Docket Nos. UE-190334, UG-190335, and UE-190222 (Consolidated) - Vol. II

WUTC v. Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities October 15, 2019



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1 (Pages 47 to 50)

Page 51 Page 53 1 LACEY, WASHINGTON; OCTOBER 15, 2019 1 Loarie for Sierra Club. 2 2 10:00 A.M. JUDGE O'CONNELL: And the Northwest Energy 3 3 --000--Coalition? PROCEEDINGS 4 4 MS. BARLOW: This is Marie Barlow with 5 5 Northwest Energy Coalition. JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. 6 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Good morning. 6 7 7 Let's be on the record. The time is approximately I believe we have a representative from 8 10 o'clock in the morning on Tuesday, 8 every party. I want to start by saying we're not 9 9 October 15th, 2019. pleased with any party or about the situation we find 10 10 My name is Andrew O'Connell. I am an ourselves in. The timing of Staff's motion is 11 administrative law judge with the Washington Utilities 11 difficult, and the apparent lack of information being 12 and Transportation Commission, and I am co-presiding 12 shared is very disappointing. We determined this with the Commissioners in Avista's general rate case and 13 13 hearing was necessary to help us decide the best option ERM. And I will be presiding at this hearing on Staff's 14 14 going forward. The Commissioners would prefer to 15 motion to sever Avista's ERM from this general rate case 15 preside along with me, but their schedules didn't permit 16 and consolidate it with PSE's, Puget Sound Energy's, PCA 16 17 and Pacific Power's PCAM. 17 Let's -- let's first address the elephant in 18 The Commission has yet to decide on how to 18 the room. The issue we want to address today is the 19 rule on Staff's motion. Thank you to all the parties 19 decision-making leading up to the 2018 Colstrip outage 20 for waiving the seven days notice so that we could have 20 and how the Commission can get the information it needs 21 this hearing today. We have a number of concerns and 21 to make a decision. 22 questions that we want the input from the parties in how 22 The three companies, Avista, Pacific Power, 23 23 to best resolve, but before we get to that, let's take and PSE, are all co-owners of Colstrip, and each has 24 appearances, and short appearances are sufficient. 24 filed a separate case seeking to recover for power costs 25 Let's begin with the companies and Avista. 25 including costs related to the 2018 Colstrip outage. We Page 52 Page 54 1 1 are well aware that the companies' cases have a plethora MR. MEYER: Thank you, Your Honor. I want 2 to make sure my mic is on. There we go. For Avista, 2 of different issues in them, which share little or no 3 3 David Meyer. commonality. We're not holding this hearing because of these issues. We're holding this hearing because of the MS. McDOWELL: Katherine McDowell here on 4 4 5 5 behalf of Pacific Power. 2018 Colstrip outage decision-making. It's an issue 6 MR. KUMAR: Ajay Kumar on behalf of Pacific 6 that we may or may not decide is large enough to 7 Power. 7 outweigh the lack of commonality in the rest of the 8 8 MS. BARNETT: Donna Barnett on behalf of filings. 9 We see that in Avista's general rate case 9 Puget Sound Energy. 10 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. 10 and ERM, we are going to be asked to make a decision 11 11 regarding prudency of decision-making leading up to the And for Staff? 12 MR. DALLAS: Joe Dallas on behalf of Staff. 12 2018 Colstrip outage. The burden is on Avista in that 13 MR. TEIMOURI: Daniel Teimouri on behalf of 13 case to show prudency and it is the burden of the other companies to show prudency in their own cases. We are 14 Staff. 14 JUDGE O'CONNELL: And Public Counsel? 15 concerned that we may not have sufficient information to 15 16 16 MS. GAFKEN: Lisa Gafken on behalf of Public make a determination of prudency and keep in mind 17 17 Counsel. whether ratepayers should pay for increased power costs 18 JUDGE O'CONNELL: And the Alliance of 18 that the companies incurred resulting from the outage. 19 Western Energy Consumes, AWEC? 19 This hearing is about how we, the -- the 20 MR. PEPPLE: This is Tyler Pepple for AWEC. 20 Commission, can get the information we need to make a 21 JUDGE O'CONNELL: The Energy Project? 21 decision. It's not just any longer the concern of Staff 22 MR. FFITCH: Simon ffitch representing The 22 and getting the information that it needs. We are

Energy Project.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Sierra Club?

MS. YARNALL LOARIE: This is Jessica Yarnall

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concerned that we will not have sufficient information.

sufficient information is by consolidating the dockets,

And if we determine that the only way we're going to get

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then we might have to do that.

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All parties will have multiple chances to speak at this hearing. I want the parties to stay focused on the elephant in the room, the decision-making leading up to the 2018 Colstrip outage and how the Commission can most efficiently get the information we need.

I'll allow at the end of the proceeding for the parties to have input into anything that does not otherwise come up in the hearing related to this question, but I want the parties to stay focused on the topics we address when we address them. If, during the hearing, the parties believe a short recess is necessary, perhaps where they can discuss amongst themselves, I would permit such a request.

We see several options for moving forward, but, though, let's talk about the obvious ones to start, both of which have flaws. The first is, we keep Avista's ERM with its general rate case and we keep the dockets all separate. The problems that we see with keeping Avista's ERM with its general rate case is that the issue of decision-making leading up to the 2018 Colstrip outage is also an issue in PSE and Pacific Power's filings.

While we were making only a decision as to

option.

I want to start by hearing from Staff three questions I want to put at this time to Staff. First, I want Staff to outline what information is lacking and what they would need from the companies in order to make a prudency determination.

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Second, I want to give Staff the opportunity at this time to explain why it believes we have to consolidate Avista's ERM with PSE's PCA and Pacific Power's PCAM.

Last, is there another way, other than through consolidation of these dockets, that Staff can envision getting the necessary information.

Mr. Dallas.

MR. DALLAS: Thank you, Your Honor. So I will take each question in the order you presented them.

So Staff's position is that the narrative behind what happened leading up to the 2018 Colstrip outage is spread across three dockets. Staff would like to tell this narrative to the Commission; however, Staff cannot provide this narrative pertaining to what happened without referencing confidential information within each docket.

Staff believes the information it would like to reference would not be considered confidential among

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Avista in its ERM docket, the problem is that we were only making a decision as to Avista, while PSE and

Pacific Power are also co-owners of Colstrip. Having to

4 make three different evaluations and determinations of 5

prudency and three separate proceedings for an issue,

the decision-making of the ownership for Colstrip leading up to the outage, that could be resolved more

8 efficiently with a single determination. 9

The second, sever the ERM, consolidate with the PCA and the PCAM as has been requested by Staff. The effective date for Avista's ERM presents an unfortunately tight timeline for resolution. Avista can correct me if I'm mistaken, but I believe that date is in early April 2020.

MR. MEYER: That's correct, Your Honor. April 1st.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you.

We believe that an adjudication can be done on that timeline, but there would be difficulties to overcome as the companies have pointed out in their responses. But we may feel after this hearing that we have no other choice to get the information that we need. This hearing is to determine if there is a better option than the two I've outlined, and I'll allow all the parties the opportunity to perhaps collaborate on an Page 58

1 the companies as joint owners of Colstrip. This is 2 because this information relates to the operation and

3 management of Colstrip. Staff cannot provide a complete

4 narrative of what happened during the 2018 outage in 5

three separate dockets at this time and will have

completely different recommendations as to each Colstrip owner based on the different administrative records in each docket.

It would be unwieldy, uneconomic, and awkward to have a docket where concerning the same doc- -- the same document, one company withholds the document based on asserted privilege or confidentiality, one company represents the document doesn't exist, and one company represents the document exists and provides it as a confidential response. This information incongruity among the three dockets can lead to different outcomes as to each company.

To illustrate this point, one company has not yet acknowledged the fact that Talen has conducted a Q-1 investigation. One company acknowledged this investigation did occur, but did not provide any documentation on it. And another company had acknowledged there was an investigation, but provided documents pertaining to the investigation as a confidential response. This designation limits Staff's

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ability to use that information in the other two dockets. And -- and just to make this clear, Staff must make its recommendation based on the individual administrative records in each power cost filing.

Although the companies disagree, Staff's position is that it would like to tell one narrative about what happened. If the individual companies did something different than the other ones, Staff would acknowledge this distinction within its single recommendation. Staff believes the Commission needs to hear the complete narrative that is spread across the three dockets to provide a result that's fair, just, and reasonable.

As to specifics, Staff would propose a two-tiered level of confidentiality in the consolidated adjudication. The first tier would be confidential information that is not confidential among the Colstrip owners relating to the operation and management of Colstrip.

The second layer of confidentiality would be confidentially commercially sensitive information that would be confidential amongst the Colstrip owners.

We believe that this two-tiered level of confidentiality will accomplish the goal of giving Staff the information to give the Commission the best

different based off the incongruity in the record. We believe that a consolidated adjudication can deal with these confidentiality issues in one proceeding so we can have the information pertaining to what happened before the outage, and specifically what Talen did prior to the outage given the fact that we believe the outage was foreseeable.

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And also, I think there's a judicial economy aspect as well. It'd be much easier from a -- from a resource perspective for the Commission to -- to make this determination in one proceeding as opposed to -- to -- to three separate proceedings on -- on -- on really the same cost and the same parties, the Colstrip owners.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: There might be some judicial economy having the decision made in one proceeding, but we're operating under a timeline that makes it rather tight and difficult.

