



August 6, 2021

Via Electronic Filing

Public Utility Commission of Oregon
Attn: Filing Center
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Salem, OR 97301
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Re: Docket UE-390—Corrections to Sierra Club’s Rebuttal Testimony

Dear Filing Center:

Sierra Club files herein a correction to its Rebuttal Testimony, originally submitted on July 30, 2021. Sierra Club inadvertently made a factual error concerning Bridger Coal Company labor agreements provided by PacifiCorp to Sierra Club through discovery. In this errata filing, Sierra Club corrects this error.

Sierra Club respectfully requests that this updated testimony be filed on the Public Utility Commission of Oregon’s eDockets website. Included for your reference is a courtesy copy of the testimony indicating, in redline, the text that has been removed and added.

Sierra Club apologizes for this inconvenience. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions regarding this filing.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

In the Matter of

PACIFICORP d/b/a PACIFIC POWER,

2022 Transition Adjustment Mechanism

Docket UE 390

Rebuttal Testimony of Ed Burgess

**On Behalf of
Sierra Club**

Public Version

July 30, 2021

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LIST OF EXHIBITS

Sierra Club/201	PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 5.5
Sierra Club/202	Confidential Attachment to PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 2.6
Sierra Club/203	Taylor Kuykendall, <i>US coal deliveries increasingly arrive to power plants on shorter-term contract</i>

1 **1. Introduction**

2 **Q. Are you the same Ed Burgess who provided opening testimony in this docket on**
3 **behalf of Sierra Club?**

4 A. Yes, I am.

5 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

6 A. My testimony responds to the issues raised in the reply testimonies of PacifiCorp d/b/a
7 Pacific Power (“PacifiCorp” or “Company”) witnesses Douglas R. Staples, Dana M.
8 Ralston, Daniel J. MacNeil, and Seth Schwartz. I continue to address the prudence of the
9 Company’s proposed 2022 Net Power Costs (“NPC”), particularly regarding coal fuel
10 expenses. Specifically, I respond to the following issues:

- 11 • First, I respond to various issues regarding Jim Bridger coal fuel, particularly the
12 Bridger Coal Company (“BCC” or “Bridger mine”) costs.
- 13 • Second, I respond to several issues PacifiCorp raised regarding new coal contract
14 terms.
- 15 • Third, I respond to various issues regarding PacifiCorp’s dispatch practices,
16 including economic cycling.
- 17 • Finally, I respond to several other issues including: dispatch versus costing tier
18 prices, a recent decision by the California Public Utilities Commission,
19 PacifiCorp’s open positions, grid reliability, and other parties’ positions in this
20 case.

21 The fact that I have not addressed each and every one of the issues that PacifiCorp’s reply
22 testimonies raised in response to my opening testimony does not mean that I agree with
23 the Company’s characterization of my assessment.

1 **2. BCC Costs**

2 ***A. Fixed Costs***

3 **Q. In your opening testimony, you cited PacifiCorp’s response to Sierra Club Data**
4 **Request 2.5(c),¹ which specifies that there are approximately \$ [REDACTED] in “wholly**
5 **identifiable fixed costs” for BCC in 2022. Is that correct?**

6 A. Yes. My testimony also points out that some of the cost items included in this estimate
7 are not entirely fixed, such as final reclamation.

8 **Q. Despite its response to Sierra Club’s data request, did PacifiCorp subsequently**
9 **dispute the notion that \$ [REDACTED] is a reasonable approximation of the fixed costs**
10 **at BCC?**

11 A. Yes. In reply testimony, PacifiCorp suggested that I omitted certain fixed costs that were
12 not specifically quantified in PacifiCorp’s response.² According to PacifiCorp, these
13 additional fixed costs are “embedded in labor and benefits, materials/supplies, electricity,
14 outside services and other miscellaneous costs.”³

15 **Q. Did you intentionally omit any significant fixed cost items from the analysis**
16 **provided in your opening testimony, as PacifiCorp alleges?**

17 A. No. Because PacifiCorp was unable to provide any numerical estimate for the
18 “embedded” fixed costs of the items in question, I presumed the fixed cost component of
19 these other items was *de minimus*. Moreover, certain items PacifiCorp identified such as
20 “materials/supplies” and “electricity” are obviously a direct function of the volume of

¹ Sierra Club/112 at Burgess/6.

