

**BEFORE THE  
WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

PACIFICORP d/b/a PACIFIC POWER  
AND LIGHT COMPANY,

Respondent.

DOCKET UE-230172  
*(Consolidated)*

In the Matter of

ALLIANCE OF WESTERN ENERGY  
CONSUMERS'

Petition for Order Approving Deferral of  
Increased Fly Ash Revenues

DOCKET UE-210852  
*(Consolidated)*

**CROSS-ANSWERING TESTIMONY OF BRADLEY G. MULLINS**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**ALLIANCE OF WESTERN ENERGY CONSUMERS**

**October 27, 2023**

1 **Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.**

2 A. My name is Bradley G. Mullins, and my business address is Tietotie 2, Suite 208,  
3 Oulunsalo, Finland FI-90460.

4 **Q. ARE YOU THE SAME WITNESS THAT SPONSORED RESPONSE**  
5 **TESTIMONY IN THIS DOCKET**

6 A. Yes. I filed Response Testimony on behalf of the Alliance of Western Energy  
7 Consumers (“AWEC”) regarding revenue requirement and power cost issues.

8 **Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR CROSS-ANSWERING TESTIMONY?**

9 A. I respond to the testimony of Staff witness John D. Wilson regarding PacifiCorp’s  
10 proposed changes to the Power Cost Adjustment Mechanism (“PCAM”). I also discuss  
11 Staff witness McGuire’s proposals surrounding the rate plan and the Coal Cost Tracking  
12 Mechanism.

13 **a. Response to Staff on PCAM**

14 **Q. PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR RESPONSE TO STAFF REGARDING THE**  
15 **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PCAM.**

16 A. In Washington, all three investor-owned electric utilities—Avista Corporation,  
17 PacifiCorp and Puget Sound Energy—have nearly identically structured PCAM  
18 mechanisms,<sup>1</sup> which contain design elements that the Commission has repeatedly  
19 affirmed “are required elements for a PCAM.”<sup>2</sup> These design elements include both a  
20 “dead band and sharing bands [that] reflect the asymmetry of power cost risk.”<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> See Dockets UE-140762 et al., Order 09 at 20 (Table 1) (May 26, 2015)

<sup>2</sup> Dockets UE-140762 et al., Order 08 at 14 (¶ 29) (Mar. 25, 2015), citing Docket UE-130043, Order 05 (Dec. 4, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at ¶105.

1 required design elements also include a refund or surcharge threshold, sometimes referred  
2 to as an amortization trigger.<sup>4</sup> In general, while I appreciate witness Wilson’s thoughtful  
3 approach on the matter, I disagree with making changes to these required elements of a  
4 PCAM in this case, and also disagree that there is justification for a change to the existing  
5 required elements. Power costs have always been volatile—consider the 2001 West  
6 Coast Energy Crisis, for example. It is precisely because of this volatility that the PCAM  
7 was created. Relative to traditional ratemaking, in which utilities would be entirely  
8 exposed to fluctuations in power costs between rate cases, the PCAM provides  
9 Washington electric utilities with a buffer against that volatility, which in turn, results in  
10 passing volatility risk onto ratepayers. In its testimony, Staff proposes to eliminate all of  
11 the critical risk sharing elements of the PCAM for variations less than \$10 million,  
12 including eliminating the dead bands and the first, asymmetrical sharing band.<sup>5</sup> This  
13 change appears to be justified predominantly based on the perception that the PCAM  
14 could result in a “windfall” to PacifiCorp.<sup>6</sup> I disagree, however, with Staff’s  
15 interpretation of the PCAM design elements as potentially resulting in a windfall; rather,  
16 the PCAM is a mechanism for equitably sharing power supply cost risk between the  
17 investor-owned electric utilities and their customers. Therefore, I recommend that the  
18 Commission not approve Staff’s proposed changes.

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<sup>4</sup> Dockets UE-140762 et al., Order 09 at 20 (Table 1).

<sup>5</sup> JDW-1CT at 36:13-21; *see also* Table 2.