MR. DALLAS: So -- so -- so Staff's position is -- is we do not want consolidation to prejudice Avista at all. We -- it's very important to us that any consolidated adjudication wrap up before April 1st. We believe this consolidation -- this consolidated adjudication will be narrowly focused on one issue, and that's going to be what happened before the Colstrip

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recommendation and preserving the companies' individual commercially sensitive information.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Let me -- let me stop you just for a moment and back up. So I'm hearing a lot about the -- the reasons why we should consolidate into a single document, a single case, but what specifically -- without revealing confidential information, I'm -- I'm -- I guess I'm asking for general topics, but what specifically do you not have that you think you need to get?

MR. DALLAS: So really right now, there's a big gap in the record. When the Company submitted their initial filing, they submitted testimony from the outage on, and there was a huge gap in the record pertaining to what happened before the outage. We believe that we have information that shows the outage was foreseeable. Just because the outage was foreseeable, Staff's position is that, that it's not imprudent, but we need more information to determine what Talen and the companies did before the outage.

But right now we don't have information in each docket. We have information pertaining to what happened in one docket, but not the other two. The information that we do have is confidential, so when we write our recommendations, they're going to be wildly

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outage. And -- and -- and this could be a very expedited proceeding. And it's very important to Staff that this wrap up before the suspension date and the GRC.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Well, let's get to that a little bit later, but I do recall that there are other parties in Avista's GRC that intend to bring up other contested issues other than the decision-making leading up to the Colstrip outage.

MR. DALLAS: Yeah, and if I could mention that for a second, Your Honor. We are aware that AWEC and Public Counsel may have other issues they want to discuss in the consolidated adjudication pertaining to the ERM. Staff's understanding is that these issues are relatively small in comparison to the issue of the Colstrip outage. And I really want -- want to focus on the legal standard here, that the -- the standard is that the issues of fact and principles of law have to be related, not identical. But -- but I -- I -- I can't speak for AWEC and Public Counsel.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: How -- has Staff thought about how else we could go about this to get the information Staff says it needs in order to make a decision, the information that we also -- we need?

MR. DALLAS: So -- so really our -- our

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preference would be -- would be to have one protective order, and in that one protective order, we would -- we would figure out how we deal with the confidentiality among the Colstrip owners. Now, if the Commission doesn't go that route, we're going to have to fight every individual designation so we can have three identical administrative records so we can tell the same story. Staff -- Staff thinks it's -- it doesn't make sense for us to have three completely different recommendations based off what the companies provide or or -- or refuse to provide.

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So I -- I think it would be an uphill battle to try to get three identical administrative records. I think it would be much easier if we just have one protective order and have that two-tier -- two-tiered level of confidentiality, and then we can tell our story and -- and -- and protect the companies' confidential information at the same time.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: So no, there isn't another idea that Staff has how to get this -- how to get this information other than consolidate them?

MR. DALLAS: So the other option would be to fight every individual designation in an attempt to get three identical administrative records in the three dockets pertaining to the same cost. So it -- it -- it

there was a -- a common hearing, a common process that -- that happened. And that might address some of the discomfort with the confidentiality between the companies, but it would also foster the judicial economy of having to deal with this in one proceeding.

I hear what Staff is saying about having to fight all the confidentiality designations. I'm not sure if my idea helps with that, particularly if the companies continue to be somewhat inconsistent with how they're providing the information, but that's -- that's an -- an idea.

I did want to address briefly the piece of Public Counsel's advocacy that might be more appropriate in the GRC versus Avista's ERM. I have one witness that's addressing both of those concepts. The -- the concept of directional bias, that -- that's the piece that could potentially go into the GRC versus staying with the ERM, and if we separated that out that would keep kind of the commonality intact among the three companies.

Our testimony there is really more informative. It -- it -- we're not offering it for decisional purposes. We could sever that piece of the testimony and with the Commission's permission, file that in the GRC. It's relatively short. It's about --

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is possible, but, you know, the legal standard we're dealing with among -- among them is judicial economy, and it's much more efficient to have one protective order that protects all the companies and allow Staff and the Commission to have the relevant information.

MR. TEIMOURI: Excuse me, your Honor. Dan Teimouri with Commission Staff. We could also issue bench requests relating directly to this information to the companies and -- and ask them directly for the requested information.

MR. DALLAS: But -- but I'm not sure if that would resolve the confidentiality issues but...

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Let me -- let's turn to Public Counsel. Ms. Gafken, the same questions generally for Public Counsel, is there another way you can envision getting the information needed without consolidating?

MS. GAFKEN: I did have one other idea. I'm not certain that it's much better than the consolidation idea. The Commission has conducted proceedings that are not consolidated but conducted simultaneously. So that was done -- I don't have the docket numbers at hand, but a Puget filing back in 2012 or 2013 where they had an ERF and a decoupling docket. Those dockets were not consolidated, but they were held simultaneously. So

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that portion of the testimony is approximately ten pages, and there's five exhibits that go along with it. I don't believe that Avista would be prejudiced. We outlined what that testimony would say in the letter that we filed on October 3rd outlining what issues we were anticipating on -- on filing. So I think that there would be plenty of opportunity to respond and no prejudice in that case, but we -- we could sever that piece of our testimony out and provide that to the Commission through the GRC and then keep our Colstrip issues separate and deal with that in the ERM proceeding if it's severed and consolidated with the other three.

Did you want me to -- to address your second question in terms of why consolidation is -- is necessary or --

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Well, I think -MS. GAFKEN: -- want me to stop there?
JUDGE O'CONNELL: -- it was more aimed at
Staff --

MS. GAFKEN: Okay.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: -- the proponent of wanting to consolidate. If you think that's the best option, I would be interested to hear that. I -- I do have a question, though, about your suggestion with sharing a common procedural schedule for the separated

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dockets and, you know, hearing them together but keeping them separate. And I'm curious, do you think we would have any trouble, any confusion making sure that those items stay separate when they get heard in front of Commission and then when they get decided? Just because in my review of that example you gave, that caused a big issue for the Commission later on.

MS. GAFKEN: I -- I think it's a flawed approach if I'm being completely frank. It's a little bit illusory because in my mind, it is consolidated, and it does pose some administrative hassles on the decision-making side in terms of having -- you still have to produce three orders, you know, if you are keeping it separate. It does look like it's consolidated, and so I think it's hard to understand so it lacks transparency. If you're Joe public looking in, I'm not sure that they fully understand what's going on in that circumstance.

I do believe that consolidation would be more efficient. It would solve a lot of those problems. You would have one record to deal with instead of three, and there is a common story that needs to be told with respect to the Colstrip outage and the -- and the events leading up to that outage. From Public Counsel's perspective, we have a story that we're ready to tell in

with informal discovery. Our -- our engagement with PacifiCorp has been a lot lighter, and that's purely a resource adequacy issue. Of course, if these three cases are consolidated, we will fully participate and go forward that way. But there is -- there is a pretty serious resource adequacy issue in dealing with all of the things that come before the Commission.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Thank you.

I am aware that there are a number of parties on the bridge line who are present here for this hearing, thank you, but they also indicated that they were not going to be really participating in this discussion.

And I want to check with Mr. Pepple. And I do not recall and I want to offer you the chance to speak, and I was curious if you are participating in this discussion?

MR. PEPPLE: Thank you, Your Honor. Well, I guess, yeah, we're happy -- we -- we certainly, yes, are interested in participating in this discussion. I guess if the question is whether we intend to file testimony on the Colstrip outage, at this time, we do not, although I wouldn't -- that's -- that's not intended to indicate, you know, a position on it one way or the other.

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the Avista ERM filing, but, you know, Staff has expressed some pretty serious concerns that perhaps we don't have a clear story, or the full story, with respect to all three of the companies.

So while I feel like I have a story to tell the Commission with respect to Avista's ERM, I'm not certain that it's the complete story or that it has all the information that the Commission needs in order to make a decision. And -- and that really goes to, you know, concerns about the -- the regulatory system and public trust and transparency. So I do believe that consolidation would -- would resolve a lot of those issues.

And in terms of the confidentiality issue, I think those are things we can work through. Staff's idea about the two-tiered confidentiality method is a good one. We can deal with those issues as we come to them. We may still have some discovery battles depending on how things go forward, but we have those anyway with three separate proceedings. And if they were separated, it would take a whole lot more resources than if they were consolidated.

You know, I mentioned this in our response, Public Counsel only recently filed notices of appearance in the other two dockets. We had engaged with Puget Page 70

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I guess I would say if -- you know, in response to your -- your first question about whether there are alternatives to consolidation, you know, one other idea might be -- it's something that I just came up with on the fly, so if it's a bad idea, then that's fine. But it -- it -- it seems like it might be possible to have another protective order that only applies to the Colstrip outage and would be issued in each utility's power cost docket. That would allow for the exchange and use of information related to the Colstrip outage in each docket without them being necessarily consolidated. So just one other alternative if the Commission does not want to consolidate the dockets.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. I think we should bring that up later and talk about that one.

Next I want -- I want to turn to the companies.