² PAC/400 at Staples/64:16-65:6.

³ *Id.* at Staples/64:20-21 (quoting Sierra Club/112 at Burgess/6).

1 coal extracted and it is only logical to treat them as variable costs with no fixed
2 component.

3 **Q. Did PacifiCorp provide any additional evidence in its reply testimony, or through**
4 **discovery, specifying what portion of these other cost categories are fixed costs?**

5 A. No. If PacifiCorp truly believed that there were significant fixed costs in excess of \$
6 [REDACTED], I would have expected them to provide supporting evidence of this fact in their
7 reply testimony. However, they did not. Even when specifically asked to identify the
8 fixed portion of these costs through discovery, PacifiCorp was unable to do so.⁴
9 Furthermore, PacifiCorp's response to SC 5.5(b) shows that no costs associated with
10 labor and benefits, materials/supplies, electricity, outside services or other miscellaneous
11 costs were incurred prior to the Company's 2022 TAM filing.

12 **Q. Didn't PacifiCorp's reply testimony point out that approximately \$[REDACTED] in**
13 **projected labor costs could be considered fixed,⁵ thus increasing the projected fixed**
14 **costs at BCC from \$[REDACTED] to \$[REDACTED]?**

15 A. Yes. However, in doing so PacifiCorp completely ignored my point that these assumedly
16 "fixed" labor costs might be substantially reduced prior to 2022 if a lower coal volume
17 need was projected. I agree that a certain amount of contracted labor costs might be
18 considered fixed as of January 1, 2022. However, PacifiCorp provided no evidence that it
19 would be unable to revise its labor costs well ahead of 2022. As PacifiCorp stated in
20 response to SC 2.5(c), "The relationship between fixed and variable costs change

⁴ PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 5.5(a) (attached as exhibit Sierra Club/201).

⁵ PAC/400 at Staples/64:9-10.

1 depending on the time period of the review.”⁶ PacifiCorp argued that the labor costs are
2 fixed but only if viewed “from the prism of a one year test period.”⁷ However, because
3 we have not yet entered the one-year test period in question, it is premature to call these
4 costs fixed. Additionally, to the extent that PacifiCorp intends to redirect some of its
5 mining activities to reclamation in future years, some amount of ongoing labor costs may
6 already be accounted for in the portion of the \$ [REDACTED] in fixed costs claimed by
7 PacifiCorp that it has attributed to reclamation.

8 **Q. Have you been able to verify whether any of these labor costs, or other costs**
9 **PacifiCorp asserts as “fixed” for 2022 BCC production, were incurred prior to the**
10 **2022 TAM filing?**

11 A. Yes. In its response to SC 5.5(b), PacifiCorp did not identify any labor costs among those
12 costs incurred prior to the 2022 TAM filing. Furthermore, PacifiCorp did not reference
13 any specific labor contracts or associated costs when specifically asked in SC 5.5(c).⁸
14 PacifiCorp did produce a “working agreement” between Pacific Minerals, Inc. and the
15 International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local S1978, which has an agreement term
16 from November 15, 2018 through November 14, 2022.⁹ Based on my review, [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]. Finally,
19 PacifiCorp identified the typical length of such agreements, but was unable to specify
20 how far in advance they are normally executed.¹⁰ This leads me to believe that there were

⁶ Sierra Club/112 at Burgess/6.

⁷ *Id.* at Burgess/6.

⁸ Sierra Club/201, PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 5.5(c).

⁹ PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 3.2(b). Confidential Attachment to PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 3.2.

¹⁰ Sierra Club/201, Confidential PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 5.5(d).

1 no additional labor costs or any other costs associated with 2022 BCC production that
2 could be considered “fixed” at the time of the 2022 TAM filing (outside of those
3 identified in 5.5(b)). As such, I maintain the conclusion provided in my opening
4 testimony that the true 2022 fixed costs for BCC coal are approximately \$ [REDACTED] or
5 less.

6 **Q. Were there any other key points you made on this issue that PacifiCorp ignored?**

7 A. Yes. PacifiCorp ignored my point that a large portion of the estimated fixed costs would
8 still be recovered even under the average cost scenario (such as that provided in response
9 to SC 2.22 and discussed in my opening testimony) due to the remaining coal volume still
10 consumed. Therefore, this portion would not need to be included in any post-modeling
11 adjustments (*i.e.*, “reaveraging”). This underscores the fact that the amount of BCC fixed
12 costs that may be at risk for under-recovery is likely far less than the \$ [REDACTED] total
13 (and may in fact be zero). I address this further in Section 2-E below.

