which it has established and which are in force at the time for any service performed by it within the state, or for any service in connection therewith or performed by any public utility controlled or operated by it.”

Commission Order No. 20-038 directed PAC “to file a tariff formalizing their CSP interconnection process and a proforma Interconnection Agreement for the February 25, 2020, Public Meeting.”

ORS 757.215 authorizes the Commission to suspend tariffs filed by utilities for further investigation. The filed tariffs are not effective during suspension.

Analysis

Background

On February 18, 2020, PAC filed Advice No. 20-003 to establish “CSP interconnection terms and procedures in compliance with Order 20-038, and the terms under which PacifiCorp will purchase energy from a Community Solar Project.”¹ PAC made its filing in response to Commission Order No. 20-038 directing the utilities to submit tariffs and pro forma contracts that would govern interconnection between CSP projects and under ORS 757.205, which requires the utilities to file tariffs regarding any jurisdictional service they provide. The jurisdictional service includes the utilities entering into contracts with CSP projects for the procurement and purchase of energy under the CSP.

On February 19, 2020, the Renewable Energy Coalition (REC) filed comments identifying several concerns the Coalition had with PAC’s proposed tariff and contract language. On February 24, 2020, Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association, Coalition for Community Solar Access, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Verde, Renewable NW, and Spark NW filed comments noting their support of REC’s February 19, 2020, comments.

Staff recognizes the importance of time with respect to review of PAC’s filing. The CSP has started to accept applications for CSP project pre-certification. It is important to finalize the CSP tariffs and contracts to allow projects to move toward project certification. However, Staff believes it is necessary to allow additional time for stakeholders to engage on PAC’s tariff and draft contracts and for Staff to conduct further investigation.

¹ See PacifiCorp Advice No. 20-003 at P 2.

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Staff does not anticipate a lengthy process and plans to submit a recommendation to the Commission regarding PAC's filing by April 2020. To ensure there is sufficient time to accommodate the investigation, however, Staff asks for a suspension of 90 days from the date of the Commission's order.

Staff recommends that the Commission suspend PAC's Advice No. 20-003 for a period of 90 days to allow time for investigation.

Conclusion

Staff believes that further investigation of PAC's tariff and draft contracts is necessary, which requires temporary suspension of PAC's filing under ORS 757.215.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

Suspend PacifiCorp Advice No. 20-003 for further investigation under ORS 757.215.