MR. DALLAS: And -- and, Your Honor, before we turn to the companies, Staff has a proposition that we'd like to hear what the companies thoughts are.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Do you want to do that on the record or --

MR. DALLAS: Yeah, we can do it on the record. So after careful review of each filing, Staff

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is now willing to stipulate that if these dockets are consolidated, the only issue it will contest is the prudency of the replacement power cost associated with the 2018 Colstrip outage. With this stipulation, though, Staff would like to consolidate the entire dockets because the Commission has to improve the entire deferral balances in each docket. It doesn't make sense to sever individual issues in each docket if the Commission needs to ultimately improve the entire deferral balances. And with that, we -- we would like to hear what the companies thoughts are on Staff's

proposed stipulation.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Well, before we get there, let's say that the companies reject your offer, but the Commission decides we have to consolidate these anyway, can we hold Staff to this only one issue is going to be contested if this gets consolidated?

MR. DALLAS: I -- I -- I believe so. That's Staff's position, and, you know, we -- we certainly want to address the Commission's concerns and the companies' concerns about commonality. In preparation for this hearing, Staff looked at every filing, and we do not believe any other costs ought to be included -- included in the 2018 deferral balances were imprudent, so therefore, we would propose that the consolidated

start with that as an article of faith, you then find a way to navigate through that, navigate through the confidentiality issues. And I think there are ways to do that.

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I -- I'm not going to reargue because we're vectoring in, if you will, on -- on a more precise Colstrip issue here, but I want to emphasize that when we filed the ERM six months ago, that triggered very extensive discovery and over 150 separate items from Staff and a hundred from other parties involved in the production of 600 documents and countless hundreds of hours of Avista, Staff time. I stand to be corrected, but I don't believe we objected to any or if we did object to any of the discovery, that I know there wasn't a motion to compel, but I don't believe we even objected. Now, whether the responses were sufficient or not, that's I guess in the eye of the -- the reader.

So we've had, you know, five months of discovery, ongoing, extensive discovery, and -- with multiple rounds. There haven't been any motions to compel in terms of what Avista did or didn't provide. They -- the -- the Company, I think, has really done a masterful job of dedicating the resources. And -- and -- and I can speak, I guess, candidly here is that frankly, there was a lot of angst within the Company

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adjudication would be focused on a very narrow issue and can be resolved before April 1st given that this is the only common issue amongst all three Colstrip -- I mean, all three power cost filings.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. And I mentioned that every party is going to have multiple opportunities to speak. I do intend to come back around to Staff.

MR. DALLAS: Thank you.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: I would -- I would ask that the companies think about what Mr. Dallas just requested. I'm not going to ask for responses right away because I feel like that might be a little unfair to ask you to respond immediately, but I would like to ask you -- I want to ask each of the companies, Avista, Pacific Power, and Puget Sound Energy, how do we get the information and make a prudency determination and is there a better way, another way other than consolidating?

Mr. Meyer.

MR. MEYER: Thank you, Your Honor. First of all, I know Avista feels this way and I suspect the other companies and all parties in these dockets feel this way is that we want the information to be made available so the right decision gets made. So if you

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about how much effort was being expended. And I was a proponent, and the Company understood that it's necessary to get this information out, but it was a big job, and I suspect it will continue to be a big job.

And just as an aside, and this is I think somewhat troubling for all of us who practice before the Commission, it's exhausted some of the goodwill on both sides, frankly; Staff, other parties, and the Company. And I hate to see that happening through this extended discovery process. But we'll patch those things up and we'll get on with doing what we always do. But at this point, five months into it, and virtually at the 11th hour, we have the plug pulled on testimony that was to be filed on October 3rd. The testimony surely was written because when the parties were told that, I think it was October 2nd, they didn't need to file that testimony, I -- I -- I -- being prudent practitioners, I'm sure they had it on the shelf ready to file.

So we lost that opportunity -- and this is just specific to Avista. We lost that opportunity to then keep the clock going in our joint procedural schedule that called for testimony on the rate case and testimony on the ERM all to be filed on October 3rd. Now where are we? We are by -- I suspect, by the time you and the Commission rule on what we're discussing

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today, another week or so. It's not up to me to say we've gone by, and we will have lost essentially three weeks on our agreed upon schedule.

And in that process -- and there's a reason I'm laying this out, because it may play into some alternative suggestions later on. But in that process, we have not disturbed the December 11th through 13th hearing dates, nor do we want to. That was for the general rate case and for the ERM. But what this three-week delay has caused is a shrinkage of time for us to respond. We had a late -- we had a November 6th, I believe, date for a response, and now we're being pinched. So some adjustment, no matter what, if they remain consolidated in Avista's general rate case needs to be made. And depending on which way the Commission goes, there are ways to do that. It's not the end of the world, there are ways to do that without disturbing the general rate case.

At the end of the day, what matters to Avista is April 1 of next year. That is the date our new rates would go into effect, and that is the date that we want to empty this bucket. We have a \$30 million bucket of ERM dollars that we've been accruing at -- really since 2005, I believe it is. And under the ERM mechanism, you don't tip that bucket, you don't

\$30 million tipping point.

So I hope that gives you some useful information as to why we're so keen on keeping these two proceedings marching in lockstep. It's -- it's not just important for us or important to the efficient use of your resources here, but it's important to our customers as well. And the time's long since passed for that bucket to be -- to be dumped.

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So that's all by way of background. What -- what troubles me a bit is that -- and, again, I can't and won't speak to what has been going on in the Puget and the PacifiCorp dockets. I don't know what the procedural posture is of those two dockets. I have not talked to the practitioners on my left, and I -- I won't pretend to. But I know that the Commission has recognized discovery tools. Those tools could be motions to compel, there were no motions to compel for Avista, and in due course, if it was necessary to have a motion to compel with respect to another issue, another company, well, so be it, I don't know. So you have that. And it -- it's -- it's a readymade tool, and somebody else mentioned bench requests, so there are ways of getting at this information.

It -- it -- it seems to me that -- let -- let me back up a minute. Common issues are not uncommon

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empty that bucket until you trip the lid, and that lid, as I said, is \$30 million.

With this ERM filing, we will -- assuming there were no issues, assuming there were no issues at all, that bucket would have -- approximately \$34 million bucket would have -- have been dumped, proceeds could go where they belong and that's into the pockets of our customers. Even if, even if one were to subtract out the roughly three and a half million of Colstrip ERM-related dollars from that \$34 million figure, it would still trip the lid.

So no matter what, we don't want that date, with or without the Colstrip issue in this case, to go by so that we can't see some mitigation for our customers come next April, April 1st, okay? That's why we're trying to keep these pieces together.

Now, in the past, Avista has used -- by agreement of the parties, because we never did trip that lid, we've used in the 2013 case, I believe it was, we had a two-year rate plan, we used pieces of that ERM bucket to mitigate some of the rate year impact, and we did it again in, I think, the 2015 case. But that's only with agreement of the parties or with an order of the Commission. The bucket would not have been dumped, if you will, in those cases because we weren't at the

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with Colstrip. Every rate case -- not every rate case, but in the last several rate cases, some party in one of our jurisdictions has argued that you're spending too much to sustain Colstrip beyond any, in their view, reasonable termination date. Of course that involves capital. But those kind of propositions were tested in Idaho with Avista. Those capital spending decisions are made jointly by those of us in the room along with Talen and other owners.

We don't find ourselves when we're arguing over capital, common capital decisions struggling with consolidation and confidentiality. So I'm a little surprised we found ourselves at this point at this time. And certainly for Avista surprised that it is at the 11th hour so deep into our process. We in discovery asked I -- I -- I believe it was either in a transmittal letter or in the body of the discovery response, we asked essentially if Staff is aware of any inconsistency between the companies or shortcoming, and certain our response is would you let us know.

And essentially that question that we posed was left unanswered because it was no secret that Staff along the way was unhappy with some of the responses they were getting. Don't know whether it was our responses, other responses, or what. So we provided

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that invitation, let us know. Let us know. And that was done I -- I'm -- I'm guessing five, six weeks ago in plenty of time, in any event, for us to then sit down and -- and -- and sensibly resolve these discovery disputes.

So I think that after you've heard from the other parties and at some point this morning, I would like to propose a break and explore a -- a possible process that would bring alignment to the companies, because remember, the companies haven't had a chance to discuss this among ourselves, and there may be ways we can assist and help work this through. So a recess at some point I think would be in order because no reason why we can't come to terms with this today.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: I do appreciate that, Mr. Meyer, and I -- we were hoping that by getting the parties here together, either on the bridge line or here in person, that we might be able to facilitate some resolution that could be beneficial for everyone. So thank you. I appreciate that sentiment.

Let me turn now to Pacific Power.

Ms. McDowell and Mr. Kumar, how do we -- of course, the -- the Commission, we're -- we're primarily focused on how we're going to get the information that we need in order to make, as Mr. Meyer says, you know, get the

continue to provide that information to Staff.

Now, I do want to say that where we're at right now is in the informal process. And so the first step, I believe, is to move to the adjudicatory process so we can get a protective order in place. And I -- and I thought it was quite constructive in Staff's motion that Staff indicated that through the adjudicative process, it believes that the discovery process that's afforded in adjudication will allow Staff to obtain the necessary information to provide a more detailed recommendation to the Commission on the prudence of these costs.

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So I think, you know, just the first step is adjudication and going into that, and we -- we haven't even gotten to that step yet. So I think Staff acknowledges that will be a material step to, you know, being able to really get the kinds of information they need from PacifiCorp. PacifiCorp has already filed a protective order and hopes to have it entered as a part of the opening of the adjudicatory process, and we are certainly open to discussing a modified protective order that would have the tiers that your -- that Staff mentioned this morning.

I think in our response, you know, we tried to respond as constructively as we could to the concerns

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right information to make the right decision. Let's -we want to get the decision right. Wanted to hear what ways you can think of that we can get this information without having to consolidate.