14 **Q. Did PacifiCorp provide any general insight on how to differentiate between fixed
15 and variable costs at BCC?**

16 A. Yes. According to Mr. Schwartz, “The proper approach is to prepare complete mine plans
17 and budgets for different levels of operations.”¹¹

¹¹ PAC/500 at Schwartz/19:8-9.

1 **Q. Did PacifiCorp’s application in this case include a comparison of the 2022 base plan**
2 **to a mine plan that reflects a significantly reduced level of operation at BCC?**

3 A. No. In fact, the only other levels of operation considered by PacifiCorp were *increased*
4 levels of production rather than any decreased levels.¹²

5 **Q. What do you conclude from this fact?**

6 A. It may be possible for PacifiCorp to significantly reduce the amount of fixed costs at
7 BCC (and total customer costs) in 2022 if a lower production volume were pursued.
8 However, PacifiCorp has chosen not to complete the analysis it asserts is necessary for
9 the Commission to evaluate this possibility.

10 **Q. Does PacifiCorp agree that it would be possible to plan in advance for a significantly**
11 **reduced production volume at BCC?**

12 A. Yes. For example, Mr. Ralston’s reply testimony included the following:

13 Q. If a significant reduction in Jim Bridger plant generation were known
14 in advance of critical decisions points, how would PacifiCorp respond to
15 those diminished fueling needs?

16 A. Within reasonable limits, PacifiCorp, in conjunction with its partner,
17 would alter BCC mine plans by adjusting shifts worked at the surface
18 mine, redirect mining activities from coal production to reclamation when
19 feasible, flex coal inventory levels, and seek to align future external
20 contract volumes with the reduced generation forecast mitigating Jim
21 Bridger plant fuel supply risks and costs.¹³

¹² Confidential workpaper accompanying the Direct Testimony of Dana Ralston (PAC/200) “BCC - 2022 TAM Incremental Analysis (Final).xlsx”.

¹³ PAC/600 at Ralston/49:17-50:3.

1 **Q. When was the last time PacifiCorp actually completed an analysis of alternative**
2 **mine plans for Jim Bridger?**

3 A. According to Mr. Ralston, this occurred in 2019, as part of an update provided in the
4 2020 TAM proceeding.¹⁴

5 **Q. Is it surprising to you that PacifiCorp did not complete additional analyses of its**
6 **BCC mine plan in its 2021 and 2022 TAM applications that included a significantly**
7 **reduced level of production?**

8 A. Yes. As I mentioned in my opening testimony, PacifiCorp has known about the high
9 costs of BCC coal for several years. If these costs, including the significant amount of
10 future fixed costs PacifiCorp alleges, could be avoided, then PacifiCorp customers could
11 stand to benefit to the tune of tens of millions of dollars *every year*. Thus, PacifiCorp
12 should be closely evaluating mine plans in each TAM proceeding to identify
13 opportunities to substantially reduce production volumes and associated costs in future
14 years, including fixed costs. I would also expect PacifiCorp would be eager to share the
15 detailed results of these analyses with the Commission as evidence that it is striving to
16 minimize BCC fuel costs. However, it appears that PacifiCorp has taken none of these
17 actions, which reinforces the recommendation in my opening testimony that the
18 Commission order PacifiCorp to provide a report in future TAM proceedings
19 documenting the steps it has taken to reduce costs at the Bridger mine.

20 **Q. Can you explain what you mean by “substantially reduce production” at BCC?**

21 A. Yes. By this I mean a reduction on par with the Generation and Regulation Initiative
22 Decision (“GRID”) model run using average fuel costs at Jim Bridger as provided in SC

¹⁴ *Id.* at Ralston/42:17-19.