<sup>6</sup> *See, e.g.*, JDW-1CT at 36:7-11.

1 **Q. DO THE CURRENT PCAM PARAMETERS REFLECT PACIFICORP'S**  
2 **CURRENT LEVEL OF NPC AND REVENUE REQUIREMENT?**

3 A. No. The current +/- \$4 million dead band was established as a percentage equal to 3.45%  
4 of PacifiCorp's NPC at the time of the 2014 GRC.<sup>7</sup> At that time, PacifiCorp's NPC was  
5 \$116 million, which is the level of NPC that was used to justify the current dead band.<sup>8</sup>  
6 In this case PacifiCorp has proposed an NPC of \$199 million.<sup>9</sup> By virtue of PacifiCorp's  
7 now higher NPC, the impact of the dead band has been reduced, and from this  
8 perspective, eliminating the dead bands altogether, as Staff proposes, is not warranted. In  
9 fact, PacifiCorp's current level of NPC would justify the Commission in increasing the  
10 dead band to approximately +/- \$6.9 million.<sup>10</sup>

11 The same is true for the first, asymmetrical sharing band, including NPC  
12 variances between +/- \$4 million and +/- \$10 million. At the time of the 2014 GRC, the  
13 first, asymmetrical sharing band was designed to cover variances exceeding the dead  
14 band, but less than 8.62% of NPC.<sup>11</sup> Following the same principle, the Commission in  
15 this case would be justified in increasing the first, asymmetrical sharing band to cover  
16 NPC variances between \$6.5 million and \$17.2 million.<sup>12</sup>

17 Finally, the amortization trigger was designed in the 2014 GRC to be equal to  
18 5.1% of base retail revenues.<sup>13</sup> In this case, PacifiCorp has proposed base retail revenues

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7 Dockets UE-140762 et al., Order 09 at 20 (Table 1).

8 *Id.*

9 Exh. RJM-1CTr at 4:8.

10 Calculated as \$199 million \* 3.45%.

11 Calculated as \$10 million / \$116 million.

12 Calculated as \$199 million \* 8.62%.

13 Dockets UE-140762 et. al., Order 09 at 20 (Table 1).

1 of \$431,787,535 for Rate Year 1 and \$459,735,352 for Rate Year 2.<sup>14</sup> This level of  
2 revenues would justify an increase to the amortization trigger to around \$22 million.<sup>15</sup>

3 Thus, the effects of the risk sharing design elements in the PCAM have already  
4 been diminished relative to the 2014 GRC by virtue of PacifiCorp's increased NPC and  
5 increased revenue requirement. As a result of this, customers today are absorbing even  
6 greater risk than they were at the time that the PCAM stipulation was adopted. Further  
7 changes outright eliminating the critical risk sharing mechanisms, and modifying the  
8 amortization trigger, exacerbate this phenomenon by shifting an unreasonable amount of  
9 risk onto ratepayers. Contrary to Staff's Response Testimony, if the Commission is  
10 going to make changes to the PCAM in this docket, it would be most justified in  
11 increasing the risk sharing thresholds based on the levels identified above, not  
12 eliminating them.

13 **Q. WHAT DID STAFF CONCLUDE ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF**  
14 **RENEWABLE ENERGY TO INCREASED NPC VOLATILITY?**

15 A. Staff evaluated PacifiCorp's claims about renewable energy contributing to increased  
16 NPC volatility, and generally disagreed that zero fuel cost renewable energy generation  
17 will increase variability of NPC to the extent claimed by PacifiCorp, citing the fact that  
18 such resources incur no fuel cost variability and replace market resources.<sup>16</sup> Staff  
19 concludes, however, that "[t]o the extent that NPC variability does increase, [it] expect[s]  
20 the effect to be asymmetric, with Forecast NPC more often underestimating Actual

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14 See SLC-5 at 1, line "General Business Revenues."