MS. McDOWELL: Yeah. You know, Judge, we really appreciate that question, and I would say that that is a question that we have been focused on in the last couple of months as well. You know, just -- just to maybe point out the obvious, the parties are not similarly situated in part because our filing came many months after Avista's and also after Puget's. So, you know, we are in the place where we are still trying to understand what information Staff needs and working to provide it to Staff.

One of the ways that we tried to do that and cut through some of the noise was to set a workshop where we really had some dialogue with Staff in a more open-ended way, in a way that I think is usually more constructive than just, you know, dueling data requests and responses. And I'm hoping -- I -- I feel like that was a constructive step. I'm hoping that we can continue to, you know, really understand what it is that Staff's focused on. I think we now understand that it's the pre-outage period, not the post outage period, but that is, you know, information we've gained, and we can

Page 82 we were hearing from Staff about overlapping cases and

issues and workload issues and then this discovery issue. And our -- our -- our response was well, let's see if we can just work on conversations where we would agree to allow discovery that is not confidential just as to PacifiCorp, but only confidential among the owners to be shared.

So I think our -- our response attempted to try to make the same overture, that -- that if that's a reasonable process we can agree to we're -- you know, if the information is information that the co-owners already have, then I think we can work around the normal limitations of the protective order, and we would be willing to do that. That was one of our responses.

So in our -- in our response is before we went to what we think is a fairly drastic and awkward step of consolidation of disparate proceedings, we thought adjudication, we thought a modified protective order or some kind of collaborative process, and -- and frankly, you know, to avoid overlapping cases and the challenges associated with that, I mean, normally the Commission has -- takes these issues one at a time for each utility, creates the record, and makes a decision in that case, and then the next utility, you know, if -- if it's adverse to the utility, then Staff will

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certainly cite that as a precedent, and that would need to be distinguished by the next utility. If it goes the other way, then Staff would need to argue why that precedent doesn't apply, but you've already -- you're not relitigating every issue, you're trying to say that that precedent decided, in this case it would be Avista, Avista would go first. When we would presumably next get to Puget's case, Puget would be able to say why or why not that decision applies to it or not.

I mean, it's a -- that's the normal process. We have overlapping issues in cases regularly, and we usually deal with them by deciding the issue in the first case filed, and then the parties are left to deal with the precedent in the preceding cases. You know, we don't usually start all over again.

So that -- that to me seems like a process that would work here, and I guess in terms of you're trying to find solution space, that's ours. It's really just doing it the way we usually do it, but I think here with the innovative approach on the protective order, that would allow common confidential information to be shared among the individual dockets.

So I guess just in closing, we'd like to say that, you know, we are still engaged in the discovery process. Our last discovery, you know, our -- our

haven't had bench requests, those are available. An in-camera review of documents, an order to compel, workshops, even -- even depositions if we're talking about a narrative. That's certainly an opportunity -- I mean, an alternative that Staff has available -- available in an adjudicative proceeding.

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I think what we're -- we have -- I do want to mirror what Mr. Meyer said, Puget has similarly requested information, specific information what it -- what it is it's lagging. We -- Puget is unclear about what it does not have or what it has not given, and we have not also received an answer to that specifically, but -- so we don't think that the discovery process is over. And even Mr. Pepple's recommendat- -- just option of a protective order that applies just to the Colstrip is an intriguing thought, that maybe some in between that doesn't need to be -- doesn't require a consolidation.

But I think it's a big deal to consolidate these cases now. Even -- even if Avista weren't so far along in their rate case, but just consolidating multiple utilities in power cost proceeding, which has never been done in 17 years of doing it, is a very big deal for -- for, what, maybe one document or one piece of information that I think we can address and get --

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workshop with Staff was just at the end of last month. We've filed additional follow-up responses out of that workshop just a couple weeks ago. You know, we would --we look forward to even a deeper discovery process once we have a protective order in place and an adjudication that's opened. So -- so we think this process can work, and we think ultimately it will end up being the cleanest and least complex way of dealing with what is admittedly a complex issue for the Commission. Thank you.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you.
Puget Sound Energy, Ms. Barnett.
MS. BARNETT: Thank you, Judge O'Connell.
First, I'd like to thank you for allowing PSE the opportunity to come up with some seems like a brainstorming session to come up with some creative alternatives to consolidation, because I do think that those alternatives are out there to get Staff what it needs and the Commission what they need to -- to make a recommendation.

And I don't have a lot to add on because I agree with Mr. Meyer and Ms. McDowell, but I -- I do think that we haven't tried just adjudication, and I think most of the issues can be addressed through adjudic- -- the adjudicative process. We could --

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get to Staff and get to the Commission short of setting a -- a big precedent for -- for future consolidation.

So I don't think I have anything other to add except I agree with Ms. McDowell that we should take this -- I sense that there was some urgency when Staff has to file testimony and the GRC is -- is gearing up for Avista that -- but we should still try separate steps first and what can we get through with just the adjudicative process.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Staff has an idea at the outset of their suggestions, and I'm curious what the companies think about it. Should the Commission, if we decide we don't want to consolidate these dockets but we do want the information, should we, could we issue bench requests to the companies to get that information more immediately?

And, Mr. Myer.

MR. MEYER: Yes, it -- it's -- a lot of information I suspect or if there are holes or perceived holes in the presentation will be filled in our rebuttal. And so that may answer bench requests. And while that's a useful tool, that's sometimes a good tool after the issues have been joined and you really see what you already have that's been presented. So we won't be filing our ERM rebuttal for some period of

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time, because if Colstrip is the ERM issue, clearly we cannot stay with this existing procedural schedule that we've married up between Avista's GRC and the ERM. It just won't work. Too much work has to be done with testimony on the Colstrip issue. That rebuttal can't be filed by early November.

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So we're looking in any event, even if you don't sever the -- the Avista ERM, I'm afraid you're looking at two sets of hearings for Avista only, one dealing with a rate case and then a follow-on hearing with a somewhat -- with a separate prefiling track for the ERM issue, all of which would lead to one order prior to April of next year. So we're -- we're -- we're in a pickle, and that procedural pickle has to -- has to be addressed even if you don't sever.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: We're aware of the procedural difficulty that there is in the Avista case right now, and we will address it one way or the other.

MR. MEYER: Thank you.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Ms. McDowell?

MS. McDOWELL: Judge O'Connell, I appreciate you bringing up that issue or that tool of bench requests, a tool that Staff also referenced. I think

goes back to your initial point that, you know, Staff has concerns about getting the information, but really

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appropriately that would come up in their cases. So I

3 think, you know, it is appropriate to make different

specific to one or the other utilities, well, then

decisions for different utilities when there are

5 different circumstances, and that may come up. I mean,

it's not -- uniformity is not necessarily going to be

7 the outcome because we're all differently situated, but

8 I think through the Avista process and your bench

9 request process, you can make sure that you have a 10 complete record to decide Avista's case when it's first 11 up, then Puget's, and then ours.

> So that's -- so I would say in some ways I think the bench request process is one that can provide you some assurance and the Commission some assurance that no matter what, you're going to have the record you

> > JUDGE O'CONNELL: Ms. Barnett?

MS. BARNETT: Thank you. I agree with -with both Avista and PacifiCorp, and I -- I think the bench requests are a valuable tool to get you -- to get the Commission what they need. I think it would be most valuable after an informal session with Staff to -- to get to some clarity about what it is they need. I think if we identify what they need and then the Commission

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- more importantly, the Commission does. The Commission
- 2 needs that information to make the right decision here.
- 3 And I think that knowing that you have that tool of
- 4 bench requests is -- is a reason to continue to try to
- 5 work this out through the normal adjudicative process
- 6 knowing that if there are gaps and, you know, Avista's
- 7 case goes forward, but you have questions about
- 8 potentially the co-owners or some other aspect of the 9
 - case that is not being fully fleshed out in the Avista record, you know, I think the Commission does have that

tool, and it's a less drastic step than consolidating

these cases and -- and trying to keep three records -trying to develop three records within a single

proceeding, which is what's going to be required, and that just seems messy.

Whereas if you keep the cases separate, allow Avista's case to go forward, you have the ability, the Commission has the ability to issue bench requests if there seem to be gaps in the narrative. And, you know, that's a situation where, you know, again, we would -- to the extent you're seeking information common to the owners, Avista would have that information to provide and would not be bound by confidentiality issues to provide it.

To the extent, you know, that is information

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1 what we can -- what Puget can get and what they possess

issue a bench request. There's a difference between

- 2 versus what they don't even know about that -- that's
- 3 lagging. So I think the bench request, we can -- like
- 4 Ms. McDowell, said we get the Commission what it needs,
 - but I think more informal, like a workshop, to identify
 - and get clarity around what exactly that is would be

8 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Before I return to 9 Staff, I do want to hear Staff's thoughts on what Staff 10 has heard. But before we get there, I want to bring up 11 some other options that we see that the parties might 12 want to think about when we do take a recess, and we 13 want to say that we are interested in hearing the 14 parties' thoughts on whether they are a better option.

In particular, the idea of severing and consolidating just the prudency of decision-making leading up to the outage. Then after a prudency decision, return those to the separate dockets. And I'm aware, as Staff described, of the difficulties of severing just the issue of this prudency determination, but if a joint or a consolidated decision were made on prudency on an expedited schedule and time for them to be reincorporated back into consideration of the rest of the issues in each of the dockets, could that not resolve the difficulties of severing just the prudency

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on.

