### Docket No. TG-210102 - Vol. II

# In the Matter of: Cascade Recycling Inc.

November 16, 2021



206.287.9066 I 800.846.6989

1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840, Seattle, Washington 98101 <u>www.buellrealtime.com</u>

email: info@buellrealtime.com



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BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  In the Matter of Determining ) the Proper Carrier ) Classification of, and ) DOCKET NO. TG-210102 Complaint for Penalties Against ) ) CASCADE RECYCLING INC. )  VIRTUAL HEARING, VOLUME II PAGES 10-63 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE SAMANTHA DOYLE November 16, 2021 9:02 a.m.  DATE TAKEN: NOVEMBER 16, 2021 REPORTED BY: CARISA KITSELMAN, RPR, CCR 2018	1 INDEX 2 EXAMINATION BY PAGE 3 Kathryn McPherson 4 Direct Examination by Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski 8 5 Dan Dolmseth 6 Direct Examination by Mr. Johns 20 7 Cross-Examination by Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski 38 8 Kathryn McPherson 9 Redirect by Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski 45 10 11 EXHIBITS 12 EXHIBITS ENTERED PAGE 13 KM-1 UTC Investigation Report 6 14 KM-2 Cascade Recycling website 6 15 16 17 CLOSING STATEMENT 18 By Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski 48 19 By Mr. Johns 50 20 21 22 23 24 25
A P P E A R A N C E S ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: SAMANTHA DOYLE FOR COMMISSION STAFF: JENNIFER CAMERON-RULKOWSKI Assistant Attorney General P.O. Box 40128 Olympia, Washington 98504 360.664.1186 jennifer.cameron-rulkowski@utc.wa.gov FOR THE DEFENDANT: MICHAEL JOHNS Roberts Johns & Hemphill, PLLC 7525 Pioneer Way Suite 202 Gig Harbor, Washington 98335 253.858.8606 mike@rjh-legal.com  ALSO PRESENT: KATHRYN McPHERSON MATTHEW PERKINSON RYAN SMITH ROD WHITTAKER DAN DOLSMETH  * * * * * * *  22 23 24 25	NOVEMBER 16, 2021  9:02 A.M.  ******  JUDGE DOYLE: Let's be on the record.  Good morning. Today is November 16th, 2021. The time is approximately 9 a.m. My name is Samantha Doyle, and I'm the administrative law judge presiding over today's hearing.  This is Docket TG-210102, which is a special proceeding to determine whether Cascade Recycling, Incorporated, is operating as a solid waste company without the required permit from the Commission.  Let's begin by taking short appearances, starting with Commission Staff.  MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: This is Jennifer Cameron-Rulkowski, assistant attorney general, appearing on behalf of Staff.  JUDGE DOYLE: Great. And for the Company?  MR. JOHNS: This is Mike Johns. I'm the attorney appearing on behalf of the Company.  MR. DOLMSETH: I'm Dan Dolmseth, owner of Cascade Recycling.  JUDGE DOYLE: Great. Thank you.  The Company is here because the Commission has information that it is or was operating or advertising as

Page 14 Page 16 1 a solid waste carrier without a permit. 1 Commission. 2 Operating as a solid waste carrier without the 2 And Staff will be presenting evidence of its 3 3 required permit is illegal and subject to a penalty of up investigation of Cascade's operations and will make a 4 to a thousand dollars per violation. 4 penalty recommendation ultimately. We would like to make 5 If you are found to have engaged in business as 5 that penalty recommendation after the Company has put on 6 a solid waste carrier without a permit, the Commission 6 its case. 7 can order you to cease and desist operating and impose a 7 We would like to point out that Cascade 8 8 penalty. Recycling bears the burden to prove that it should not be 9 When I call on each party to testify, I will 9 classified as a solid waste collection company, and Staff 10 10 swear you in with the oath of witness so that anything bears the burden of showing that Cascade Recycling 11 you tell the Court will be under oath and can be 11 violated laws or rules enforced by the Commission that 12 considered sworn testimony. 12 would be the basis for a penalty. 13 13 For the court reporter's benefit, please speak As a practical matter, the same actions lie under both the classification and penalty proceedings. 14 slowly and clearly. Once you are sworn in, you can 14 15 15 present your testimony. And so Staff is prepared to put on a single case that 16 Let's first have Staff address the 16 would support both. 17 classification. Following Staff's presentation, the 17 At this -- at this time, I would like to call 18 18 Company will have the opportunity to ask Staff's Kathryn McPherson. 19 witnesses any questions. And then you may present 19 JUDGE DOYLE: Great. 20 20 testimony. MR. DOLMSETH: I'm sorry. Jennifer, I didn't 21 Once you are done testifying, Staff's attorney 21 hear that, please. 22 may have some questions for you. And then Staff will 22 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: At this time, I'm 23 make a recommendation on the penalty. 23 calling Kathryn McPherson to be sworn in to testify. 2.4 Do you have any questions before we get started? 24 MR. DOLMSETH: Thank you. 25 Okay. Hearing none, Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski, you 25 ARBITRATOR HALTER: Will you please raise your Page 15 Page 17 may proceed with the issue of the Company's 1 right hand. 1 2 2 classification when you're ready. 3 3 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you, Your Honor. Kathryn McPherson, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as 4 Just as a preliminary matter. I would like to 5 say that the parties have stipulated to entry of the two 4 follows: 5 THE WITNESS: I do. 6 exhibits. And the one exhibit is the investigative 7 report, and the other exhibit is the Company's website. 6 JUDGE DOYLE: Thank you. You may continue. 7 DIRECT EXAMINATION 8 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Great. And --MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Okay. Just -- sorry. 8 BY MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: 9 9 Q. Good morning, Ms. McPherson. 10 Go ahead. 11 JUDGE DOYLE: Just going to say we'll enter 10 A. Good morning. 11 Q. Please state and spell your name. 12 them into the record. A. Kathryn McPherson. K-a-t-h-r-y-n. Did you know those numbers, but that's okay? 12 13 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Yes. They are 13 M-c-P-h-e-r-s-o-n. 14 Q. Please state the name of your employer. 15 Exhibits KM-1 and KM-2. 14 JUDGE DOYLE: Great. KM-1 and KM-2 will be 15 A. Utilities and Transportation Commission. 16 entered into the record. Thank you. 16 Q. And what position are you employed by the 17 17 Commission? 18 (Exhibit Nos. KM-1 and K-12 18 A. I'm an investigator with motor carrier safety. entered.) 19 19 Q. And how long have you been employed in this 20 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: So our allegations are 20 position? 21 A. Almost three years now. 21 that Cascade Recycling should be classified as a solid 22 22 waste collection company, and if it is so classified, Q. And how long have you been employed by the 23 then the Commission should find there is violated laws 23 Commission? 24 2.4 and rules requiring a company operating as a solid waste A. Six vears. 25 Q. And what are other positions that you've held at 25 collection company to obtain authority from the