15 Calculated as \$431,787,535 \* 5.1%.

16 Exh. JDW-1CT at 27:1-28:13.

1 NPC.”<sup>17</sup> The past PCAM performance, however, does not support this assertion. Based  
2 on the historical performance of the PCAM identified in Figure BGM-1 in my Response  
3 Testimony, the experience of the PCAM to date is not indicative of a bias, one way or the  
4 other.

5 **Q. HAS NPC VARIABILITY MATERIALLY CHANGED SINCE THE PCAM**  
6 **DESIGN ELEMENTS WERE ADOPTED?**

7 A. No. There has always been variability in NPC. As far back as the 2006 GRC, the  
8 Commission found that “the analyses by Staff and PacifiCorp demonstrate the Company  
9 is subject to significant power cost variability [and that] the amount of potential  
10 variability [is] sufficient to warrant consideration of a PCAM as a means to accommodate  
11 this variability in ratemaking.”<sup>18</sup>

12 Importantly, in the 2014 GRC, PacifiCorp made identical arguments about the  
13 impact of renewable energy on NPC volatility, when it proposed the Renewable Resource  
14 Tracking Mechanism. In the 2014 GRC, PacifiCorp Witness Duvall made statements  
15 such as the following:

16 Wind has little to no predictable pattern of delivery, and therefore its  
17 intermittency creates a more complex operating environment for PacifiCorp  
18 compared to the variability of hydroelectric resources and loads. Adding a  
19 significant amount of intermittent resources to the Company’s system in  
20 accordance with the [Washington Energy Independence Act] lessens the  
21 Company’s ability to produce reliable pro forma NPC.<sup>19</sup>

22 In this case, Witness Painter makes substantively the same statements supporting  
23 PacifiCorp’s recommendation regarding the elimination of key PCAM design elements:

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17 *Id.* at 27:12-13.

18 Dockets UE-061546/ UE-060817, Order 08 ¶ 71 (Jun. 21, 2007).

19 Docket UE-140762, Exh. GND-1T at 43:2-7.

1 As more renewable resources are introduced to the Company’s system, their  
2 availability on an hourly or even seasonal basis due to weather conditions  
3 are nearly impossible to forecast. When all other resources are optimized  
4 and the Company is unable to meet customer demand, the only option is to  
5 purchase energy through the market at prices that the Company has little to  
6 no control over.<sup>20</sup>

7 In the 2014 GRC, the Commission, however, resoundingly rejected these  
8 arguments as a reason to eliminate the risk sharing in the PCAM in 2014, stating that  
9 “[t]he reduced scope of this power cost tracking mechanism that has no dead bands or  
10 sharing bands [...] misses the mark.”<sup>21</sup>

11 **Q. ARE THERE FACTORS THAT ARE EXPECTED TO REDUCE NPC**  
12 **VOLATILITY?**

13 A. Yes. Since the 2014 GRC, new markets and tools have become available to PacifiCorp,  
14 including the Energy Imbalance Market, Extended Day-Ahead Market, and Western  
15 Resource Adequacy Program. Contrary to PacifiCorp’s assertions, these tools make it  
16 easier to manage the variability of renewable resources and mitigate the volatility risk—  
17 both in terms of market prices and production levels. While both Staff and PacifiCorp  
18 make statements such as “the EDAM will transfer control over some significant drivers  
19 of NPC variance to the CAISO”,<sup>22</sup> this ignores the fact that the EDAM and other similar  
20 market structures are designed to make NPC less variable and more manageable, thus  
21 negating the alleged need to make changes to the PCAM based on the higher penetration  
22 of renewable resources. The EDAM benefits study conducted by the Brattle Group is  
23 attached as **Mullins, Exh. BGM-11**. That study came to the following conclusion:

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20 Exh. JP-1T at 20:10-14.