MR. DALLAS: Thank you, Your Honor. Let me first comment on what the companies stated. I -- I really appreciate their thoughtful responses. I think their solutions would certainly resolve the -- the issue of confidentiality, but it would not resolve the issue of judicial economy. Under their solutions, we would still have three hearings, three procedural schedules, three settlement conferences, three written orders. It -- it -- it wouldn't -- would not resolve that concern, and I think Public Counsel voiced earlier that they have resource constraints, that that's the reason

why they participated in the ERM more so than the other I think your solution, I -- I need to consult with my client, but Staff's position is we want to make sure the Commission has sufficient information

to make a decision that's fair, just, and reasonable for both the ratepayer and the Company, and to make sure that these proceedings don't drain the resources of the Commission. So if your solution could accomplish those two, I think Staff would be willing to entertain that,

23 24 but that's something I'd have to consult with my client with Staff on that.

So it's -- it's an interesting idea. I think it's worth pondering more, but I -- I do have some question about whether it simply elongates it.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Let me -- let me turn to the companies. And this is in consideration of what I know about Avista's ERM filing. I'm not the judge on the PacifiCorp, Puget Sound Energy filings. There hasn't been a judge assigned. So I'm somewhat more familiar with what's going on in Avista's case, and I am aware that the determination of prudency of decision-making leading up to the Colstrip outage is one piece that then also needs to be considered as a whole with the rest of the Avista's ERM filing including the deferral balance. So that's why my question is, is the potential to sever just the prudency determination have a decision on that and then return it to the separate dockets?

Mr. Meyer.

MR. MEYER: The more we talk this morning, the narrower the issues appear to be. And so in that sense, I think we're moving in the right direction. What I'm -- but I don't want this to be illusory. We -we talk from Staff's point of view that the real issue is what happened before the outage, and the remedy

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JUDGE O'CONNELL: Right. Perhaps that's something you can discuss during the recess.

MR. DALLAS: Absolutely.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Ms. Gafken, do you have any thoughts?

MS. GAFKEN: That's an intriguing idea. I worry a little bit about the time frame. If we have a separate proceeding on the one issue and then try to finish the rest of the issues separately, do we make it to the end, you know, to the targeted end date? And I'm trying to kind of sketch that out in my own mind. I'm not sure if that elongates it versus if we just do it all at once, because I think we can make the April 1 date if we just dive in and do it. It's an intriguing idea, though, because it -- it does sever that one issue. It deals with some of the arguments about the Commission has to deal with each one of the filings.

I -- I do want to chime in and -- and say that Public Counsel's focus is also Colstrip. You know, we do have that -- the one up -- you know, we want to provide an update regarding the ERM workshop. I still don't see that as a substantive issue, but really the substantive issue that -- that Public Counsel is looking at in all three of the dockets would be the Colstrip issue. So I -- I think we're kind of in the same boat

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presumably is a disallowance in whole or in part of the power cost replacement dollars. I don't know whether even in exercising that remedy whether the Commission will want to make distinctions between parties, and there may be reasons why in some cases the Company behave with just extraordinary dispatch and reasonableness, and it would just be improper.

What -- what our prefiled testimony tells you or tells the Commission about Colstrip in the ERM -this is in the ERM docket -- is that even with this two-month outage, that plant operated at an 82 percent availability factor. That's pretty good. In fact, the -- the -- I'm not arguing the case, but I'm trying to provide perspective on this, okay? And even with -with that, we will -- we will remind the Commission that in other months of the year, Colstrip operated much better, much better, greater availability than was anticipated.

So at the end of the day, this episode, while -- while certainly something you need to look into, was -- was not so out of the ordinary. Again, I don't want to argue the case, but we will be taking the position that things happen in Colstrip, things happen in every generating plant, and this was managed appropriately, it's not the end of the world, and keep

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this issue in some kind of perspective.

Okay. So back to the point at hand, I -- I don't know if it -- if it's slimmed down quite the way you describe it, Joe, on -- on behalf of Staff. You know, if it's just a question of outage and power replacement costs. I mean, did each of the three companies monitor and exercise their fiduciary duties as part of the management committee that oversees Talen? I don't know if you're going to make distinctions there. So it's -- it's -- while it's tempting to paint with a broad brush and say it's just -- it's an -- it's an easy up or down decision, there are nuances here that would probably need to be explored on a company-by-company basis.

I am heartened to -- to better understand that maybe from even Public Counsel's perspective it really is just the Colstrip issue. The other issue you mentioned we can address perhaps in the rate case, Lisa. So if -- and if there are no other ERM issues and if we've strictly defined what we mean by the Colstrip issue, then that lends itself to -- to some sort of early decision on that just so long as -- and we put the ERM to bed for Avista and we can use those dollars for ratepayers, okay?

JUDGE O'CONNELL: So, Mr. Pepple, if you're

the units at issue, ownership percentages, amounts in controversy, rate impacts, replacement power strategies, and the individual responses of the facts leading up to the outage.

Ultimately the Commission has to make three independent determinations on three individualized records. And we -- we don't see that -- we see that as being absolutely more complex in a consolidated proceeding where the things get jumbled than if you do it sequentially, take Avista's, take Puget's, take ours, and then build on the record that gets developed over time in the individual utility cases.

That's the normal course of events. We think that is the more efficient process and frankly more comfortable one for us. You know, as we are just now like moving into an adjudicative process, the idea that we are moving into an expedited adjudicative process, which is, you know, like news to us and not exactly in our schedule for the next couple of months, is -- you know, that's not necessarily a welcome development for us. I understand it's imperative for Avista, but for us especially to try to meet, you know, Staff's needs around let's -- let's really understand the story so we can come to the right outcome, that -- that's at odds with but file your testimony next week.

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still on the line, I'd like to prepare you for a question I'm going to ask perhaps after we take a recess, and I'm curious about Staff and Public Counsel have made fairly clear that they -- well, that Staff offered to simplify the issues of the ERM to the Colstrip outage. I recall that you, AWEC, have more issues in the ERM docket than just the Colstrip outage, and at some point after we take a recess, I'm going to be interested to hear what -- whether you can make that same offer or what your position on that is.

But let me return now to the companies, for Pacific Power. Just for the decision of prudency on the decision-making of the Colstrip outage, if we were to sever that, expedite a decision on just that piece of Pacific Power's filing and then return whatever that determination is to your PCAM for consolidation with the rest -- consideration with the rest of the things in that docket, is that a possibility?

MS. McDOWELL: So, Your Honor, I appreciate, you know, the attempt to come up with constructive solutions here. I will say that that solution is not a good one for PacifiCorp. You know, we think even if the issue is narrowed to the Colstrip outage, that issue is still not common among the three utilities. You have the different utilities situated differently in terms of

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And so, you know, we think in our situation it would be better to set the normal schedule, not an expedited schedule that, you know, works for Avista, but to allow Avista's case to go forward then allow ours to go forward in the normal course. We think our situation is -- you know, we -- we get that there is a common issue that occurred, a common fact that occurred, but we think the utilities all are differently situated on that and all have, you know, a different record that ultimately needs to be developed. And we want a chance to develop ours in the normal course, not in like tomorrow because we've gotten thrown into a proceeding frankly that we didn't expect to be thrown into.

So that's -- that's our course. We think -- I mean, ultimately we hope to settle this case. We've generally been able to settle our PCAM filings and -- and we think that's going to be harder to do if we're immediately thrown into litigation and don't have that time to have those sort of discussions. So -- so, you know, as much as we'd like to say yes and, you know, continue with constructive brainstorming that's a solution, I -- I don't think works because we just don't think the commonality exists.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: I appreciate your input, and you anticipated my comment about we do think that