	Page 18		Page 20
1	the Commission?	1	carrier must obtain a solid waste transportation
2	A. I was a consumer protection specialist where I	2	certificate from the Commission?
3	did informal investigations with utility and	3	A. When a common carrier is transporting waste on
4	transportation companies stemmed from consumer	4	more than an occasional basis, even though they are not
5	complaints.	5	holding themselves out as a solid waste collection
6	Q. Thank you.	6	company, they are required to have a certificate to
7	And do you have any prior experience as an	7	continue to transport waste.
8	investigator before coming to the Commission?	8	Q. Thank you.
9	A. While living in the State of Florida, I worked	9	And by "a certificate," are you do you mean a
10	for the Department of Revenue as a child support	10	solid waste collection certificate?
11	investigator for approximately two years.	11	A. Yes. A solid waste collection certificate. A
12	Q. Thank you.	12	certificate of convenience and necessity.
13	Please briefly describe your responsibilities as	13	Q. Thank you.
14	they pertain to this matter.	14	Did you conduct an investigation of Cascade
15	A. In my position I investigate the possible	15	Recycling?
16	transportation of solid waste with companies that do not	16 17	A. I did.
17	hold a certificate issued by the Commission.  Q. And are you familiar with Cascade Recycling,	18	Q. Did you document the investigation? A. I did.
18	Inc.?	19	Q. Please direct your attention to Exhibit KM-1.
19 20	A. Yes, I am.	20	Can you please identify this document?
21	Q. How did you become familiar with Cascade	21	A. That is the investigation report I conducted on
22	Recycling?	22	Cascade Recycling.
23	A. Initially, I became familiar with Cascade	23	Q. And is that the documentation of your
24	Recycling about two years ago when a complaint was issued	24	investigation?
25	regarding a drop box at the WinCo in Lacey that had solid	25	A. It is.
	Page 19		Page 21
1		1	
1 2	waste. I provided technical assistance to the Company,	1 2	Q. Thank you.
1 2 3	waste. I provided technical assistance to the Company, and they agreed not to transport solid waste.	1 2 3	Q. Thank you.  And what was Staff impetus for initiating the
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Page 22 Page 24 1 activities. 1 materials, which is only recyclable materials for Cascade 2 Q. And after the compliance letter, what was --2 Recycling. And they bring into the yard, they sort it, 3 what was your next step then? 3 and that's basically what it says. 4 A. I received -- well, I received communication 4 The data information that I received was based 5 back and forth with Cascade and initially was unable to 5 off the Excel ticket sheets that they had provided. 6 get the information on the loads requested. I was 6 Q. And Cascade's loads, there are a list of loads. 7 requesting the amount of loads into Cascade by weight and 7 Is that in Attachment M, starting on page 39? 8 8 then the amount of residual waste leaving Alpine and A. Yes. 9 9 Q. And what was Cascade's response to the question transported by Cascade. 10 10 which disposal facility did your company transport to? The Company then provided the information of 11 those loads, and I found an investigation needed to 11 A. That would be Weyerhaeuser in Cowlitz County. Q. All righty. And is that the same as the Cowlitz 12 continue. 12 13 Q. All right. 13 County landfill? Please turn your attention to page 5 of an 14 14 A. It is. 15 15 investigation report. Q. And did you contact the landfill? 16 A. I have that in front of me. 16 A. I did. 17 Q. All right. And do you see the paragraph there 17 Q. And what did you learn? about the middle starting on September 28th? 18 18 A. I requested information of all loads during that 19 19 same time period received by Cascade. 20 20 Q. All right. And just take a moment to review And I received information that they had 21 there, and then please explain what you learned there. 21 disposed of 376 tons of waste in that two-week time 22 A. When I spoke with Mr. Dolmseth, the owner of 22 period. A total 16 transports over those 14 days. 23 Cascade Recycling and Alpine Recycling, and discussed the 23 Q. And just to be clear, this is the information that you received from the Cowlitz County landfill? 24 amounts of waste, he had stated that, at best, his 24 25 25 A. That is correct. company is only able to recycle 60 percent of the loads Page 23 Page 25 1 Q. And did you calculate the weight of all of the 1 collected. 2 loads Cascade has collected, which are listed in 2 I explained to Mr. Dolmseth that according to 3 that information, that would be a violation of 3 Attachment M? 4 RCW 81.77.040. 4 A. I did. It totaled -- the loads into Cascade for 5 Q. Thank you. 5 recycling, the total weight, was 639 tons of material 6 Now please turn to page 32 of the investigation 6 7 7 report that's Attachment I. Q. And did you calculate the -- oh, I'm sorry. 8 A. Yes. I have that in front of me. 8 A. -- for a total of 193 loads. 9 Q. Does this show the information request, which 9 Q. And did you calculate the proportion of what Cascade disposed versus what Cascade collected? 10 I'll call data request, that you sent to Cascade 10 11 11 Recycling? 12 12 Q. And what is that percentage? A. Yes. I asked for a two-week time period between 13 August 1st and August 15th of 2020 to review the loads in 13 A. It was 59 percent over a total of two-week 14 period that was disposed of at the landfill of the total 14 and out of the facility. 15 Q. And did Cascade Recycling respond to the data 15 collection. 16 request? 16 Q. All right. Aren't the weights of the loads and 17 A. Eventually, yes, they did. 17 the solid waste percentage that you calculated shown on Q. And is that response in Attachment J, which 18 page 6 of the investigation report? 18 19 begins on page 33? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. Thank you. 20 A. It is. 21 Q. And what information did Cascade provide in 21 What conclusions did you draw from your 22 response to the question? What items were collected? 22 calculations? 23 23 A. It states that per the attached listing of A. Based on the information provided by the data 24 24 received from Cascade and the data received from the inbound loads and the time period, the type of materials Cowlitz County landfill, it was my determination that 25 25 that were collected were in the attachments, CDL-type