21 Docket UE-140762, Order 08 at 132.

22 Exh. JDW-1CT at 24:10-11.

1 Challenging market conditions (such during as the December 2023 gas price  
2 spikes) will magnify EDAM benefits (as the EIM experience in 3Q of 2021  
3 and 3Q-4Q of 2022 have shown). The Base Case does not reflect the limited  
4 liquidity of bilateral market during such challenging market conditions.<sup>23</sup>

5 **Q. DO YOU AGREE WITH STAFF THAT A SYMMETRICAL PCAM DESIGN IS**  
6 **MORE APPROPRIATE FOR PACIFICORP?**

7 A. No. The Commission has stated that “[a]n optimally designed PCAM would recognize  
8 the inequality between upside and downside risk in its design of dead bands and sharing  
9 bands.”<sup>24</sup> As it stands, all three investor-owned electric utilities in Washington follow  
10 this principle and have a PCAM with a dead band and an asymmetrical sharing band.  
11 The conditions for PacifiCorp are in no way different than for Avista and Puget Sound  
12 Energy, and while I recognize that differing circumstances might warrant different  
13 treatment between the respective utilities, nothing that PacifiCorp or Staff have identified  
14 in testimony are unique circumstances to PacifiCorp. All the investor-owned electric  
15 utilities must comply with Washington’s Clean Energy Transformation Act (“CETA”);  
16 must purchase power in the same markets as PacifiCorp; and must deal with risk and  
17 uncertainty in managing their operations.

18 **Q. DOES NPC RISK CONTINUE TO BE ASYMMETRICAL?**

19 A. Yes. There are practical lower limits to NPC, but no upper limit. For example, it would  
20 be virtually impossible for NPC to decline by 100% to zero, but it is within the realm of  
21 possibility for NPC to double, or increase by 100%. Given this asymmetry, there is an  
22 inherent positive skew associated with the variability in NPC. In the 2006 GRC, this

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<sup>23</sup> Exh. BGM-11 at 29.

<sup>24</sup> Dockets UE-061546/UE-060817, Order 08 ¶ 86.



1 skew was evaluated statistically by performing Monte Carlo power cost simulations in  
2 the GRID model. Based on those simulations the Commission concluded the following:

3 This case illuminates a point not analyzed in our prior consideration of  
4 PCAMs--the distribution of net power costs may not be symmetrical, but  
5 skewed and not statistically normal. For example, in this record the  
6 distribution of net power costs is skewed toward higher costs, in part  
7 because poor hydropower is correlated with higher wholesale power costs  
8 and higher fuel costs. Staff finds that 60 percent of the variability in the  
9 Company's power costs is on the "high side." This means that any  
10 symmetrical PCAM design will shift some level of risk to ratepayers,  
11 because the probabilistic benefit ratepayers receive from good water  
12 conditions does not equal the probabilistic risk customers will incur from  
13 poor hydrologic conditions.<sup>25</sup>

14 **Q. HAS PACIFICORP OR STAFF PRESENTED NEW MODELING TO**  
15 **DEMONSTRATE THAT THE DISTRIBUTION OF NPC IS NO LONGER**  
16 **ASYMMETRICAL?**

17 A. No. Other than allegorical assertions, there was no concrete modeling presented to  
18 demonstrate that the asymmetry in the distribution of NPC no longer exists. While I have  
19 not performed a Monte Carlo simulation to demonstrate that the NPC risk continues to be  
20 asymmetrical, such a study is highly complicated and would need to be prepared and  
21 sponsored by the Company—who bears the burden of proof with respect to its proposed  
22 changes. Absent such a study, it is difficult to form conclusions regarding the assertion  
23 that the distribution of NPC no longer has a positive skew.