Page 99 Page 101 1 there -- it's clear that there is some commonality. The 1 ask of Mr. Meyer a question that we've been pondering. 2 2 We would benefit from Avista agreeing to extend the extent to which I think everyone can argue about at this 3 effective date of its ERM, if we decided these dockets 3 point, but there is some commonality here. Ms. Barnett, you've had the -- the benefit 4 should be consolidated, will Avista agree to extend the 4 5 5 of hearing all of my questions before I get to ask them effective date of the ERM? 6 of you. What are your thoughts? 6 MR. MEYER: Would that have the effect of an 7 7 MS. BARNETT: And hearing all the answers. ERM decision that would extend beyond April 1st of 2020? 8 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Yes. 8 JUDGE O'CONNELL: To agree to extend the 9 MS. BARNETT: I -- I guess I -- I look at 9 effective date would be to move it beyond 10 the -- at Staff's motion a little differently. I don't 10 April 1st, 2020, yes. 11 see -- I don't see the proposal as really a narrowing 11 MR. MEYER: Then we would not agree to that. 12 because that's the way I always saw Staff's proposal. I 12 We're -- that would prevent the \$30 million bucket from understood. I guess, this is -- having done I guess now 13 13 benefitting customers because this issue would still be 14 15 power cost adjustments without any of them ever being 14 unresolved. Now, that gives us still five months of 15 adjudicated, I just assumed this was the only issue. So good, hard work between now and April 1st, and however 15 16 when they say we're just going to pull out and 16 the Commission decides to address this, a lot can be 17 bifurcate, I guess, this one issue from the PCA, I -- I 17 done in that period of time. So I'm not trying to be 18 understood that -- I understood that to be Staff's 18 difficult, but I want to preserve the objective. 19 motion. That is their -- that is their position, is the 19 JUDGE O'CONNELL: I understand. And it's 20 20 worth asking, and perhaps I just ask that you keep it in only issue is the Colstrip outage. 21 mind as you discuss more during recess with the other 21 So I don't see as severing the -- this one 22 22 issue, the prudency issue of Colstrip outage replace parties. 23 23 power costs as a -- as a -- as a more efficient MR. MEYER: Sure. Thank you. 24 improvement, I guess, or -- or alternative. I think --24 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Mr. Dallas? 25 I -- I do think it's also not worth the -- I guess I'm 25 MR. DALLAS: I just wanted to provide just Page 100 Page 102 uncomfortable with, again, I think I said it before, 1 some very quick feedback. Staff's initial position is 1 2 consolidating multiple companies into what -- into one 2 we -- we agree with PSE that it's just procedurally 3 proceeding, setting that precedent. But not only that, 3 awkward to sever individual issues. I'm going to also setting a precedent that it's easy to bifurcate 4 consult with my client and get their thoughts on it, but 4 5 5 specific issues from a rate case. I mean, that's I wanted to reiterate what Donna said. 6 essentially what we'd be doing, is severing one issue 6 And also I wanted to address Meyer --7 that you don't want to discuss in a rate case and we 7 Mr. Meyer. Our position, we're coming from a principle 8 8 position. We have not made a decision on the prudency want to take that offline and separate and -- and join of cost. At this point, Staff is trying to obtain the 9 it with another. I think that's -- I think that's a big 9 10 deal. So I -- I think -- I guess I don't have anything 10 information to make that determination. 11 11 to add except that PSE would not be comfortable with As to what Pacific stated, we agree that 12 that proposal. 12 there could be different outcomes as to each company, 13 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. It's about time, I 13 but Staff's position is that it would like to tell one think, for us to have a recess, but I --14 14 story. We believe it's one set of facts, the characters 15 MR. DALLAS: And, Your Honor, before we go 15 are the Colstrip owners and Talen, and if each 16 16 on recess, can I quickly provide Staff's thoughts on individual Colstrip owner did something different, Staff 17 17 this? would certainly make that distinction within one 18 JUDGE O'CONNELL: I want to address one more 18 narrative response. thing --19 19 So we just want to make it clear that 20 MR. DALLAS: Okay. Great. 20 Staff's position is that it will identify if -- if an 21 JUDGE O'CONNELL: -- before we go back to 21 individual company did something different in its single 22 Staff and --22 narrative within the consolidated adjudication to -- to 23 MR. DALLAS: Great. 23 resolve that concern. Thank you. 24 JUDGE O'CONNELL: -- go to recess. 24 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you, Mr. Dallas. 25 25 From everything I've heard today, I want to It is 11:15 a.m. I don't believe after this

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recess we will have much left to discuss, depending on how the -- the parties do in the recess. Is half an hour or 35 minutes sufficient for the parties to talk -- talk to your clients and then for us to come back and have a short chat before we adjourn?

MR. DALLAS: Yes, Your Honor.

MR. MEYER: Yes for Avista. But I do -- after a short break, have the -- have us come back and talk about some discovery options here, see what we can do. And I think if -- if we need more than a half an hour, can we -- well, how about we just call when we're ready for you; would that work?

JUDGE O'CONNELL: That -- that would. If I don't hear anything, I'm going to check back in in half an hour, because it is -- I'm aware and conscious of AWEC's availability as we get into the afternoon, and I want to be sensitive to that. So I -- I am going to at least check back in if I don't hear from you. If you would like me to come back before half an hour, 35 minutes, yes, please, contact me. And I'm not seeing anyone objecting to that, so with that, we will be off the record in recess. Thank you.

(A break was taken from 11:18 a.m. to 11:47 a.m.)

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Let's be on the record.

list, you know, would -- would represent a good reason for the Commission to, you know, either consolidate or not consolidate depending on its position on the Colstrip issue. I think that the issues we raised are relatively narrow and can be dealt with pretty easily.

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The first issue we -- we raised on is an issue that, you know, we -- we raised in testimony in the Avista remand docket. We feel like we need to raise it in the ERM proceeding as well in order to protect our interest on that issue, but it's an issue that could very well be resolved in the ERM -- or in the remand docket.

The third issue we raised is really just a policy issue about, you know, the period over which Avista should amortize the ERM balance, you know, and that's -- I don't think that that's really a big enough issue to -- to influence your decision here.

And then the -- the middle issue, the second issue, regarding the -- the interest again, that's, you know -- it's an issue that requires testimony, but probably only a couple of pages to identify it. And, you know, so it's -- again, it's a fairly simple and narrow issue.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Thank you. Before we adjourn, close for the day, I do

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Have the parties had a chance to collaborate and did any good ideas come from that?

MR. MEYER: Well, before we go there, you had a question pending for -- of Tyler.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Yes, I do.

MR. MEYER: And probably should get that out because that might have a bearing on -- on some of this. JUDGE O'CONNELL: Very well.

Mr. Pepple, I wanted to check back in with AWEC. Staff made an offer earlier in this hearing that if the -- if everyone -- you know, if we consolidate all of these dockets, the power cost filings, that they were only going to contest a single issue. I'm aware from the contested issues list that you filed in the ERM docket that you have more issues than just that one, and I'd like to hear from you regarding how you feel about whether you can only focus on this one issue or whether there are multiples that you still need to address.

MR. PEPPLE: Yeah, thank you, Your Honor. So as I -- I mentioned to -- to some of the parties at the break, you know, AWEC isn't -- isn't willing to give up its issues for the sake of procedural efficiency. You know, we think that there are issues that -- that deserve to be raised. That said, I don't think that any of the issues we raised that we have identified in the

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want to give the opportunity to the parties to tell me any -- anything else that we should consider and how we should go forward. The kind of a catchall question for the very end. Before we get to that, which I will allow everyone to have a say, was there collaboration and is there any idea for a resolution that would be acceptable to everyone?

MR. MEYER: There is a germ of an idea, but that will not resolve the fundamental question of consolidation or not. The parties are apart on that as I understand the positions, but what I think there may be agreement on is that we've discussed this -- this idea of holes in the discovery responses. We all say the right things that Commission has to have what they need and we all believe it, okay? But we're talking in the abstract, so I -- I think it's time, starting with the three utilities, to sit down, figure out amongst us what we've already produced, because we haven't even done that yet, and then talk amongst ourselves just what is truly confidential, and we'll get into this two level confiden- -- or protective order in just a minute, but decide among ourselves just what the state of discovery is. We can do that in fairly short order. And then sit down with Staff and other interested parties to go over that so we understand and you understand there's common

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agreement, what's missing, what do you need, and can we give that to you.

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And we didn't talk about dates. I didn't get the final okay from all parties. I'd like to get all of that done -- that's actually a two-step process, I suppose -- done in the next three to four weeks. And then as a matter of cleanup, it's -- it's apparent that in any event the -- another prehearing in the ERM, Avista ERM docket will be required to reset the schedule, assuming that it is going to proceed on its own course, and that's the issue that has not been resolved.

But, you know, I won't speak for how quickly the Commission can turn an order around, so if the hearing that carried into the new year on the ERM docket would allow, I don't know, four to six weeks, seven weeks, whatever the Commission finds necessary, then to write an Avista-specific ERM order that talks about Colstrip and everything else. And then we get to the finish line of April 1st.

Now, did someone else want to better articulate this protective order, we can agree on something like that?

MR. DALLAS: Yes, thank you. So we had collaborative conversations during our recess. I think that would resolve the issue of judicial economy, but it still would be very procedurally awkward in Staff's opinion.

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JUDGE O'CONNELL: Well, let me clarify a little bit on that idea, because that thought came about with the understanding that we need to have a decision on the -- at least Avista's part of the 2018 Colstrip outage, the decision-making leading up to the that, and the prudency thereof. We need to have that decision to then reincorporate it into the rest of the ERM to get to the deferral balances. So that procedural idea would have had to look something like severing that one issue and returning it after a decision was made.

MR. DALLAS: So -- so I think if the issue is timing, I think Staff's stipulation would -- would resolve that concern. I know AWEC and Public Counsel have some other minor issues, but with that stipulation, I don't think there is going to be a substantive difference in timing if we consolidated the entire dockets -- I'm sorry -- as opposed to severing individual issues because that one issue is the only issue Staff may contest pursuant to its stipulation. So I -- I -- I'm not sure if -- if there is a substantive difference in timing between the two options.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. What I'm hearing is

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we -- we do have an agreement as to the two-tiered level of -- of confidentiality. I think what the -- I think the parties can correct me if I'm wrong, but we -- we all agree that there should be at least a common protective order, and that in this protective order, there'd be two layers of confidentiality. One would be confidential, but not confidential among the Colstrip owners because the information relates to the operation and management of Colstrip. And then the other layer would be truly commercially sensitive information that would be confidential as to each individual utility company.

I think where the disagreement is, is how do we proceed procedurally. Do we do this in three separate dockets or do we do it in one. Staff's position is that it would promote judicial economy to do this in one as opposed to three because three necessarily means three procedural schedules.