Page 26 Page 28 Cascade was transporting to a landfill on more than an 1 1 the violations. And then we'll return to the penalty 2 occasional basis as they were disposing of 59 percent of 2 after that. their collective materials as solid waste. 3 You can briefly explain why each of the 3 4 violations occurred. And then describe any steps you 4 Q. Thank you. I'm going to switch gears here. 5 have taken to correct the violation and prevent the 5 Does Cascade Recycling have a website? 6 violation from occurring again. 6 A. Yes, they do. 7 And I can now swear in your witness. 7 Q. And have you reviewed the Company's website? 8 MR. JOHNS: Before we do that, could I take a 8 A. Yes, I have. 9 couple minute break just to discuss something briefly 9 Q. Is that website contained in Exhibit KM-2? 10 with him? 10 11 JUDGE DOYLE: Sure. Would you -- are you 11 Q. All right. Now I'm going to turn to your 12 doing that offline? Or are you requesting that I go estimation of the violations and a preliminary discussion 12 13 offline? 13 on penalties. 14 MR. JOHNS: Yeah. I can just go to a How many violations of the -- of 14 15 different phone and talk to him real briefly. 15 RCW 81.77.040 -- and also WAC 480.70.080, the commission 16 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. We'll give you a couple 16 rule, both of which require the Company to obtain 17 minutes. Thank you. Let's be off the record. 17 Commission authority under Chapter 81.77 RCW before 18 (A break was taken from 18 transporting solid waste. 9:24 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) 19 How many violations of that law and rule do you 19 calculate Cascade Recycling committed? 20 20 JUDGE DOYLE: We just took a short break and 21 A. Sixteen violations. 21 the time is now 9:30. 22 Q. In the investigation report, do you discuss 22 Mr. Dolmseth, would you please raise your right 23 penalties? 23 hand and I will swear you in. A. I do. 24 24 MR. JOHNS: Oh, he may have had to hang up to 25 talk to me so he may be getting back on. 25 Q. And what penalties did you recommend there? Page 27 Page 29 A. I recommended, per our RCWs, a \$1,000 penalty 1 1 MR. DOLMSETH: Hello? 2 JUDGE DOYLE: Oh, Mr. Dolmseth, are you there? 2 for each violation, totaling \$16,000 in penalties. 3 MR. DOLMSETH: Thank you. 3 Q. And is the -- is each violation in the 16,000 in 4 JUDGE DOYLE: Great. Let's swear you in. 4 dollars in penalties based on the 16 trips to the 5 Will you please raise your right hand. 5 landfill over approximately two weeks? 6 6 A. Yes, it was. 7 having been first duly sworn, was 7 Dan Dolmseth, MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you, examined and testified as 8 Ms. McPherson. 8 follows: 9 Judge Doyle, Staff would like to reserve its 9 THE WITNESS: Yes, ma'am. 10 final penalty recommendation until after the Company puts 10 JUDGE DOYLE: All right. Mr. Johns, thank 11 11 you. You may proceed. 12 And at that time, I would like to recall 12 MR. JOHNS: Thank you. 13 Ms. McPherson to provide Staff formal penalty 13 DIRECT EXAMINATION 14 recommendations. 14 BY MR. JOHNS: 15 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. That will work. 15 Q. All right, Mr. Dolmseth. Why don't you just 16 Mr. Johns, do you have any questions for 16 tell the judge, what does Cascade do? 17 Ms. McPherson? 17 A. Your Honor, Cascade is a transporter. We've 18 MR. JOHNS: No, I do not. 18 been in business for the better part of 22 years 19 JUDGE DOYLE: Thank you. 19 exclusively as a transporter. We have no specific intent 2.0 Thank you, Ms. McPherson. 20 to advertise, to hold ourselves out in any way, shape, or 21 I did not receive any exhibits from the Company 21 form, as a -- as a waste hauler, as a garbage hauler. 22 in advance of the hearing, so we can proceed with your 22 We have -- and I've owned the company for the 23 client's testimony. 23 last six years. And we've enjoyed a good track record, 24 First, you will address the classification. And 24 both in terms of what you do, what we're respected for. 25 then, as we just discussed, we can then turn to each of 25 We have provisions within our contract agreements with

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our customers that we do not haul garbage. That we are Cascade Recycling Company, and therefore, we haul waste -- we haul waste materials coming off from the job sites.

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You know, we look to the Department of Ecology and the transporter regulations to define our operations. And I feel comfortable in saying that the most important our intent, but as well our practice, is consistent with being a recycler. And hopefully we'll get to some key issues here that got us into this situation that I apologize for. But I can hopefully explain.

### Q. Okay. So you used the term "transporter." What are you referring to?

A. Under the Department of Ecology regulations, there's a definition of transporter. And, if necessary, I can state the regulation.

There are approximately 200 transporters in the State of Washington that are registered with the Department of Ecology. It gives us the operating license to carry recyclable materials from one -- it would be, in my case, the vast majority of what we do is we provide a drop box service to our customers, which are builders, residential builders, specifically, to carry material -- and, again, when I say "waste material," I'm not referring to garbage. Waste material under the statute

A. Yes.

## Q. So why don't you provide a little further explanation of that situation.

A. Yes. Katherine had inquired based upon a complaint from a neighbor that's been -- again, in all respect, I can say that she's went to the health department and various other agencies. Why? Because she's fighting the zoning that permits us to operate there

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And this neighbor has an axe to grind --

- Q. Let's not focus on the neighbor.
- 12 A. Yeah.