24 **Q. IS THERE DATA THAT SUPPORTS THE CONCLUSION THAT THE**  
25 **DISTRUBTION OF NPC CONTINUES TO BE ASYMMETRICAL?**

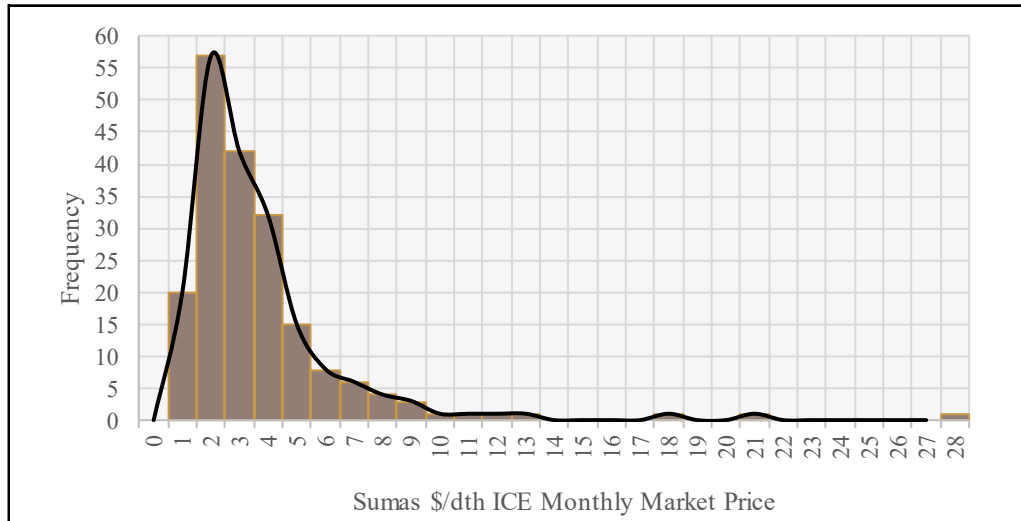
26 A. Yes. Asymmetry can be clearly observed through an evaluation of historical energy  
27 market prices, although to be clear, market prices are just one of many factors that

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<sup>25</sup> Dockets UE-061546/UE-060817, Order 08 at ¶ 85.

1 influence NPC. In Figure BGM-1CA, below, I show the distribution of Sumas gas prices  
2 over the period May 2007 through June 2023, which has a clear positive skew.

**Figure BGM-1CA**  
Skewed Distribution of Sumas Market Prices



3 In the figure, the average Sumas market price over the period was \$4.22/dth. This  
4 compares to a median price of \$3.51/dth. This relationship between the mean and the  
5 median is indicative of a positive skew in the prices, which can also be visually observed  
6 in the figure. Since gas prices are a driver of NPC variability, one can infer that this skew  
7 carries over into NPC, though as I mentioned, a Monte Carlo simulation considering all  
8 drivers and factors influencing NPC would be necessary to fully evaluate that inference,  
9 which PacifiCorp has not performed.

10 **Q. IS IT REASONABLE TO ALLOW PACIFICORP TO OVER-RECOVER NPC IN**  
11 **YEARS WHEN ITS COSTS ARE LESS THAN ITS FORECAST?**

12 A. Yes, when viewed in the overall context of an appropriate PCAM structure. Staff's  
13 primary criticism of the current PCAM design elements appears to be based on its view

1 that “[i]f Forecast NPC is in error, then an over-forecast will result in a windfall to  
2 customers and an under-forecast will result in a windfall to PacifiCorp.”<sup>26</sup> I, however,  
3 disagree with such a characterization of the risk sharing design elements. The design  
4 elements of the PCAM are not meant to provide a windfall, one way or the other, but  
5 rather are designed to recognize the assumption of risk. The concept of a “windfall”  
6 suggests receipt of something that is not earned. However, if PacifiCorp over-recovers in  
7 years when its NPC is lower than the baseline, that is due to the fact that it is assuming  
8 risk through the operation of the PCAM. That is, the over-recovery is very much earned  
9 because PacifiCorp is also assuming the risk of under-recovery. As Staff also  
10 acknowledges, it also serves as an incentive for PacifiCorp to manage NPC in the most  
11 cost-effective manner possible.<sup>27</sup>