The Commission mentioned a -- a solution where we would sever individual issues. Staff's preference would be to consolidate the entire dockets because it's -- it's just odd to us to sever individual issues when the Commission has to approve the entire deferral balances. But as an alternative, we would take that as opposed to leaving these unconsolidated because Page 110

that all the parties can agree that it would be a good 2 idea, whether consolidated or separate, that we have 3 this -- as we've characterized at this hearing -- a 4 two-tiered level of confidentiality and a protective 5 order. One level of confidentiality where it's not 6 confidential between the Colstrip owners and then 7 another level of confidentiality where essentially the 8 companies can't see the other information of the -- the

other companies. Is that -- I'm hearing that that is the one thing that the parties can't agree on.

MS. BARNETT: I don't -- this is Donna Barnett from PSE, and I think that offer was -- is a compromise to consolidation. It is not intended to be a support -- PSE does not support consolidation, and if it's a -- I think that was a separate issue. So if it's a two-tiered protective order, that doesn't mean we'd want that in a consolidation as a compromise.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: So then the idea -- I just want to make sure I understand. The idea then would be to keep the dockets separate, allow this two-tiered level of confidentiality, and that would allow for introduction of certain evidence really to the Colstrip owners and decision-making to be used in each of the dockets?

MS. BARNETT: That's right, if it's

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appropriate. That -- that's right. This would --that's a -- PSE's and the other parties, my understanding, is the attempt to get to understand what Staff is missing and get them that information, which --which is the purpose behind their motion the way we understand. If judicial economy is a separate issue, we don't think that judicial economy, the benefits afforded the Commission in judicial efficiency or economy does not outweigh the gray cost in establishing precedent of having multiple power cost proceedings bound together in a consolidated proceeding.

To me that just creates a -- a boilerplate power cost rate proceeding that is applied to multiple utilities without looking at every individual utility the way they're filing separately. It's -- so I -- so I think this is -- the offer was to -- as a -- as an attempt to compromise to get Staff what they need and not an acknowledgment or accession to consolidation.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay.

MR. TEIMOURI: And, your Honor, this is Dan Teimouri. And just to be clear that that is not Staff's position. We do not see it as a compromise, but as a component of a consolidated docket in our preference.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: We'll -- we will take that into consideration, and I do want everyone to understand

appreciated the suggestions of the tiering from Staff and the individualized modified protective orders from Mr. Pepple. And I think we tried to combine those during the break into something that would work for all of us to really address the discovery issue that you raised and that Staff raised.

So we are totally comfortable with a modified protective order being developed and entered in each of the dockets that would have -- identify the tiers and that would have the special language that would allow information produced in one docket, you know, in that, I guess it would be the tier -- the tier two is where we've identified the common information, that that common information would be -- notwithstanding it being designated confidential, it would be -- in this case, be allowed to be used in the three dockets.

So that -- that is different than your typical protective order, and we're -- we're comfortable with that, and we think that addresses -- we hope that addresses your concern and also the Commission's concern about how to manage this from an evidence perspective. So -- so we're comfortable with that. I think the distinction between what our perspective and what Staff articulated was just the common protective order that implies that if one protective order in a consolidated

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that we're going to make a decision soon on this, and it's possible that not everyone will be happy with that decision. Someone's not going to get what they want so...

MR. DALLAS: And, Your Honor, I -- I think just to quickly talk about what PSE stated, I think I already made this point, but Staff's position is it's not going to have a boilerplate recommendation in the consolidated adjudication. We believe it's one story, and if every individual utility company did something different, we would identify that.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Mr. Dallas, I -- I understand.

MR. DALLAS: Okay.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: You've made that point a couple times.

MR. DALLAS: Okay. Yeah, yeah -- okay. JUDGE O'CONNELL: No, I do recall quite clearly that Staff said that you can do different determinations in a single narrative.

MR. DALLAS: Exactly. I just wanted to reconfirm that.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Ms. McDowell.

MS. McDOWELL: Thanks. Just trying to get in to clarify one thing, I think that we really

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proceeding. We still believe that judicial economy is best served by doing this in three separate proceedings and let the cases evolve in -- you know, in the way they have been filed.

You know, Avista might be ready to go to hearing in a month, but I don't think PacifiCorp is. We are just now entering the adjudicatory process. We want to engage in this discovery process. We also talked about, you know, informal technical conferences, which could potentially, if we have this kind of protective order placed, the three utility, Staff and other parties where we could do a technical conference that would -- where we could share information informally as a way of getting around a lot of back-and-forth discovery requests.

So we're open to all of those ideas, but in our mind, that -- you know, judicial economy is served by getting that -- sharing those facts in an orderly way and then moving into, you know, an adjudicatory process, your typical evidentiary testimony process. And I feel like here we're not going to -- at least for PacifiCorp, if we are, you know, moved and consolidated into Avista's schedule, that's going to be problematic for us to be able to engage in that kind of process.

So -- so we think judicial economy is best

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served by continuing the cases separate, but doing these innovative approaches to sharing information and also informal sharing of information, both sort of formally through the protective order and then informally through these technical workshops or other proceedings.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you.

Ms. Gafken, do you have any thoughts?

MS. CARKEN: I do feel like I would be

MS. GAFKEN: I do feel like I would be repeating a lot of what has already been said, but it sounds to me like there is some agreement on the need to share information and to levelize that information across the three companies and to make sure that everyone has the same information. I think that's really been one of the key concerns. I don't think we have agreement on how to proceed and meet, you know, the deadlines that need to be met. And so I'm afraid we've been unhelpful in that regard.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: So at this time, I want to give all the parties, including the parties who are on the bridge line, The Energy Project, Sierra Club, Northwest Energy Coalition, AWEC, I want to give all parties a chance and opportunity to provide any additional thoughts on how we should move forward. Let's -- let's start with Staff.

Mr. Dallas.

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it's -- it's certainly -- there was no bad intent to the timing of our motion. We certainly don't want to prejudice any of the companies. We just did -- we just wanted to give PAC a fair opportunity, and I -- I think Staff would be accused of prematurely filing its motion if we filed our motion prior to the workshop. So I just wanted to -- to really state why we filed our motion when we did. It's because we view all these cases as one, which is why we're asking for consolidation.

As to the point why we didn't file motions to compel, it -- it -- it didn't make sense to. For instance, we believe the companies are withholding the same document, so if we did a motion to compel with Avista, we would fight that, and then if we won, it would be confidential, and then we would have to try to move that same document into the other three -- the other two cases.

So -- so -- so it -- it makes more sense to do this in a context of a consolidated adjudication because we have to fight to get the document, and then the document's going to be confidential, and then we have to fight the designation of confidentiality to get in the other two dockets. So it -- it's really a five-step process to get one document in each administrative record if there is no consolidation. So

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MR. DALLAS: Thank you, Your Honor. And like you said, this will be a catchall, so I have a couple points I want to hit. So the compromise that the companies are seeking, we appreciate. I think it would resolve a lot of the confidentiality issues. Staff still has concern about judicial economy. You know, I think Public Counsel stated it best, that it would really limit our participation in all three if we had to adjudicate the same cost three different times. And then the first case wouldn't have the benefit of the information and insight from the latter cases. So as these cases evolve and we become more familiar with these issues, the Commission may enter inconsistent orders based on three serial cases.

The next point I want to talk about is the timing of Staff's motion. I think -- you know, I -- I want to explain why we filed it when we did. We've always viewed these cases as one single case, and we filed our motion after the workshop with PAC that took place on September 20th, and we wanted to wait to file our motion until we heard from PAC to give them a fair opportunity.

This workshop was on September 20th, and then after this workshop, we sat down with all the information and filed our motion six days later. So

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we -- we -- we did not pursue the motions for -- motions to compel because it just didn't make sense. It -- it makes sense to -- to -- if we go that route, and we hope we don't, it makes sense to do it within the context of a consolidated adjudication so we can use that one document as to all three companies because we want to provide consistent recommendations. So I -- I just wanted to provide some context on that.

And with that, I know it was a catchall. I think those are the points I want to make. I'll move it over to my associate, Dan.

MR. TEIMOURI: There were -- thank you, Your Honor. There were a couple of points that were made that Staff and I had a chance to respond to that I'll just briefly touch on and then we'll move quickly through them.

But I think first, PAC and PSE said something to the effect that they're still trying to understand what Staff needs, that Puget's not clear on what it has not given. And I think that, you know, Staff would strongly push back on this, we've had several discovery conferences with both parties that made very clear as Your Honor stated at the very beginning of this hearing they were looking for the Q-1 contemporaneous decision-making leading up to the

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Colstrip outage. So that was conveyed very clearly to all companies, and I don't think there was any -- any lack of clarity there.

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It was also stated by Mr. Meyer, and I think this appears in all the briefs, that there was thousands of documents, lots of time spent, and by the same token, there was a lot of time spent by Staff receiving those thousands of documents. As you know, thousands of documents a response does not make. And so we wasted a lot of time going through those documents to not get an answer to our questions, so I think shared frustration on both sides.

It was said that this was bad precedent. I think that's not true. This is a very narrow situation. As was said, 17 years we haven't had a similar situation where there was three joint owners with one outage. The order could be narrowly crafted around those facts and would not set bad precedent.

And lastly, during the break, we went and looked for some precedent to establish that the issuance of bench requests in a -- in a situation like this, would be not be unprecedented, and we have that authority here, and I would like to hand it up to the Bench if you are so inclined to receive it and to share it with the parties.

particular issue. Of course each one of the individual companies will have their percentage of ownership and all of those things, but those are merely facts.

They're not things that necessitate separate treatment.

Public Counsel's preference would be to have a process that has the most efficient path forward. So, you know, fewer times parties need to gear up to address this particular outage, we would prefer that.