### Q. Let's just discuss what your situation is.

A. Yeah. Okay. Anyways, she called me and -- the issue that I'm getting to is we hauled quote/unquote garbage to the facility. We don't. These are drop boxes that contain recyclable material. It is not garbage. And that's a very sensitive material obviously to this hearing. It's recyclable material that we're taking in this case to another company that I own. It's Alpine Recycling.

Again, we take it to various facilities throughout the Puget Sound area, Cascade does.

And I'm sorry, Mike, please -- for lack of a better term, reel me in here. Specifically you wanted me

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is material that's no longer useful and includes recyclable material.

So I'm using the broader definition of waste material as defined in the transporter statutes -- or regulations, excuse me.

The point being is that we are allowed as a transporter to take recyclable materials from the job site in our drop boxes and take them to a recycler. Cascade has many recyclers that it brings recyclable material to. We operate as far north as Shoreline, as far south as Olympia. Our primary area is south of King County. But we also do business in King County and, therefore, we take our material to many different disposal -- excuse me, recycle facilities. We are not permitted to take stuff to a disposal facility.

So as a transporter, that's what we do. That's what we -- that's what we're allowed to do under the Department of Ecology.

- Q. Okay. All right. So now you're familiar with the issues involved in this investigation and the violations that you've been charged with, correct?

  A. Yes.
  - Q. All right. And you heard Ms. McPherson's

testimony about her discussion with you and the 59 percent figure that was discussed.

to address specifically about what Katherine's testimony?

- Q. She indicated when she asked you about how much you haul that turns out not to be recyclable, you said it was somewhere in the neighborhood of more than 50 percent.
- A. Yes. Transporter regulations require us to bring material, recyclable material. And, again, if you need, I can dive in what we do -- the best job that we do to ensure that's recyclable material.

But transporter regulations allow us to take recyclable material within our drop box facility. And we have 13 trucks. We have over 200 boxes. And we also have a unique approach to this thing to try to encourage source recycling. But that's ultimately what we all want to see. We're trying to implement that with economic constraints being the obvious prevention from us doing that

Having said that, we take recyclable material through our various recycling facilities. And, again, Cascade does not haul recyclable materials to a disposal facility. And we can talk about the specific charge. I'm emphasizing we only take recyclable material to recyclable facilities. We do not take recyclable materials to a quote/unquote disposal facility.

The issue about the 50 percent, which is

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critical here -- and I will say it's the reason that I'm -- I just -- I talked to other members in the industry; I've talked to the Department of Ecology about the acceptability of the 50 percent. Because when I talked to Katherine, I was concerned maybe I was missing the regulation here that required us to haul X percentage of recyclable versus nonrecyclable.

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And, Mike, please understand. When this material is placed in boxes, and all of our agreements to our customers specifically state we are not a garbage hauling company, you have to have a garbage receptacle. An appropriate receptacle on each site in which to put your garbage.

And ultimately, per the statute, the regulations require the generator of the material to put the material into a garbage receptacle into a recycle receptacle. And that is their responsibility.

But regardless, we're a recycler. We don't make money -- we don't want garbage. We don't want any part of garbage. We want recyclable material. And we do the best we can to educate our customers as to what that entails and their obligation to have a garbage receptacle on-site as well as an obligation to separate out the material.

The fact that we've been in business for 22

recycling facility. Again, we do the best job that we can. And really we've got a good reputation as far as Cascade.

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But that threshold of 50 percent or less -- and 50 percent is critical, because it speaks to the current regulations that are in place and the goals and the corresponding requirements of a transporter. When you have a 50-yard drop box, which is a very large 8-foot by 8-foot by 20-foot, you know, container, you have no idea what they're putting on and you're depending upon your relationship with your customer that their marshalling. And, you know, when we see stuff that's in there, we tell them about it, we get it out, we have discussions.

But, you know, again, as a part of this proceeding, the UTC wants us to do more. Hey, we're all ears. And I got some ideas on that. And I include them in the plan there that we provided.

But that is -- is the key. We're a transporter, Mike. We're a recycler. We're known in the industry for that. And we really do have a good reputation. And we were not hauling garbage to the facility, contrary -- to the Alpine facility in this case, contrary to what the neighbor had reported to Katherine. I --

#### Q. All right. But did you --

the 16 loads, did it not?

A. If I'm missing something, please help me.

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years and Katherine mentions one incident in which -- and Katherine knows the details of it -- we were called to an emergency situation to go out to a job site on a Saturday. And that particular customer deals with the garbage companies. They could not get a garbage company to take care of this. It involved a bunch of food waste it turns out that was thrown into our dumpster.

And so it's a broker that does this stuff, arranges for these one-offs, we call them. And we made it clear to them we don't haul garbage. This is a mistake. Our driver made a mistake. I explained that to Katherine. Again, we've been in business a long time, and we don't haul garbage.

Getting to the 50 percent and what I'm saying.

And, Katherine, excuse me. I didn't say 50 percent. I said greater than 50 percent. That's a key threshold. If you took all of the material that Cascade hauls to various recycling facilities, which is its job as a transporter, it's way over 50 percent. I can't tell you what that percentage is. But I know by the material that we both get the customers that we've got our long history with these customers, that material is -- the vast majority of it is recyclable. And that is what's required under the transporter regulations. We're not taking to disposable facility. We're taking to a

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Q. But Cascade did haul to the Cowlitz landfill for

A. It did. Yes and no. And this is the issue. And I could speak to regulations that I think are more important.

But, Mike, please understand that there were -- again, Alpine has been in business for 12 years. Cascade has been in business for 22 years. We have not -- this issue has not come up.

What the -- what happens -- and, again, Alpine -- I sent a large amount of material regarding what's called a solid waste permit. And I won't digress into the regulations, I'll just mention them.

If one looks to regulation -- it's 173-350-210(a), it talks about what an exempt facility is versus a nonexempt facility. Alpine historically has been a nonexempt facility, meaning that we did not have to get what is called a solid waste handling permit with Pierce County.