12 **Q. DO YOU AGREE WITH STAFF THAT PACIFICORP CAN CONTROL MANY**  
13 **ASPECTS OF NPC?**

14 A. Yes. Staff witness Wilson states that “[w]hile Company witness Painter believes that  
15 there are ‘very few cost controls left for the PCAM deadband and asymmetrical sharing  
16 band to incentivize,’ I think he understates PacifiCorp’s remaining responsibilities.”<sup>28</sup> I  
17 generally agree with this statement that PacifiCorp has understated its responsibilities in  
18 managing Net Power Costs. As I stated in Response Testimony, there are many uncertain  
19 factors that PacifiCorp must consider as it manages NPC.<sup>29</sup> These risk factors, however,

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<sup>26</sup> Exh. JDW-1CT at 22:3-4.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* at 34:9-35:8.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.* at 24:14-25:2.

<sup>29</sup> *See, e.g.,* BGM-1T at 70:17-71:2.

1 are the very reason why the PCAM exists and the reason why the current design elements  
2 were put into place. PacifiCorp's actions in responding to these risk factors, meanwhile,  
3 are also extraordinarily impactful on the level of NPC that it ultimately incurs. Simply  
4 pointing to the fact that there are uncertain elements involved in managing NPC, while  
5 ignoring PacifiCorp's responsibility for managing NPC in response to those uncertain  
6 elements, is like letting go of the steering wheel while driving on the freeway. The  
7 uncertain elements of NPC have been acknowledged in the current design elements of the  
8 PCAM, and allegations that PacifiCorp's actions in managing NPC are meaningless call  
9 into question PacifiCorp's role as an electric utility with a designated service area. If it is  
10 true that PacifiCorp has zero control over NPC, then ratepayers would be better off  
11 managing their own power supply. Further, as discussed above, the amount of control  
12 PacifiCorp has over NPC is largely irrelevant to whether the PCAM should exist or be  
13 modified. The PCAM is a tool to help manage PacifiCorp's overall risk relative to its  
14 authorized return – its existence doesn't depend on how unpredictable NPC is. In fact, if  
15 PacifiCorp had complete control over NPC, that would be a stronger argument for  
16 removing the PCAM because NPC would be much more predictable. It is precisely  
17 because PacifiCorp does not control all aspects of NPC (and the size of NPC relative to  
18 PacifiCorp's overall revenue requirement) that the PCAM exists.

19 **Q. PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR RECOMMENDATION.**

20 A. As mentioned previously, AWEC does appreciate the thoughtful analysis that Staff  
21 undertook with respect to PacifiCorp's proposed PCAM modifications. Notwithstanding,  
22 AWEC continues to disagree that it is appropriate to modify the 2014 GRC Stipulation in

1 this case and requests that the Commission reject both PacifiCorp’s and Staff’s proposed  
2 changes to the PCAM. If the Commission is to make any changes to the PCAM, it  
3 should increase the dead bands and sharing bands to reflect the growth in PacifiCorp’s  
4 NPC since the PCAM was adopted.

5 **b. Response to Staff on Rate Plan and Coal Tracking Mechanism**

6 **Q. WHAT DID STAFF PROPOSE RELATED TO A COAL TRACKING**  
7 **MECHANISM?**

8 A. Staff proposed “that the Commission order PacifiCorp to establish a tracker for the  
9 recovery of costs related to its coal fired facilities (i.e., Colstrip Unit 4 and Jim 6 Bridger  
10 Units 3-4), consistent with the Colstrip trackers established for Puget Sound Energy and  
11 Avista.”<sup>30</sup>

12 **Q. DOES AWEC SUPPORT THIS RECOMMENDATION?**

13 A. In general, AWEC does not oppose the notion of a tracker. Notwithstanding, there are  
14 many complications involved with such a tracker for PacifiCorp that warrant further  
15 consideration. This is particularly true given the scant information that PacifiCorp  
16 provided in its initial filing regarding its proposed handling of coal costs following the  
17 December 31, 2025 CETA deadline.