In terms of consolidating three separate companies into a single proceeding, I think the Commission has broad discretion on that. It really ultimately comes down to what does the Commission feel that it needs to do in order to process these filings and do so in a way that they can make a decision based on all of the facts that they need to have and be the most efficient with it. I think that discretion falls squarely on the decision-makers.

I -- I am quite encouraged by the offer to -- one, for the offer of the companies to meet among themselves and then to meet with the rest of the parties to -- to levelize the facts. I think that is very constructive, and we look forward to participating in that process, regardless of whether this ends up being consolidated or not. I think I'll stop there. I don't want to take up much more of the air time, but thank

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JUDGE O'CONNELL: And can you share with me just the -- the docket and perhaps if you're -- whatever document you're looking at?

MR. TEIMOURI: Yes, it's In re Joint Application for Merger of Qwest Communications International Inc. and US West Inc., Docket No. UT-991358, April 26th, 2000.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: April 26th.

MR. TEIMOURI: And that's all I have, Your Honor. Thank you.

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JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. 11

> Ms. Gafken, does Public Counsel have any other thoughts about how we should move forward?

MS. GAFKEN: I will speak briefly, and thank you for the opportunity. From Public Counsel's perspective, it -- it does seem somewhat unnecessary to have three separate proceedings to deal with this particular issue. I think it's -- it's been fairly -it's been clarified that the Colstrip outage and the events leading up to it really is -- is what we need to grapple with, and we have three common owners.

Of course the Commission needs to deal with each one of the filings, but it -- it seems to me to be a bit unnecessary to have three separate proceedings and gear up three separate times to deal with this -- this

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1 you. 2 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Mr. Pepple for AWEC, do 3 you have any additional thoughts you would like to

4 voice? 5 MR. PEPPLE: Just very quickly, Your Honor. 6 AWEC is comfortable with whatever decision you make on 7

whether to consolidate or not consolidate for purposes of the Colstrip outage as long as AWEC's right as a party to raise be -- you know, other issues that it has identified within the scope of the dockets is preserved, so that's all. Thanks.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you, Mr. Pepple. Mr. ffitch, for The Energy Project?

MR. FFITCH: Thank you, Your Honor. We don't have any comments at this time.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Thank you. 16 And Ms. Yarnall Loarie for the Sierra Club?

MS. YARNALL LOARIE: Sierra Club also doesn't have anything to add at this time. We still do not oppose the idea of consolidating and severing this issue for the sake of efficiency.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Thank you. And, Ms. Barlow, for Northwest Energy Coalition?

MS. BARLOW: Thank you, Your Honor.

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the works, it's procedural works on its ERM, so that it -- that is going to have to be delayed. We're confident that we can set a new schedule that will still

meet that April 1st order, though.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Thank you. I want to return to the companies. For the most part, I want to hear your final thoughts about how we should move forward, but I'd also like to hear more of Mr. Meyer about what would be needed as far as timing if the companies needed to get together. Is that something that can or -- or would be able to go hand in hand with having this two-tiered protective order? Because obviously if we do that, the companies will have to get together.

Northwest Energy Coalition doesn't have anything to add

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either. Thank you.

So to end on a constructive note, I'll send out something to the -- the utilities to jump start this process, check with your principals, and then we can decide how best to share this and then kick it over to the other parties in terms of what -- what you would like to do to assembly all this. That's the best I've got.

MR. MEYER: Yeah, we'll have to sort the information accordingly, and -- and -- and so we have not talked about timing. I'm happy to send an email around after I confer with my own client before I commit my own client. They -- they don't like that.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: And here's my concern, Mr. Meyer, is that we do expect to issue a decision rather quickly on this, and that is going to have an impact on what we decide to do procedurally with Avista's general rate case. So I just want to understand what sort of timeline we are under and whether -- whether you're going to be able to have those discussions before we issue a decision.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Ms. McDowell? MS. McDOWELL: Thank you, Your Honor. Let me just conclude by saying we are open to all ideas that parties have on how to share information efficiently and effectively to make sure all parties have the information they need and to make sure the Commission has what it needs to resolve this case. We do strongly object to consolidation of these proceedings. We think it would not promote judicial efficiency. That's the Commission's perspective, and we think it would be prejudicial to Pacific Power, that's our perspective.

Utilities are entitled to individualized prudence determinations. So whether or not this case is consolidated, the Commission is going to need to develop

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MR. MEYER: I would think not, because it envisions an iterative process where we pull stuff together, we look at it, we ask ourselves quite directly and honestly is that really confidential or isn't it, and -- and try and find common ground, hand it off to others to look at and discuss, and then what comes out of that, and this could be three, four weeks down the road is we've identified the following six deficiencies that need further discovery.

You know, I was just -- just trying to reflect -- and this will be my last thought unless you have other questions -- is how different today would be if we weren't discussing this whole thing in the abstract. And we all have views of what may or may not be there in discovery once we get our hands on it, what may or not be issues, and that's fair, because we're early in the process with some of these parties.

But let's say we were before you today arguing about six specific requests for information, six requests. I think it would be an entirely different discussion today, and I think there would be an order coming, and we wouldn't be talking about consolidating cases. But instead, because it's unfortunately and maybe inevitably, we're discussing this on an abstract basis, what it's done to Avista is that it's gummed up

an individualized record. We don't think it makes it easier for the Commission to do that in a consolidated proceeding. We think that creates a risk of a confused record. That leads to my concern about prejudice. We think in a consolidated proceeding, there's a risk that other act- -- other parties' actions could be imputed to us, that we could leave with an unclear, confused record, and that we could be basically assigned a schedule that is problematic for us because of another utility's concerns.

So we have -- we do have concerns about consolidation, both from the Commission's perspective and judicial economy and from our perspective in terms of our right to have an individualized determination of our prudency in this case. Thank you.

JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you.

And, Ms. Barnett?

MS. BARNETT: Thank you, Your Honor. PSE agrees with PacifiCorp and Avista on this. And I think PSE's concerns were underscored by Staff's final statements and final thoughts mainly when they said that this is -- they viewed these as the same case, these three separate -- three separate issues as the same case and that it's one story. They're -- they're three separate stories, they are three separate cases, they

Page 127 Page 129 1 are three separate companies with only one fact in 1 sufficient information to make -- to render fair, just, 2 2 common. Not even one -- not even similar parties are in and reasonable rates, and we also believe that 3 3 common. consolidation would promote judicial economy and avoid 4 wasting the Commission's resources on hearing the same 4 I think that -- that idea of creating a 5 5 consistent answer or prudency determination for each of case three separate times. And I guess with that, I 6 the companies is a mistake. Consistency should not be 6 would just stand on our brief. 7 7 the goal. Efficiency should not be the goal. Getting JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Is there anything 8 it right should be the goal. And I think the compromise 8 else from the parties that we need to discuss at this 9 9 that we proposed today will get Staff and the Commission hearing? Not seeing anything in the room, I'm not 10 the information they need to get it right. 10 hearing anything from the bridge line. So with that, we 11 And -- and so I don't see a need to 11 will adjourn this hearing. We will take into 12 consolidate them if they have the information they need 12 consideration what's been said, and with that, we will 13 to get it right. And I think consolidating them, which 13 be off the record. 14 would then just be just for judicial consistency and 14 (Adjourned at 12:35 p.m.) 15 economy, would be a drastic departure from Commission 15 16 precedent and make it easier to do single issue 16 17 ratemaking in the future, consolidate totally 17 18 inappropriate cases with multiple companies. And -- and 18 19 so I think it -- it would be a very big and drastic 19 20 20 departure from the Commission's practice. 21 So just to end on a -- on a final note, I do 21 22 think PSE is committed to getting Staff the information 2.2 23 they need and finding out what that information is and 23 24 by -- by working together with the other companies we'll 24 25 do that. And I think that solves the -- the issues that 2.5 Page 128 Page 130 1 Staff has brought in its motion. And so I hope the 1 CERTIFICATE 2 2 Commission considers that, but maintaining it as 3 3 separate -- separate -- separate cases, not STATE OF WASHINGTON 4 4 **COUNTY OF THURSTON** consolidated. 5 5 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Thank you. 6 MR. MEYER: May I just tack on? I know I 6 I, Tayler Garlinghouse, a Certified Shorthand 7 had my time. 7 Reporter in and for the State of Washington, do hereby 8 8 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Very briefly, Mr. Meyer. certify that the foregoing transcript is true and 9 accurate to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability. 9 MR. MEYER: Okay. This process that you 10 just referred to where we share information, I think if 10 11 11 I were a commissioner, I might want to know whatever happened there? Did you guys figure this stuff out or 12 12 Jaylin Grantingheus Tayler Garlinghouse, CCR 3358 13 13 not? It would be helpful I think to the Commissioners 14 if they're -- if someone -- probably Staff would report 14 15 15 out that there are X, Y, Z as unresolved discovery 16 16 issues, and so narrow this thing down at this point. 17 Otherwise, it's just a -- could be a nebulous exercise 17 18 and we're back here again. 18 19 JUDGE O'CONNELL: Okay. Well, considering 19 20 that, Mr. Dallas, Mr. Teimouri, Staff has the proponent 20 21 of the motion, last word? 21 22 22 MR. DALLAS: I think Staff would just stand 23 23 on its brief. I think, you know, consolidation can 24 24 resolve the confidentiality issues in one protective 25 2.5 order, and Staff's position is that the Commission has

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