Now, again, a solid waste handling permit for Alpine, one could hear that term and think oh, gee, they are a solid waste disposal site. No. We're deemed a solid waste handling permit under the regulations largely determined by the Department of Ecology. And if you look at the definitions of a solid waste handler means that

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Alpine receives all kinds of recyclable materials. And, again, the goal is to receive more than 50 percent of recyclable materials versus nonusable materials. And, again, this material comes in -- you've got folks on job sites that are trying to get stuff done, they're taking stuff. And they have a recyclable side and they have bits and pieces of all kinds of stuff that they're throwing in there that by itself you look and say that's garbage. No, it's not. That's mixed in with other recyclable.

And this is a key point, Mike. We recyclable -we drop on our slab every load that comes in and we hand
sort it. And that's unusual because there's -- and I
will say it, competitors that take the stuff and they'll
throw it right into other containers and haul it to a
landfill facility. That's a blatant violation of -- with
the spirit and the letter of the law. Every load that
Cascade brings into our facility is dropped on the ground
and hand sorted. Material that's left over that we
cannot recycle because of economics or because of the way
it's given to us, it goes to a landfill.

The statute recognizes that when it gives us a goal of 50 percent -- now I'm going to say this as a digression. During the settlement conferences that we had, I was told that --

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it. Yeah, that is okay. You are exempt. Because Cascade doesn't hold itself out as a hauler or transporter of garbage. In no way do we do that. The intent is an important part of this discussion.

And, yes, Cascade did haul those 16 loads to Alpine. But the idea that the same material that we hauled over a 14-day time period versus the records that Alpine is -- that is just not correct.

As I mentioned, we are obligated, you know, out of respect for our neighbors and our surrounding folks on the parcel that we're at, to water down the material. This is in August. The issue being Cowlitz County, to their credit, requires us to water down the material because it comes in very dry and has a lot of dust. And so we have sprinklers on during the whole recycling process. And during the month of August, you are talking about a very dry time period in which it gets extremely wet.

We also have different material. It's not just a straight one-to-one correlation. What Cascade may bring into Alpine goes directly to the dump.

During that time period, please go back to August of 2020. What was going on in our world? Well, we were dealing with COVID. And we thought that we were supposed to shutdown as our customers did back at the end

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## Q. Let's not get into settlement discussions. That's off limits.

## Go ahead and explain: Did you haul 16 loads to the dump?

A. Yes. Thanks, Mike. I'm sorry. I have a lot of passion about this and I can get off track, so please keep me on point. Thank you.

What I'm saying is that, yes, we did. These are trailers that are owned by Alpine. This is an account that Katherine can verify that Alpine historically has had at the Cowlitz County landfill. This is way less than 50 percent of material that we bring into the facility that is how the -- hauled to Cowlitz. We use a Cascade tractor.

And, again, I was mistaken. I thought we could use a Cascade tractor and a Cascade driver because it's -- again, we're not in the solid waste business. It's a related company. That tractor and that driver took Alpine's materials and Cascade trailers to an Alpine designated facility that has a relationship with -- to the dump, to the Cowlitz County landfill. We're permitted. Alpine is allowed to do that because we have a strong association with Alpine. I thought the tractor and the driver being Cascade's was okay.

And I could point to statutes that would suggest

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of March in 2020. We all remember that day. And we -- I told my drivers to go home, we're done.

We then got notification from the governor's office because we had asked for direction what we're supposed to do. And they came back to us and said you are to stay open as a waste diversion company.

I was suffering a variety of -- a bunch of accumulated health issues that had to be put off because of COVID. I finally got it taken care of, and I'm on the mend. This is a difficult time period in which we're scrambling. And I got guys that are out due to COVID or somebody suspected of COVID. We sent folks home, you know, trying to figure out what the best way to protect people. Anyways, you're talking about a really disjointed time period.

Again, that statistic 50, oh, my God. They're hauling. No, we're not. Please hear me. That would be a blatant disregard for the law, the intent, and all the rest of it. We're not about that. And I really apologize for that statistic because it -- and, Katherine, I'm not disrespecting you. It just isn't what we're about. And I mean it sincerely.

But the issue, Mike, is, yes, we used a Cascade truck and a Cascade driver to drive the residual material from Alpine to Cowlitz.

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And, again, I'm just going to say this. We have been tested -- Pierce County comes out and inspects us on an ongoing basis. If we were doing what that statistic suggests, we would have been shut down a long time ago.

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To the contrary, Alpine has never received a violation. And, again, I'm going to say this about the percentage. The most stringent requirement out there for recycling facilities -- in this case, that's the regulation, 173-350-210(a). You go to the regulation. In there it says source separated material coming into the facility. That means under the new law that you're talking about just strictly cardboard or just strictly wood or just strictly metal. Those loads that are source separated under the law that passed in 2020, they cannot contain more than 5 percent of quote/unquote garbage, whether it's by volume or weight or whatever or by load. And that's understandable, because you're talking about separated material.

But exempt -- again, this is exempt facilities, meaning that's what Alpine used to be. Because Alpine accepts commingled loads, that means it contains wood, it contains brick, it contains roofing, it contains remnants of carpet and insulation and all sorts of stuff.

And I'm going to tell you this, we don't ever have hazardous material. This is clean construction

receive material, source separated or not, from other folks outside of Cascade. So that's why I sent the information to Katherine saying, hey, we're under permit. We're allowed to do this. The permit is about to get issued.

And it did. Pierce County inspected us several times under the new statute. They're happy with Alpine 100 percent. I mean, we're doing our job, Mike, within the regulations. I apologize. I will shut up.

JUDGE DOYLE: Mr. Dolmseth, this is Judge Doyle.

I would like to ask you -- I've heard a description of the events. I've heard your version and your interpretation. And, Mr. Johns, maybe you're just about to get to this.

But I would also like to hear how you would prevent this situation from happening again. Unless you're trying to say, and I maybe misunderstood, that there was no violation here at all.

Can you clarify that for me, please?

MR. DOLMSETH: I'm sorry.

