

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Application of	)	DOCKET NO. UG-971136
	)	
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC.,	)	
	)	
For a Certificate of Public	)	FOURTH SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER
Convenience and Necessity to	)	AMENDING ORDER
Operate a Gas Plant for Hire in the	)	
Designated Portions of Kittitas	)	
County	)	
.....	)	

**I. BACKGROUND**

1 **PROCEEDING:** On July 11, 1997, Puget Sound Energy, Inc., (PSE) filed with the Commission an application for authority to provide natural gas service to portions of Kittitas County, including unserved regions within the geographic area currently certificated to the City of Ellensburg (City). The Commission entered its Order Accepting Stipulation; Requiring Tariff Refiling on March 18, 1998.

2 PSE filed a Motion to Amend Order on November 9, 1998. PSE asked the Commission to amend its Order in four areas: 1) a waiver of Commission rule on proximity considerations related to pipeline operating pressure—WAC 480-93-020; 2) a waiver of Commission rule regarding proximity requirements related to structures for human occupations; 3) distance between high pressure valves; and 4) composition of backfill material. The Commission entered its Third Supplemental Order Amending Order Accepting Stipulation on December 8, 1998. Final completion of Phase I of the project occurred in 1999.

**II. MEMORANDUM**

3 On October 19, 2004, PSE filed a request to further amend the original order in advance of Phase II of the project for the following: 1) Reduction in pipe diameter from 16-inch to 12-inch; 2) modification of backfill requirements; and 3) final route. On February 7, 2005, Commission Staff filed its response to PSE's request. Commission Staff states it has discussed with PSE the proposed modifications, including the potential economic and public safety impact of each change. Staff further states, based on their investigation and documentation provided by PSE, that the proposed changes will have no adverse economic impact on the project, and the proposed modifications are not adverse to the public safety.

**A. Reduction in Pipe Diameter**

**1. PSE Request**

4 PSE asks the Commission for authorization to reduce the pipeline diameter for Phase II of the project from 16-inches to 12-inches. PSE states the reduction in diameter is considered the most economical while providing sufficient capacity and line pack to the serve load in combination with 16-inch installed under Phase I.

**2. Staff Response**

5 Commission Staff is in agreement with PSE that the reduction in diameter would be reasonable, but is reserving judgment on the issue of whether the reduction should be deemed the most economic. Staff informs the Commission that the reduced pipeline will provide sufficient capacity and line-pack to the serve load in conjunction with the 16-inch pipeline installed in Phase I of the project.

**B. Modification of Backfill Requirement**

**1. PSE Request**

6 The Third Supplemental Order specified the backfill requirements as select rock-free material having “particles no larger than ½-inch diameter with rounded and little or no sharp edges”. PSE indicates its standard for cross-county steel pipe requires initial backfill to be soil-based select material or native soil that passes a 1-inch square screen. On February 2, 2005, PSE filed a request to withdraw that portion of its request pertaining to backfill requirements.

**2. Staff Response**

7 Staff informs the Commission that the request for modification of the backfill requirements merits further discussion and evaluation. Staff will continue to work with PSE on this issue and may present the issue to the commission for determination.

**C. Final Route**

**1. PSE Request**

8 PSE states the Certificated route for Phase II, was, like Phase I, to be constructed substantially within existing road and road rights-of-way. However, PSE’s experience with Phase I in-road construction resulted in costs greater than anticipated, due to the high cost of restoration and the extended liability of road warranty requirements. PSE requests a change in route for Phase II. PSE proposes a portion of the pipeline be constructed on and adjacent to Washington State Department of Transportation property and the majority of the proposed pipeline be constructed on private land, as depicted on the maps accompanying PSE’s request.

**2. Staff Response**

9 Commission Staff supports PSE's request to change the final route of Phase II of the project.

**III. ORDER**

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

- 10 (1) PSE is authorized to reduce the pipeline diameter for Phase II of the project from 16-inches to 12-inches.
- 11 (2) PSE's request to modify the project's backfill requirement is withdrawn. PSE and Staff will continue to work on the issue and may present the issue to the Commission for determination at a later date.
- 12 (3) PSE is authorized to amend its final route of Phase II as described on the maps attached to PSE's request.
- 13 (4) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter of any the parties to this proceeding to effectuate the terms of the final Order and the instant Order in the protection of the public safety.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 18th day of February, 2005

RICHARD HEMSTAD, Commissioner

PATRICK J. OSHIE, Commissioner