1 2.22, which reduced output at the Jim Bridger plant by about [REDACTED] percent relative to the
2 TAM base case.¹⁵

3 **Q. Do you have any other general observations on the relative fueling costs for BCC**
4 **coal, including fixed costs?**

5 A. Yes. It is noteworthy that most other coal suppliers in PacifiCorp's portfolio (including
6 non-Powder River Basin suppliers) have managed to keep their fuel prices—which also
7 reflect their own fixed costs—substantially lower than BCC.¹⁶ Moreover, even though
8 the BCC costs included in the TAM are high relative to other suppliers, they only reflect
9 a fraction of the total BCC costs charged to PacifiCorp customers because additional
10 BCC fixed costs are included in base rates separate from the TAM. This calls into
11 question PacifiCorp's overall cost management practices at BCC, particularly given the
12 fact that this is an affiliate mine that is essentially immune from any competitive market
13 pressures that would otherwise serve as a mechanism to contain costs.

14 ***B. Reporting***

15 **Q. What did PacifiCorp testify regarding your recommendations for additional**
16 **reporting on BCC coal costs in future TAMs?**

17 A. Mr. Staples testified that BCC coal costs “are properly accounted for in the GRID model
18 and any further discussion of the prudence of these costs should be addressed in
19 PacifiCorp's long-term mine plan or IRP processes.”¹⁷

¹⁵ Sierra Club/100 at Burgess/65 (Confidential Table 10) (citing ORTAM22 NPC CONF (Webb) at “Coal Summary” tab; Sierra Club/123, Confidential Attachment to PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 2.22).

¹⁶ See e.g., Sierra Club/100 at Burgess/13 (Confidential Table 2).

¹⁷ PAC/400 at Staples/72:17-19.

1 **Q. Do you agree with this assessment?**

2 A. No. In my opinion, PacifiCorp has not been very forthcoming in providing information
3 about its coal costs, and repeatedly refuses to provide unredacted electronic copies of its
4 coal contracts and affiliate mine plans to Commissions and intervenors (subject to
5 appropriate confidentiality treatment). While PacifiCorp has allowed limited viewing
6 sessions of the underlying contracts and mine plans, this arrangement is far from ideal for
7 conducting a rigorous assessment of the contract terms and has presented hurdles to my
8 own analysis, as the viewing sessions typically involve review of multiple contracts and
9 only limited note taking is permitted. Frankly, I'm surprised that PacifiCorp would object
10 to additional transparency measures to make sure that the Commission understands the
11 costs associated with BCC coal, particularly because PacifiCorp owns the Bridger mine,
12 and, therefore, any concerns over competitively confidential information that might be
13 raised by third party suppliers would not apply in this particular case.

14 **Q. Do you agree that the only proper venues to address BCC costs are “in PacifiCorp’s**
15 **long-term mine plan or IRP processes”?**

16 A. No. First, just because these other processes address BCC costs does not mean that BCC
17 costs cannot be reported in the TAM, where substantial BCC costs are recovered. Second,
18 because the IRP does not authorize fuel cost recovery, the IRP process is thus
19 inappropriate to provide adequate oversight over BCC fueling cost. Finally, according to
20 Mr. Ralston, PacifiCorp’s fueling strategy for Jim Bridger has historically been addressed
21 in the TAM. More specifically: “Issues regarding PacifiCorp’s fueling strategy for the
22 Jim Bridger plant have been raised multiple times over the years, including in the dockets
23 UE 264 (2014 TAM), UE 307 (2017 TAM), UE 323 (2018 TAM), UE 339 (2019 TAM),

1 and UE 356 (2020 TAM).”¹⁸ Thus, I think it is wholly appropriate for the Commission to
2 evaluate PacifiCorp’s long-term mine plan in the present 2022 TAM proceeding.

3 ***C. Quantity***

4 **Q. Did PacifiCorp testify regarding the quantity of coal that the BCC mine must**
5 **produce?**

6 A. Yes. According to Mr. Schwartz, the BCC mine operations must be capable of producing
7 between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] tons per year at the Bridger surface mine to “support the
8 output of the Jim Bridger power plant[.]”¹⁹ based on the level of Jim Bridger operations
9 over the past five years.

10 **Q. Do you agree that BCC must be equipped at all times to produce at historical levels?**

11 A. No. This would only be true if it were expected that Jim Bridger would provide
12 electricity, on an annual MWh basis, that is comparable to historic levels. In contrast, it
13 may be economically beneficial to PacifiCorp’s customers if the Company reduced the
14 total output of Jim Bridger on an annual MWh basis, such that it produces below
15 historical levels.