BY MR. JOHNS:

Q. That's what I would like to get to. So, Dan, please pay attention to what I am asking you here.

The violations here are hauling to the dump

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material that comes into Alpine. But because of the new law, because it commingled, that means you can have cardboard and metal all clean. Doesn't matter. That is commingled. So you have to get what's called under Pierce County and the Department of Ecology regulations, you got to get a solid waste handling permit. That means that Alpine can accept commingled loads. It doesn't mean we accept garbage. It doesn't mean what somebody might think solid waste is. Hey, we're accepting garbage up. No. We're not allowed to do that. That is -- that's commingled loads that Alpine historically receives. We sort every morsel. This is the remnant pile that Cascade then -- it gets loaded with Alpine equipment into Alpine trailers and it goes to the Cowlitz County landfill that Alpine has an account with that Katherine acknowledged. And what we did is that we used a Cascade truck and a Cascade driver. Yes, Mike, we did do that.

But I would love to talk more about it. I'm sorry for being so long-winded. These are complex and difficult regulations for anybody to read. And so I'm trying as best I can to say you just can't choose kind of fast and loose of the percentages because, yes, they're important to everybody. But to say that's 59 percent --no, it's not the same material. It's different. And Alpine is allowed under the permit categories it has to

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these loads from Alpine -- and Cascade hauled this.

Do you acknowledge that Cascade did that?

A. Yes. With the driver and the tractor, yes.

Q. All right. So what are you going to do to prevent that from occurring in the future?

A. Okay. And with respect to this process and the difficult regulations, I -- I could suggest under the statute that we're being cited, 480, if you look under the exempt organizations -- and I don't have the cite right in front of me -- it would suggest that Cascade may be allowed to do this because we have an associate relationship with Alpine. Okay. I get it. We can't do it. You made a mistake, Dan. And I apologize for that sincerely.

There is a provision that allows for a lease agreement of both a tractor and a driver and these are -- these are pieces of equipment that I have with Cascade because -- anyways, not to try to get around the law in any way. It is just Cascade has drivers. Alpine hasn't. But I do have a DOD number with Alpine and certainly can make the driver that's hauled exclusively to Cowlitz County an employee of Alpine.

But there's a statute -- no, it's a regulation. It's 480 that allows for leases to exist between, in this case, Cascade and Alpine so that Cascade can lease with

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driver to Alpine. And the statute or the regulation is extraordinary, because it actually gives you the template for the lease agreement. And it just has to be for a year or longer and there's insurance provisions and standard DOT safety provisions within the lease, which we easily meet via Cascade or Alpine.

So My suggestion to this is that, hey, I will immediately put in place the lease agreement between Cascade and Alpine, and Cascade won't ever use that truck again. It will say Alpine like a typical lease arrangement. If you leased a car, it's your car. And we have right to either include the driver in the lease agreement or have the driver as an employee of Alpine, which we certainly can do. I have fully authorized CDL, very good experienced driver, for safety provisions. And we have an excellent safety record as well, please know.

That's what I recommend most immediately is that, hey, you messed up, Dan, you can't do that.

Okay. I'm sorry. We're not hauling garbage.

But I certainly will use a tractor and I certainly will use a -- within Alpine, so that Cascade is not involved in any way. And Alpine is bringing its residual material to the dump, which it's allowed to do under the regulations.

That's my easiest response to this -- quickest

A. Yes. I had a partner a few -- just before this time period began. But during the relevant time period, ves.

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Q. All right. And if I -- I'm just trying to understand what you said.

So currently -- so during the time period -during the relevant time period and also currently you are the sole owner; is that right?

- A. Yes.
- Q. Sorry. Sole owner of both companies.
  - A. Yes.
  - Q. Okay. Thank you for clarifying that.

And it's my understanding that Alpine accepts materials exclusively from Cascade; is that correct?

A. Going back over the years, Alpine did.

But as I was trying to explain, that is not the case, because we -- throughout we've been able to accept source-separated material and to a limited extent, if we know what the source of it is -- again, I'm talking about economic constraints, we can accept it from other customers with the exemption -- excuse me, with the solid waste handling permit under the Department of Ecology that Alpine now has and successfully operating under.

We are allowed to take loads and we do take loads, both commingled or not, from other customers.

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and most definitive response as permitted under the WAC regulations that we're dealing with here, the 480s.

- Q. Okay. All right. So do you have anything else to add there to prevent this from happening again? Or does that complete --
  - A. I hope that that's satisfactory.

But if you -- I can make -- I can put the vehicle in Alpine's name and hire the driver. And I can do it immediately. And that way Cascade is out of any hauling to the dump immediately. I just -- you know, if that's okay, that's what I'll do. And, again, I sincerely apologize for this. I guess --

MR. JOHNS: All right. I don't have any further questions then.

JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. And with that, Staff, do you have any questions for Mr. Dolmseth at this point?

MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you,

Judge Doyle. I do have a couple.

CROSS-EXAMINATION

BY MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI:

- Q. Mr. Dolmseth, you're the sole owner of Cascade, correct?
- A. Yes, ma'am, yes.
- Q. And you're the sole owner also of Alpine,correct?

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Mostly it's source separated material. But we are
allowed to take other material. And I don't want to get
to the point where I get too much stuff that I can't
handle it. We try to keep things organized and whatnot.

5 Things can get out of control in a hurry.

But to answer your question, no, that's not correct.

Q. All right. Okay.

And during the time period -- during the relevant time period here when these 16 trips occurred, was Alpine accepting --

- A. During that time period --
- Q. Hold on. Let me finish my question, please.
  Did Alpine accept materials from anyone other than Cascade during that period?
- A. Again, and I'm sorry. There's a -- it was a confusing time period. As best I can answer, I believe we only accepted commingled loads from Cascade. We accepted, you know, source-separated material from other vendors which we are -- with other customers which we are allowed to do.

So I'm trying to be as specific as possible here. And I'll shut up so I can better answer your question. I apologize.

