

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
OF OREGON**

UM 1283

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.,	)	PREHEARING CONFERENCE
	)	REPORT
Application for Authorization to Acquire	)	
Cascade Natural Gas Corporation.	)	

DISPOSITION: PETITIONS TO INTERVENE GRANTED;  
SCHEDULE SET

On Friday, December 8, 2006, a prehearing conference was held in Salem, Oregon. The following parties appeared: MDU Resources Group, Inc., Cascade Natural Gas Corporation, Commission Staff, Community Action Directors of Oregon and Oregon Energy Coordinators Association (CADO-OECA), the Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon (CUB), Northwest Industrial Gas Users (NWIUGU), and NW Energy Coalition.

CUB filed a notice of intervention on November 20, 2006. NW Natural, NWIUGU, and CADO-OECA filed petitions to intervene. There were no objections. I find that the petitioners have sufficient interest in this proceeding and that their appearances will not unreasonably broaden the issues, burden the record, or delay the proceedings. *See* OAR 860-012-0001(2). The petitions are granted.

Counsel for MDU Resources Group, Inc., and Cascade Natural Gas Corporation clarified that MDU Resources Group, Inc., is the applicant in this case. Cascade Natural Gas Corporation is considered a party, but need not file a petition for intervention.

MDU Resources Group, Inc., filed a motion for a protective order on December 6, 2006. There were no objections to the motion, and the motion was granted. The protective order was entered as Order No. 06-661 on December 8, 2006.

The parties conferred and proposed the following schedule:

Deadline for petitions to intervene	December 21, 2006
Public comment hearing – Pendleton	January 24, 2007
*Technical conference	January 25, 2007
Public comment hearing – Bend	January 31, 2007
*Settlement conference	February 16, 2007
Staff/ intervenor testimony	March 22, 2007
*Settlement conference	April 6, 2007
MDU testimony	April 19, 2007
Staff/ intervenor testimony	May 17, 2007
MDU testimony	June 7, 2007
Hearing	June 21-22, 2007
Aspirational order due date	August 31, 2007

Events marked with an asterisk are among the parties only; if they need to be noticed or rescheduled, the parties should decide that among themselves. Parties have agreed to a 5 day turn-around time for discovery after the June 7 testimony date. Parties should refer to the Commission’s rules on electronic filing. Also, parties should serve paper copies to all parties unless they have waived paper service, and always file a text-searchable file when submitting an electronic filing to the Commission.

Parties should notify me by January 3, 2007, if they intend to have a table at the public comment hearings. Typically, the Hearings Division, Staff, and the Applicant, at a minimum, participate in the hearings. The hearings will be held in a “town hall” format, with posterboards, handouts, and representatives available to answer questions from the community. Parties should contact me if they have any questions about the format of the hearings.

Dated at Salem, Oregon, this 11th day of December, 2006.

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Christina M. Hayes  
Administrative Law Judge