18 **Q. DID STAFF IDENTIFY THE REVENUE REQUIREMENT IMPACTS OF THE**  
19 **TRACKER?**

20 A. No. And like Staff, AWEC is “not confident it could comprehensively identify all of the  
21 cost items that would be appropriate to pull into in a coal cost tracker-specific revenue

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<sup>30</sup> Exh. CRM-1T at 62:5-8.

1 requirement.”<sup>31</sup> This is an analysis that needs to be performed by the Company. Given  
2 that no such analysis has been performed, however, it is not clear how it will impact the  
3 overall rates in the respective rate years, nor how it will impact class cost allocation. This  
4 contrasts with settlements reached for Avista and Puget Sound Energy that established  
5 the Colstrip trackers for those utilities, in which the impacts were understood and  
6 commonly agreed to between the parties.

7 **Q. DOES THE FACT THAT PACIFICORP WILL CONTINUE OPERATING THE**  
8 **PLANTS AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2025 ALSO COMPLICATE THE TRACKER?**

9 A. Yes. Evaluating decommissioning and remediation (“D&R”) costs in the context of the  
10 coal tracker will be complicated. For example, as it stands today, the plant balances for  
11 Jim Bridger and Colstrip are likely to be negative at the time of their removal from rates  
12 due to the negative salvage embedded in the approved depreciation rates. For example,  
13 in the workpaper titled, “14-6ExistingCoalFiredGenerationAssetsYear2,” the coal assets  
14 were documented to have a collective negative balance of \$84,447,193 by December 31,  
15 2025 on a total Company basis,<sup>32</sup> with Washington’s share being \$18,716,017 at a  
16 22.163% allocation factor. Ratepayers need to get the benefit of this overpayment. In  
17 addition, a regulatory liability has also already been established to recover the excess  
18 D&R costs and Bridger Coal Company mine closure costs not covered by accumulated  
19 depreciation. It is not necessarily clear, however, how these elements will be handled in  
20 the tracker. At a minimum, these negative balances and the balances associated with

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<sup>31</sup> Exh. CRM-1CT at 64:19-65:2.

<sup>32</sup> See tab “10.5.1”, sum of cells “AH11:AH14” and AH30:AH30.

1 D&R activities need to accrue interest during the period between when the funds are  
2 collected from customers and when they are actually used to perform D&R activities,  
3 although further evaluation is warranted.

4 **Q. HOW WILL THE FINAL DECOMMISSIONING COSTS BE EVALUATED IN**  
5 **THE TRACKER?**

6 A. It is not known when the Jim Bridger and Colstrip facilities will actually be  
7 decommissioned. Final decommissioning may occur five, ten or fifteen years from now.  
8 At that time, it is likely going to be more expensive to perform decommissioning and  
9 remediation activities than it will be at the end of 2025. Therefore, there needs to be a  
10 common understanding of how these decommissioning costs, as well as Washington's  
11 responsibility for such costs, will be addressed. This is another issue that needs to be  
12 evaluated in the context of a tracker.

13 **Q. IS THERE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE POWER COST**  
14 **IMPACTS OF THE COAL TRACKER WILL BE ADDRESSED?**

15 A. No. As I mentioned in Reply Testimony, PacifiCorp's proposal to carve out coal plants  
16 from its NPC forecast in order to meet the January 1, 2025 prohibition of coal costs in  
17 rates presents a number of problems. Notwithstanding, PacifiCorp did not prepare a NPC  
18 forecast for Rate Year 2 as part of its initial filing, so the effect of this proposal has not  
19 been demonstrated. While the precise impact is unknown at this time, removing coal  
20 from the NPC forecast and PCAM base is very likely to increase NPC. There may be,  
21 however, offsetting reductions to NPC beginning in 2025 and 2026 associated with items  
22 such as the addition of Gateway South, and the addition of new non-emitting resources.  
23 The existing wind generation fleet will also have otherwise depreciated between 2025

1 and 2026, which is another possible benefit that will offset the increase to NPC  
2 associated with removing coal resources from the forecast. One of the benefits of  
3 renewable resources is that they generally require less capital maintenance and depreciate  
4 more rapidly than thermal generation resources that often require lengthy overhauls every  
5 few years. These benefits will also contribute to offsetting the impact of removing coal  
6 from NPC at the end of 2025.