Q. All right. Do you have a copy of Staff's

10 (Pages 46 to 49)

Page 50 Page 52 1 investigation report with you? 1 60 percent. 2 A. I don't in front of me. I have limited 2 And please hear -- I'm just going to digress 3 3 capability. Maybe you can -- if you can be so kind as to quickly. 4 tell me what you're talking about, and I can respond to 4 The most stringent requirement for recycling 5 5 facilities, such as Alpine, be solid waste handling or 6 Q. Certainly. 6 not, is an entity in Seattle called Built Green. They 7 So I'm looking at Attachment M, which is the 7 oversee the recycling, and they allow builders to have 8 8 list of Cascade Recycling loads into Alpine. permits if they have certain recycling rates. The 9 9 It was my understanding -- hold on just a threshold for that most stringent -- and King County has 10 the most stringent, coming in to look at your residual 10 second. I apologize for the delay. Just one minute. 11 pile to make sure that you don't have stuff that you're 11 12 throwing into the stuff that should be recycled, right? 12 All right. So I'm looking at page 34 of the 13 very stringent. 13 investigation report. And I'll just wait a moment to 14 give anyone who needs an opportunity to get theirs. 14 Built Green has thresholds of more than 15 15 50 percent or more is what it says, you're in a -- you So on page 34, Mr. Dolmseth, you were answering 16 Staff's questions what items were collected. And you 16 know, they call it a term they call a silver category. 17 answered there "Per the attached listing of all inbound 17 If you're 70 percent or more, you're golden. That's 18 important because builders if they're in the 70 percent 18 loads for the time period requested," which was August 1, 2020, to August 15, 2020, you -- and you provide some 19 19 category, then they Built Green certified and other 20 further information there. But you do refer to that list energy saving devices, they can get those all important 20 21 permits faster and easier being Built Green certified. 21 as "all inbound loads." 22 So that's a 50 percent threshold by the most 22 And so my understanding was that all of the 23 inbound loads had been brought to Alpine by Cascade. stringent requiring entity. 23 24 So I say to you that at least 50 percent, more 24 A. Yeah. I thought the issue was all inbound loads often -- I mean, what I said to Katherine is more often, 25 25 from Cascade that came in. Page 51 Page 53 1 Q. All right. And so you're not certain whether 1 you know, easily more than 60 percent. 2 2 there were loads from other companies as well as Cascade? But the exact percentages I -- you know, I can't 3 A. Yeah. I mean, again, I -- I'm sure there was 3 tell you, because Cascade delivers to multiple 4 some. Again, I just can't tell you what it is offhand. 4 facilities. And this is an issue about Cascade. And 5 And if I had known this was an issue, then I 5 it's -- you know, whether Cascade is hauling garbage or 6 would have been more prepared. So I apologize. 6 not. I'm sorry. 7 7 Q. No, that's all right. Q. So, Mr. Dolmseth, I just have one further 8 At any -- at any rate, 59 -- roughly Staff 8 question. 9 calculated that roughly 59 percent of the incoming loads 9 Do you understand that if a company is 10 were then -- were then disposed of at the Cowlitz County 10 transporting solid waste on more than an occasional 11 11 basis, that they will need a solid waste certificate? 12 12 And I want to ask you one more question, and A. 100 percent. I -- sometimes I couldn't hear clearly your testimony. 13 13 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you. I don't A. Yeah. 14 14 have any further questions. Q. But I would like to know currently, when you're 15 15 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Would Staff like to 16 receiving these commingled loads, what do you estimate 16 discuss the penalty recommendation at this point? 17 the percentage is of materials that are being disposed? 17 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Yes, Your Honor. 18 A. As I mentioned to Katherine at the time of the 18 We would like to go off the record for just a facility -- excuse me, at the time of the 19 19 few minutes, if we may. investigation -- and, again, if we're talking Cascade, if 2.0 2.0 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Do you need more -- is 21 we're talking Alpine, again, please understand, Cascade 21 five minutes enough? Or less? Or should we --22 delivers to a variety of facilities. If it is inbound 22 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Let's go ahead, just

given the connection issues, if we can go off the record

for ten minutes, that would be helpful. Just because

it's going to take me some time to call in and call out.

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loads of Cascade, we're talking about just to Alpine.

Okay. And I would say easily, no question, over

50 percent. I said to Katherine, more often over

Page 54 Page 56 1 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. We will take a short 1 \$1,000 per violation. 2 recess and return at 10:16. Thank you. 2 Q. And just to be clear, this is the same penalty 3 (A break was taken from 3 amounts that you had discussed and recommended in your 10:06 a.m. to 10:17 a.m.) 4 investigation report, correct? 4 5 A. Correct. JUDGE DOYLE: It's approximately 10:17. We 5 6 Q. And is Staff amendable to a payment plan for the 6 took a short break to allow Staff to convene. 7 penalty? 7 Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski, you may continue. 8 Ms. McPherson? 8 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you, Your Honor. 9 A. Yes. Am I not coming in? 9 REDIRECT EXAMINATION 10 Q. Correct. I didn't hear what you said. 10 BY MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: A. I apologize. 11 11 Q. Ms. McPherson, did you hear the testimony of 12 Yes. I am agreeable to a \$16,000 -- I'm sorry, 12 Mr. Dan Dolmseth? payment arrangement on the \$16,000 penalty. 13 13 A. Yes, I did. 14 Q. Thank you. 14 Q. And is there anything in particular in his 15 And do you have anything else to add to your 15 testimony that you would like to respond to? 16 testimony? A. I would like to state, as I did in my 16 17 A. I do not. 17 investigation report, that the issue with the Company is 18 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you. the transportation of waste on more than an occasional 18 19 Judge Doyle, I have no further questions for 19 basis. Whether it be by Cascade or Alpine, which is 2.0 Ms. McPherson at this time. 20 solely owned by the same person. The transportation of 21 I would like to offer a brief closing statement 21 additional waste needs to be transported by a 22 when we're at the end. 22 certificated hauler because it is ongoing and more than 23 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Thank you. 23 an occasional basis. I'm going to allow -- Mr. Johns, would you like 2.4 Q. And, Ms. McPherson, did you hear Mr. Dolmseth's 24 25 to ask Ms. McPherson any questions? 25 proposal for compliant operations going forward involving Page 55 Page 57 a lease arrangement between Alpine and Cascade? 1 MR. JOHNS: No. No, Your Honor. 1 2 A. I did hear that testimony. 2 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Then with that, Q. And --3 3 Ms. Cameron-Rulkowski, you may make your statement. 4 A. Go ahead. 4 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Thank you, Your Honor. 5 Q. Sorry. Go ahead. 5 CLOSING STATEMENT 6 A. I would state that if that was the situation, 6 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Under the law and the 7 7 rule at issue in this case, RCW 81.77.040 and WAC then Alpine would be in violation of transporting waste 8 on more than an occasional basis. And requires --8 480-70-081, a company cannot haul solid waste in 9 Q. And -- and do I understand -- just to make sure 9 Washington state unless it has first obtained a 10 10 we're on the same page, is your understanding that Alpine certificate from the Commission. 11 would lease trucks from Cascade and then haul solid waste 11 A recycling company with a motor carrier permit 12 to disposal -- to one or more disposal facilities? 12 is exempt under WAC 480-70-011, if it occasionally 13 A. That was my understanding of the testimony as 13 transports to a disposal site. well. 14 But under WAC 480-70-016, if a carrier 14 15 Q. And just to make certain that it's -- that the 15 transports solid waste to a disposal site on more than an 16 record is clear, and is it your understanding that under 16 occasional basis, it normally will also need to obtain a 17 that type of arrangement, that Alpine would then need a 17 certificate of public convenience and necessity. 18 solid waste certificate from the Commission? 18 And, Your Honor, that's the case that we have A. Yes, they would. 19 before us today. It's clear that -- that this company, 19 20 20 Q. Thank you. or multiple companies under the ownership, under the 21 21 I'm going to go ahead and move to the penalty exclusive ownership of Mr. Dolmseth, are transporting 22 22 discussion. solid waste for disposal on more than an occasional 23 23 What amount of penalty does Staff recommend? basis. Mr. Dolmseth admitted today on the record that 24 A. Staff recommends a penalty of \$16,000 for 16 24 the company is recycling maybe 60 percent of the 25 transportations of solid waste to a disposal facility for 25 materials that it collects and the rest is being

