PUGET SOUND ENERGY
The Energy To Do Great Things

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Filed Via Web Portal

Mr. Steven V. King, Executive Director and Secretary
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Re: Advice No. 2017-14 (PGA and Tracker) Natural Gas Tariff Filing

Dear Mr. King:

Puget Sound Energy ("PSE") hereby submits a proposed Purchased Gas Adjustment ("PGA") and proposed Deferred Account Adjustment ("Tracker") including proposed revisions to its WN U-2 tariff. Enclosed, pursuant to RCW 80.28.060 and Chapter 480-80 WAC, are the following proposed revised tariff sheets:

WN U-2 (Natural Gas Tariff)
41st Revision of Sheet No. 1101 – Supplemental Schedule No. 101 – Gas Cost Rates
44th Revision of Sheet No. 1106 – Supplemental Schedule No. 106 – Deferred Account Adjustment

The filing consists of proposed changes to Schedule 101 ("PGA"), which reflect changes in wholesale gas and pipeline transportation costs, and Schedule 106 ("Tracker"), which reflect changes in deferral amortization rates. The overall impact of the Schedule 101 rate change is a revenue decrease of $31.2 million, or -3.3%. The overall impact of the Schedule 106 rate change is a revenue increase of $0.4 million, or 0.04%. The revenue increase for Schedule 106 is due to a smaller credit in rates from the prior year. The net impact of this filing is to decrease the amount billed to customers under the PGA and its associated Tracker with an overall revenue decrease of $30.8 million, or -3.3%. The filing includes an effective date of November 1, 2017.

Purpose of This Filing

The purpose of this filing is to adjust PSE's PGA and Tracker rates. The PGA rates recover expected gas costs from PSE's sales customers. On an average annual basis, the PGA rates included in this filing reflect a 7.9% decrease in gas costs. The impact of the decreased gas costs, as proposed herein, is a 3.0% decrease in residential gas service rates and a 3.3% overall decrease in gas sales service rates. The annual dollar amount of the change is a reduction in revenue of $31.2 million. This filing also represents a corresponding decrease in expenses, resulting in no net change in net operating income to PSE.

In addition to the proposed PGA rate changes, the proposed Tracker rate changes adjust the rate for deferred gas costs. The proposed Tracker rates increase the current rate slightly for most rate schedules, which will result in a 0.04% increase to overall gas sales service revenues. This change also results in no impact on net operating income. The combined effect of both the PGA and Tracker proposed rate changes is to decrease residential rates by 3.1% and overall rates for gas sales customers by 3.3%.

The Tracker rates are designed to true-up prior over or under recoveries of revenue to recover purchased gas expenses. This filing reflects the true-up of actual costs to actual revenue collected through August 31, 2017, and estimated costs to estimated revenue through October 31, 2017. PSE projects the balance in its 191 account will be a $4.9 million over-collection at the end of October 2017. Of the $4.9 million net over-collection, $15.2 million is commodity-related over-recovery resulting from the differences between actual gas market prices and forward prices used in preparation of the 2016 PGA filing. Of the net over-collection, $10.5 million is demand cost under-recovery related to differences between actual demand costs and those estimated in preparation of the 2016 PGA filing. There are also projected to be approximately $0.2 million of over-recovered balance remaining in the amortization account.

PSE is proposing to transfer all of the $15.2 million projected balance of over-collected commodity costs to the amortization account. None of the PGA demand balance is proposed to be transferred to the amortization account because an under-collected balance is expected at the end of October due to the cyclical nature of demand gas cost recoveries relative to cost incurrence. When the current costs that PSE is proposing to transfer to the amortization account are combined with the remaining over-recovered balance of $0.2 million in the amortization account, the net effect is $15.5 million to be credited to customers through Schedule 106 Tracker rates over the upcoming PGA period. Because current Schedule 106 Tracker rates reflect the amortization of a $15.7 million credit to customers established in the 2016 Tracker filing, the proposed rates result in an increase to customers through the Tracker rates.

The proposed rates in this filing reflect allocation factors using results from PSE’s last-filed and Commission approved gas cost of service study, which was performed during its 2011 General Rate Case.

Estimating Gas Commodity Costs

PSE has estimated annual gas supply costs for the period November 2017 through October 2018 for the purpose of determining PGA rates using an Excel-based model which is the same as the model used last year. This methodology creates a least cost supply portfolio that includes supply contracts, storage operations and transportation for the annual period.