16 **Q. In your opening testimony, you suggested that it might be beneficial not to renew**
17 **the Black Butte coal supply agreement (“CSA”). Did PacifiCorp raise concerns**
18 **about the quantity of coal under this scenario?**

19 A. Yes, according to PacifiCorp, “BCC could not deliver the Jim Bridger plant’s required
20 coal by itself. Given that Black Butte coal is lower price than the alternative, it is unclear

¹⁸ PAC/600 at Ralston/42:11-14.

¹⁹ PAC/500 at Schwartz/20:6-9.

1 why Sierra Club believes that the Company may not need to renew the Black Butte
2 contract.”²⁰

3 **Q. Do you agree?**

4 A. No. Under the average price GRID run produced in SC 2.22, for example, the Bridger
5 plant would only require [REDACTED] MMBtu of fuel.²¹ This is substantially less than
6 what BCC has historically produced, which is closer to [REDACTED] MMBtu.²² As such,
7 there should be no concern with the quantity of coal under a scenario where the Black
8 Butte supply were removed. With respect to the lower price of Black Butte coal, I agree
9 that it may be preferable to consider an option where BCC were to shut down production
10 instead of Black Butte. However, that appears to be a practical impossibility due to the
11 fixed cost concerns PacifiCorp has repeatedly raised.

12 **D. Self-Dealing and BCC Supplemental Coal**

13 **Q. In your opening testimony, you pointed out the possibility that PacifiCorp could be**
14 **gaming the pricing of BCC supplemental coal to its own advantage. How did**
15 **PacifiCorp respond?**

16 A. PacifiCorp’s reply simply stated that “[m]any decades ago, the Commission consolidated
17 BCC on PacifiCorp’s balance sheet to avoid any possibility of self-dealing and to ensure
18 that BCC coal supply was priced on an actual cost (not market) basis. Sierra Club’s
19 position ignores this important regulatory context.”²³

²⁰ PAC/600 at Ralston/48:16-49:3.

²¹ Sierra Club/123.

²² Confidential workpaper accompanying the Direct Testimony of Dana Ralston (PAC/200) “Cost Comparison.xlsx”; Confidential Attachment to PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 2.6 (attached as Exhibit Sierra Club/202).

²³ PAC/400 at Staples/66:4-7 (citation omitted).

1 **Q. Do you agree that this 39-year-old decision absolves PacifiCorp of any potential self-**
2 **dealing in 2022?**

3 A. Not at all. First, the decision PacifiCorp cites includes no reference to BCC supplemental
4 coal, the GRID model, the TAM, and many other relevant factors that did not exist in
5 1982.²⁴ Second, just because the Commission required PacifiCorp to price BCC coal on
6 an actual cost basis does not eliminate the potential for gaming by PacifiCorp. Because
7 PacifiCorp owns the BCC mine and earns a regulated return on investments in the mine,
8 it has an inherent incentive to increase mine production, even on an “actual cost (not
9 market) basis.” Meanwhile, PacifiCorp still has discretion over a variety of issues that
10 could inflate BCC coal projections, including:

- 11 • Which mine plans to study and/or select in its long-term fueling strategy;
- 12 • Whether to pursue only the BCC base quantity or the BCC base and supplemental
13 quantities; and
- 14 • Whether the “marginal” cost of coal assumed in GRID reflects just the
15 supplemental quantity or both the supplement and the base quantity (which is the
16 lion’s share of total coal purchases from the Bridger mine).

17 Relying on one provision of a single decision from nearly four decades ago does not
18 demonstrate that the BCC regulatory construct is fully protecting customers. I believe it
19 may be time for a reexamination, including evaluating potential self-dealing issues
20 associated with supplemental coal quantity and pricing.

²⁴ *Re Pacific Power & Light Company*, Docket No. UF 3779, Order No. 82-606 (Aug.18, 1982).