Page 58 Page 60 1 1 transported for disposal. And moving forward, Cascade will not haul Staff showed that over a period of approximately 2 2 anything to disposal site so that it will not be 3 3 two weeks, Cascade hauled approximately 59 percent of the operating as a solid waste hauler. And so it will comply 4 materials the Company collected to the Cowlitz landfill. 4 in the future and will not do that. 5 Collecting and transporting for disposal this amount of 5 MR. DOLMSETH: Mike, can I just make one --6 waste constitutes the transportation of solid waste on 6 interject here that under regulation 70A.205.265, solid 7 more than an occasional basis. 7 waste handling permit exemption from requirements, under 8 8 And I want to speak briefly to the proposal that 2(c), I believe that applies. It allows Alpine to haul 9 the company made regarding compliance going forward. The 9 its own materials that have been separated to a landfill. 10 10 company proposed a leasing arrangement between Cascade That regulation is exempt if it handles solid-based waste 11 and Alpine. The Staff is very concerned that this type 11 that had not been processed, to segregate solid waste 12 of arrangement would result in further violations. 12 materials destined for disposal from other solid waste 13 13 RCW 81.77.040 states, "A solid waste collection shall not materials destined for the beneficial use of recycling. 14 operate for the hauling of solid waste for compensation 14 That is -- that Alpine and the -- can haul its 15 15 without first having obtained from the Commission a own materials directly to the landfill. Alpine can. The 16 certificate declaring that public convenience and 16 understanding within the industry of that specific 17 necessity requires such operation." 17 statute is that that's Alpine material hauling it 18 18 The arrangement that the company is proposing directly to a disposal facility. And clearly we're not, 19 19 you know, seeking solid waste handling garbage whatever. sounds like Alpine would then be operating as a solid 20 20 waste collection company and would require a cert. And We're just taking our own material to the landfill. And 21 if Alpine would come to the Commission and would be able 21 we're permitted to do that. 22 to get a certificate, then that -- the arrangement that 22 JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Dolmseth. 23 the company proposed would be just fine as far as Staff 23 Any other discussion you have regarding Alpine could be done off the record with Staff going further 24 understands it. 24 25 In conclusion, the Commission should classify 25 before --Page 59 Page 61 1 1 Cascade Recycling as a solid waste collection company; MR. DOLMSETH: Okay. 2 2 JUDGE DOYLE: -- before any other should order Cascade Recycling to cease and desist 3 operating as a solid waste collection company; and should 3 determinations. The matter at hand is the 16 violations 4 impose the \$16,000 in penalties that Staff had 4 we're here for today. 5 5 Was that the end of the statement that you would recommended. 6 And that concludes Staff's case. 6 like to make? 7 7 MR. JOHNS: Yes, Your Honor. JUDGE DOYLE: Thank you. 8 Mr. Johns, would you like to make a final 8 JUDGE DOYLE: Thank you all for coming today. 9 statement as well? 9 I will be issuing an order reflecting the 10 **CLOSING STATEMENT** 10 Company's classification and the Commission's decision 11 MR. JOHNS: Yes, Your Honor. 11 related to the penalty. 12 12 Cascade, as Mr. Dolmseth testified, it Finally, I like to have the transcript 13 13 acknowledges that it did haul to the disposal site, to available. While I've been taking notes, it is very 14 the Cowlitz landfill. And that it should not have done 14 helpful when writing the order. 15 so. As Mr. Dolmseth said, that was during a period while 15 Would the parties accept waiving the ten-day 16 it was in COVID operations, and it didn't really fully 16 requirement to issue a decision on this matter to allow 17 understand the regulations. 17 for the time it takes to obtain the transcript? 18 And so it acknowledge that it's made that 18 MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: That is not an issue. 19 mistake and agrees that it will not do that again; that 19 MR. JOHNS: I have no objection. 20 20 Cascade will not haul any further to the dump. JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Thank you. 21 So we acknowledge there was 16 violations. My 21 Is there anything else before we go off the

13 (Pages 58 to 61)

MS. CAMERON-RULKOWSKI: Nothing from Staff,

MR. JOHNS: Nothing from me, Your Honor.

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record?

Your Honor.

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instead of 1.000.

client, given the fact that it operated for so many years

penalty be reduced from \$1,000. Maybe \$500 per violation

without violations, would ask that the -- that the

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1	JUDGE DOYLE: Okay. Thank you all. We are	
2	adjourned.	
3	(Adjourned at 10:29 a.m.)	
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