A necessary component of the gas cost forecast is the assumed "forward strip" of monthly prices for the basins from which PSE acquires gas. PSE's gas cost forecast utilizes a 3-month average of forward price marks. The 3-month price mark period is June 2 through August 30, 2017, the period immediately preceding the date of the analysis noted above. PSE believes the cost forecast overall is a reasonable basis for setting PGA rates. Actual market prices will most likely differ from the forecast.

Combined Impact of the Proposed PGA and Tracker Rates

With the proposed Tracker rates PSE is proposing to increase the rate charged to customers for over-recovered gas costs during the November 2017 through October 2018 period, the same time period as the proposed PGA rates are expected to be in effect. The combined impact of the proposed PGA and Tracker rates is a revenue decrease of $30.8 million, or -3.3%. The following table summarizes the separate and combined impact of the proposed PGA and Tracker rates, based on a percentage change in total revenue from each rate schedule:

Estimated Impact on Annual Bills

Rate Schedules	PGA Impact	Tracker Impact	Total Impact
Residential			
23	-3.0%	-0.06%	-3.1%
16	-1.6%	-0.03%	-1.6%
Commercial and Industrial			
31	-3.5%	0.04%	-3.5%
41	-5.1%	0.76%	-4.3%
Interruptible			
85	-6.5%	1.62%	-4.9%
86	-4.9%	0.99%	-3.9%
87	-7.1%	1.89%	-5.2%
Total Sales	-3.3%	0.04%	-3.3%

Customer Notification

Posting of the proposed tariff changes, as required by law and the Commission's rules and regulations, for inspection and review by the public is being completed immediately prior to or coincident with the date of this transmittal letter, through web, telephone and mail access in accordance with WAC 480-90-193(1). The effect of the proposed rates in this filing is a decrease in customer bills and in accordance with WAC 480-90-194(2) no notice is required. However, since PSE has a CRM filing before the Commission (Docket No. UG-170692) which is expected to be an increase that requires notice in accordance with WAC 480-90-194(2) and the Commission's Policy on Accelerated Replacement of Pipeline Facilities with Elevated Risk (Docket No. UG-120715), PSE will issue a notice reflecting the combined impacts of the CRM and PGA filings.

List of Exhibits

The following exhibits are being submitted to document the above revisions:

PGA Exhibits	Description
Exhibit _____ (PGA-1)	Calculation of the revised Schedule 101 rates, by demand and commodity components, based on the estimated gas costs for the period November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-2)	Summary of proposed Schedule 101 rate changes.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-3)	The projected customer counts and sales volumes by rate schedule for the period November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018, which were used in estimating the proposed gas costs for the period and developing rates.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-4)	The calculated annual and monthly effect of the proposed PGA Schedule 101 rates on customer classes based on projected volumes for the proposed PGA period.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-5)	The estimated revenue impact of the Schedule 101 rates proposed in this filing, by customer class, based on forecasted volumes for November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-6)	The combined effect of the proposed PGA and Tracker rates on customer classes, based on projected volumes for the proposed PGA period.
Exhibit _____ (PGA-7)	The combined revenue impact of the PGA and Tracker filings, by customer class, based on forecasted volumes for November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018.
Tracker Exhibits	Description
Exhibit _____(Tracker-1)	Calculation of the balance proposed to be collected through Schedule 106 rates during the PGA period.
Exhibit _____(Tracker-2)	Calculation of Schedule 106 rates, by demand and commodity components, based on the FERC Account No. 191 balances.
Exhibit _____(Tracker-3)	The projected customer counts and sales volumes by rate schedule for the period November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018, which were used in estimating deferrals for the period and developing rates.
Exhibit _____(Tracker-4)	The calculated effect of the proposed Schedule 106 tracker rates on the various customer classes based on the projected volumes for the proposed amortization period.
Exhibit _____(Tracker-5)	The estimated revenue impacts of the tracker filing, by customer class, based on forecasted volumes for November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2018.

Conclusion

PSE's proposed PGA rates in this filing reflect PSE's best forecast of gas costs that will be incurred to serve customers during the PGA period November 1, 2017, through October 31, 2018. The proposed Tracker rates reflect the proposed treatment of deferred costs during the same time period. The rates proposed in this filing reflect a balancing of customer impacts with reasonable results for gas utility operations. While actual costs will vary from projections due to volatility of market prices and sales volumes, the rates proposed in this filing will provide a reasonable matching of gas costs with revenue generated by the revised rates.

Questions regarding this filing can be directed to Paul Schmidt at (425) 462-3180. If you have any other questions, or if I can be of any assistance, please contact me at (425) 456-2110.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kenneth S. Johnson

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cc: Lisa Gafken, Public Counsel
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Attachments:
Natural Gas Tariff Sheets (shown on page 1)
Exhibits (shown on page 4)