1 *i. Basic economic principles*

2 **Q. Mr. Staples states that using average costs, instead of incremental costs, is contrary**
3 **to basic economic principles.²⁵ Is this accurate?**

4 A. Mr. Staples' statement is not entirely accurate. First, it is worth noting that the Company
5 has acknowledged that the dispatch tier prices used in GRID are not necessarily equal to
6 the incremental costs of generation, but rather are set at the price point needed to ensure
7 that a unit's coal consumption exceeds the minimum take requirement.²⁶ Thus, the
8 Company's own dispatch practice does not exactly follow marginal costs as it would
9 normally be defined using economic principles. Second, standard economic principles
10 dictate that the use of marginal cost (or incremental cost) pricing is optimal *only* under
11 specific conditions that are not satisfied in PacifiCorp's case. More specifically, in a
12 competitive market, a seller's optimal price is indeed the marginal cost but *only* if the
13 marginal cost is above the average cost. If the marginal cost is below the average, as is
14 the case with certain take or pay provisions and PacifiCorp's supplemental pricing at
15 BCC, then every unit of goods sold at the marginal cost will result in economic losses.
16 Selling at a loss for a limited period of time to recover some of the sunk costs might be a
17 viable option, but in the long run the seller should either shut down operations to avoid
18 additional losses, reduce the portion of costs that are fixed, or increase the price towards
19 the average. This means that a pre-existing contract signed several years ago might justify
20 selling at a loss to ensure minimum volume consumption, but this can only be justified
21 for a limited period of time, and only if there is no opportunity to revise the underlying
22 contract. Signing CSAs knowing that they will be selling power at a loss (*i.e.*, dispatch

²⁵ PAC/400 at Staples/63:11-13.

²⁶ PAC/100 at Webb/30:2-7.

1 tier is less than costing tier) is not only imprudent, but contrary to basic economic
2 principles. The practice of selling power below average cost would be unsustainable for
3 the Company if not for the existence of the TAM and PCAM, which disconnect cost
4 recovery from market competition. In this case, ratepayers subsidize the Company's
5 uneconomic operations.

6 **Q. Can you further illustrate why PacifiCorp's use of supplemental pricing at BCC is**
7 **not consistent with basic economic principles?**

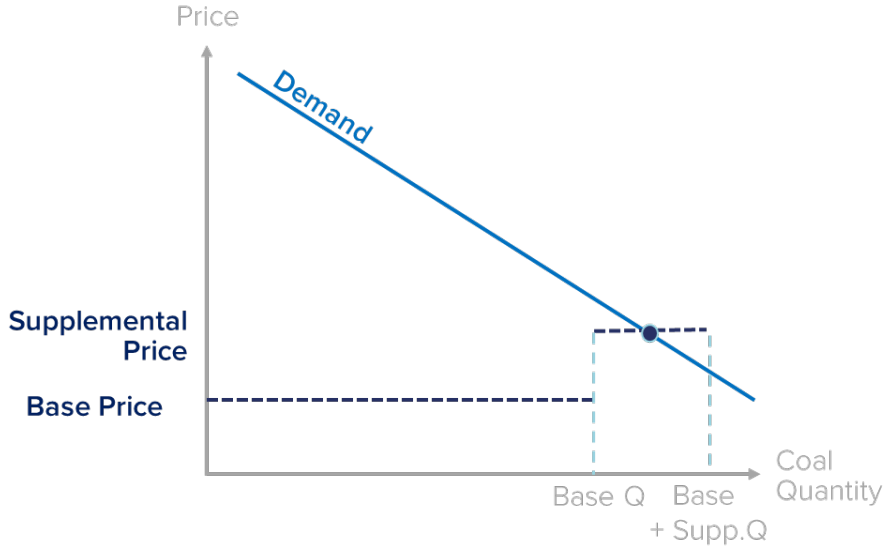
8 A. Yes. Below are two graphs illustrating two different potential supply curves for coal fuel.
9 In the first graph, the supply curve indicates an upward sloping marginal cost (*i.e.*,
10 supply), which would be typical of most commodities purchased in a competitive
11 marketplace. The base quantity is available at a specific price, while the supplemental
12 quantity is available at a higher price. According to economic principles, optimizing
13 dispatch in this case would result in dispatching at a price equal to the incremental cost (
14 *i.e.*, the supplemental price). In the second graph, however, the marginal cost curve
15 reflects a situation more similar to PacifiCorp's BCC costs, which is distorted from the
16 more typical market shown in the first graph. In the BCC case, the supplemental quantity
17 being available at a significantly lower price than the base quantity leads to an atypical,
18 inverted, and downward-sloping supply curve. Thus, dispatching the unit based on the
19 fuel's supplemental price results in overgeneration from coal that is not aligned with the
20 equilibrium that would be achieved if the base price were used. More importantly, it
21 results in ratepayers paying more for electricity costs. This is because any electricity
22 generated from the base quantity of coal above Point A in the chart could have been
23 supplied from a more economic resource. Although ratepayers benefit from subsequent

1 consumption of lower priced coal (supplemental quantity), this happens only after the
2 Company has consumed a significant amount of the base quantity at an economic loss.
3 Thus, to gain the “full benefits of mine ownership” that come from using the BCC
4 supplemental quantity price, as Company witness Mr. Staples claims,²⁷ ratepayers end up
5 paying significantly more than they should, resulting in a net effect that is actually
6 detrimental to them.

