

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

UM 2312

In the Matter of

NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS
COMPANY, dba NW Natural,

Updated Depreciation Study.

RULING

DISPOSITION: PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE ADOPTED AND ESTABLISHED

On February 9, 2024, I issued a memorandum requesting that the parties to these proceedings file a proposed procedural schedule in lieu of a prehearing conference by February 23, 2024. Additionally, I stated that any party may request a prehearing conference by February 23, 2024. On February 20, 2024, Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural, filed a proposed procedural schedule on behalf of itself, the Staff of the Public Utility Commission of Oregon, the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board, and the Alliance of Western Energy Consumers. No party filed a request for a prehearing conference.

After reviewing the parties' proposed procedural schedule, I find that the procedural schedule proposed by NW Natural and the parties is reasonable with the following modifications. Due to conflicts with schedules already set in other proceedings, the date for reply testimony will move from July 19, 2024, to July 18, 2024. Accordingly, the schedule for these proceedings is, as follows:

EVENT	DATE ¹
Deadline to File Petition to Intervene ²	February 28, 2024
Workshop ³	March 7, 2024 at 9:00 am
Staff and Intervenor Settlement Proposals Issued	May 29, 2024
Settlement Conference	June 5, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.
All Party Testimony	June 21, 2024
Settlement Conference	June 27, 2024
All Party Reply Testimony	July 18, 2024
Hearing (remote)	July 25, 2024
Opening Briefs	August 20, 2024

¹ The filing deadline for all dates in this procedural schedule is 3:00 p.m. on the date of the event.

² The schedule includes a requested date for petitions to intervene, but by statute, a person may petition to intervene at any time before the close of the record. *See* ORS 756.525.

³ Staff Workshop/Settlement conference dates are included in the schedule for the parties' convenience. The parties do not need Commission approval to reschedule Staff workshops or settlement conferences.

Reply Briefs	September 5, 2024
Target Commission Decision	September 27, 2024

Parties are reminded that attorneys not licensed in Oregon wanting to appear before the Commission in this docket must file an application for admission to appear *pro hac vice*.⁴

Dated this 26th day of February, 2024, at Salem, Oregon.



Sarah Spruce
Administrative Law Judge

Attachment: Notice of Contested Case Rights and Procedures

⁴ See UTCR 3.170, OAR 860-001-0320.

NOTICE OF CONTESTED CASE RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

Oregon law requires state agencies to provide parties written notice of contested case rights and procedures. Under ORS 183.413, you are entitled to be informed of the following:

Hearing: The time and place of any hearing held in these proceedings will be noticed separately. The Commission will hold the hearing under its general authority set forth in ORS 756.040 and use procedures set forth in ORS 756.518 through 756.610 and OAR Chapter 860, Division 001. Copies of these statutes and rules may be accessed via the Commission's website at www.puc.state.or.us. The Commission will hear issues as identified by the parties.

Right to Attorney: As a party to these proceedings, you may be represented by counsel. Should you desire counsel but cannot afford one, legal aid may be able to assist you; parties are ordinarily represented by counsel. The Commission Staff, if participating as a party in the case, will be represented by the Department of Justice. Generally, once a hearing has begun, you will not be allowed to postpone the hearing to obtain counsel.

Notice to Active Duty Servicemembers: Active Duty Servicemembers have a right to stay these proceedings under the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. For more information contact the Oregon State Bar at 800-452-8260, the Oregon Military Department at 503-584-3571 or the nearest United States Armed Forces Legal Assistance Office through <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil>. The Oregon Military Department does not have a toll free telephone number.

Administrative Law Judge: The Commission has delegated the authority to preside over hearings to Administrative Law Judges (ALJs). The scope of an ALJ's authority is defined in OAR 860-001-0090. The ALJs make evidentiary and other procedural rulings, analyze the contested issues, and present legal and policy recommendations to the Commission.

Hearing Rights: You have the right to respond to all issues identified and present evidence and witnesses on those issues. *See* OAR 860-001-0450 through OAR 860-001-0490. You may obtain discovery from other parties through depositions, subpoenas, and data requests. *See* ORS 756.538 and 756.543; OAR 860-001-0500 through 860-001-0540.

Evidence: Evidence is generally admissible if it is of a type relied upon by reasonable persons in the conduct of their serious affairs. *See* OAR 860-001-0450. Objections to the admissibility of evidence must be made at the time the evidence is offered. Objections are generally made on grounds that the evidence is unreliable, irrelevant, repetitious, or because its probative value is outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice, confusion of the issues, or undue delay. The order of presenting evidence is determined by the ALJ. The burden of presenting evidence to support an allegation rests with the person raising the allegation. Generally, once a hearing is completed, the ALJ will not allow the introduction of additional evidence without good cause.

Notice of Contested Case Rights and Procedures continued

Record: The hearing will be recorded, either by a court reporter or by audio digital recording, to preserve the testimony and other evidence presented. Parties may contact the court reporter about ordering a transcript or request, if available, a copy of the audio recording from the Commission for a fee set forth in OAR 860-001-0060. The hearing record will be made part of the evidentiary record that serves as the basis for the Commission's decision and, if necessary, the record on any judicial appeal.

Final Order and Appeal: After the hearing, the ALJ will prepare a draft order resolving all issues and present it to the Commission. The draft order is not open to party comment. The Commission will make the final decision in the case and may adopt, modify, or reject the ALJ's recommendation. If you disagree with the Commission's decision, you may request reconsideration of the final order within 60 days from the date of service of the order. *See* ORS 756.561 and OAR 860-001-0720. You may also file a petition for review with the Court of Appeals within 60 days from the date of service of the order. *See* ORS 756.610.