7 **Q. WILL PACIFICORP'S PARTICIPATION IN THE EDAM OFFSET THE COST**  
8 **OF REMOVING COAL FROM NPC?**

9 A. Yes. According to a study performed by the Brattle Group in April 2023, attached as  
10 **Mullins, Exh. BGM-11**, PacifiCorp is expected to recognize a gross benefit from  
11 participation in the EDAM of \$339 million and a net benefit of \$181 million.<sup>33</sup> And  
12 according to the study, these benefits are likely understated. The operation of the EDAM  
13 will offset the cost to Washington associated with removing coal plants from NPC. Yet,  
14 none of this benefit has been considered in the NPC that PacifiCorp filed in this case.

15 **Q. WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND?**

16 A. Considering the fact that the Commission has approved a similar mechanism for other  
17 utilities, AWEC does not necessarily oppose the notion of a coal tracker.  
18 Notwithstanding, the mechanisms approved for the other utilities were largely the result  
19 of negotiated settlements in which the terms and operation of the mechanisms were  
20 understood and agreed to by all parties. As I mentioned in Response Testimony, apart  
21 from not performing any analytical studies to document the impact of removing coal

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<sup>33</sup> Exh. No BGM-11 at 31.



1 resources from NPC by the CETA deadline, which occurs in the midst of Rate Year 2,  
2 PacifiCorp's Rate Year 2 proposal is problematic because it lacks any consideration of  
3 offsetting factors associated with the major capital additions that it proposed for inclusion  
4 in rate base, including factors that will offset the cost of removing coal from NPC. This  
5 puts ratepayers in a very challenging situation. It puts the onus on ratepayers to  
6 determine after the fact what offsetting factors may have been recognized with the vague  
7 possibility of a rate refund many years from now. Put simply, PacifiCorp's wait-and-see  
8 approach to evaluating offsetting factors is not satisfactory and not reasonable to  
9 ratepayers. Accordingly, my recommendation continues to be for the Commission to  
10 approve rates solely for Rate Year 1 in this docket and provide PacifiCorp with the option  
11 to file a new rate case to address in 2024 both the offsetting factors and the treatment of  
12 coal fired resources under CETA.

13 If, however, the Commission approves a two-year rate plan for PacifiCorp, I  
14 continue to recommend PacifiCorp be required to file an update to its power costs no  
15 later than January 15, 2025, for rates effective for the portion of Rate Year 2 ending  
16 December 31, 2025.<sup>34</sup> In this process, parties should be allowed to holistically review  
17 PacifiCorp's power costs as well as other offsetting factors, such as updating the  
18 accumulated depreciation for PacifiCorp's generation fleet, the benefits of the EDAM,  
19 and further evaluation of the timing of the major Rate Year 2 capital additions. In  
20 addition, I also continue to recommend that PacifiCorp file a limited rate filing or power

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<sup>34</sup> Should the Commission approve Staff's proposed coal tracker, AWEC assumes that only the power costs associated with coal resources would need to be addressed as part of this filing.

1 cost only rate case on or before April 1, 2025 for rates effective January 1, 2026<sup>35</sup> to fully  
2 review PacifiCorp's power costs once it is required to remove coal from rates. I  
3 acknowledge that the timing of these filings is tricky given the corresponding need to also  
4 update NPC on March 19, 2025, in order to capture offsetting benefits embedded for Rate  
5 Year 2. Given the scope of these potential overlapping processes, it would be more  
6 efficient from my perspective to simply require PacifiCorp to file an entirely new rate  
7 case, which is why my principal recommendation is for the Commission to solely  
8 approve rates for Rate Year 1 in this docket.

9 **Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR CROSS-ANSWERING TESTIMONY?**

10 **A. Yes.**

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<sup>35</sup> Exh. BGM-1T at 22:22-23:9.