

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: October 20, 2015**

REGULAR _____ CONSENT X EFFECTIVE DATE October 20, 2015

DATE: October 8, 2015

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Cindy Dolezel *CSJ*

THROUGH: *J* Jason Eisdorfer and *AA* Aster Adams

SUBJECT: OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION STAFF:
(Docket No. UM 1538) Request by RS Energy LLC (RSE) on behalf of its customer, Star Mooring Farms (The Farms), for a waiver of the two-month solar photovoltaic system interconnection application requirement set forth in OAR 860-084-0210(1).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission approve RSE's request, made on behalf of its customer, Star Mooring Farms, to waive the two-month interconnection application submission deadline, set forth under OAR 860-084-0210(1), so that the deadline is extended from July 18, 2015, until November 6, 2015, for a solar photovoltaic system in Portland General Electric's (PGE) Solar Incentive Program and to reinstate the capacity reservation for this project.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Each project that is awarded a capacity reservation retains it for 12 months from the reservation start date, so long as a preliminary interconnection application is submitted and approved by the utility within two months of the reservation start date; the deposit fees are paid; and the project is installed within 12 months of its reservation start date; or if needed, the project receives a waiver to extend the installation deadline. See OAR 860-084-0210(1). RSE requests a waiver under OAR 860-084-0000(3), on behalf of its customer, Star Mooring Farms, to waive the two-month interconnection application deadline.

Applicable Rules

OAR 860-084-0210(1) states that "A capacity reservation expires...if a completed interconnection application is not filed within two months of the reservation start date or if the system has not been installed within 12 months of the reservation start date, unless a waiver is granted under OAR860-084-0000." The evaluation criterion set forth in OAR 860-084-0000(3) for waiver of Division 084 rules is "good cause shown." The Commission has discretion to determine what constitutes "good cause."

Analysis and Recommendation

RSE, on behalf of its customer, Star Mooring Farms in Yamhill County, applied for a capacity reservation as part of the May 2015 enrollment window and received a capacity award from PGE as Reservation Number, A9M340, for a 10 kW solar photovoltaic array. The project's allocation was awarded on May 18, 2015, with a two month interconnection application submission deadline of July 18, 2015. The company is not asking for adjustment of the final system installation deadline of May 18, 2016. RSE believes if the waiver is granted, they will have the project installed by December 31, 2015.

RSE had a technical issue with connection to the existing utility service. Specifically, RSE states that the deadline was not met due to difficulties with compatibility of equipment to connect to the low-voltage utility service. This then led to complications completing the required electrical diagrams needed for the two-month application deadline. Historically, there have been options to tie into utility services at low kW ratings using a Solectria inverter, but the inverter was no longer being manufactured. Due to the lack of an immediate technical solution, RSE did not submit the interconnection application on time because the required one line drawing as part of the application could not be completed until this connection problem was resolved. RSE found an economical solution to the situation and is now ready to submit the application to the utility.

Staff contacted PGE to check on the status of the project regarding this missed deadline and learned that all other criteria have been met by RSE.

In analyzing the "good cause" rule criterion, Staff notes that the contractor did pay all fees, submitted all other documentation in a timely manner, and has already issued a purchase order for the project's solar panels, showing commitment to the project.

Based on this analysis, Staff recommends this waiver request be approved.

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PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

The request by RS Energy, made on behalf of its customer, Star Mooring Farms, to waive the two-month interconnection application submission deadline, set forth under OAR 860-084-0210(1), so that the application deadline is extended from July 18, 2015, until November 6, 2015, for a solar photovoltaic system in Portland General Electric's (PGE) Solar Incentive Program and to reinstate the capacity reservation for this project, be approved.

CA6-UM 1538 RS Energy, Star Mooring Farms, VIR two month waiver request