²⁷ PAC/400 at Staples/66:14.

1 **Table 1: Coal Fuel Supply Curves**

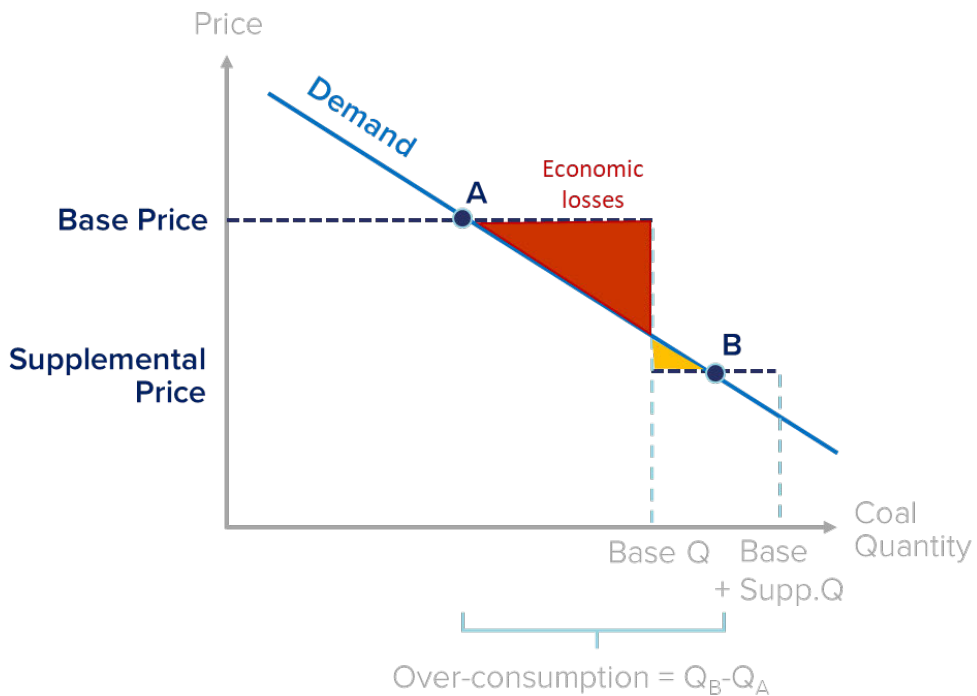
Case 1: Optimal Price and Quantity in a Competitive Market with a Normal Supply Curve



2

Optimal coal consumption under appropriate pricing (with increasing MC)

Case 2: Optimal Price and Quantity with a Distorted Supply Curve like BCC



A: Optimal coal consumption under appropriate pricing

B: Consumption when dispatch cost is based on supplemental pricing

3

1 **Q. Can you further explain why PacifiCorp’s use of a supplemental price for BCC**
2 **results in higher costs?**

3 A. Yes. As depicted on the second graph above, if fuel costs at Jim Bridger were priced
4 correctly, then coal generation from this unit should stop at point A. But because
5 PacifiCorp uses supplemental pricing (with decreasing marginal cost), coal consumption
6 is forecasted at point B. This means that for every ton of base coal quantity that is
7 consumed above point A, ratepayers pay more than they should because other generation
8 units could supply electricity at a lower cost. This results in economic losses to ratepayers
9 which are depicted by the red triangle (*i.e.*, coal cost paid minus the cost of the available
10 alternative). On the other hand, the “benefit” of the incremental pricing, shown by the
11 smaller yellow triangle, comes from the cost of the supplemental quantity being lower
12 than the cost of some alternatives. However, to reach that benefit, ratepayers have already
13 paid a significantly higher cost. This concept is confirmed in PacifiCorp’s GRID runs
14 using average cost whereby the coal consumed at Jim Bridger falls well below the base
15 quantity.

16 *ii. Use of supplemental quantity pricing before the base quantity is exhausted.*

17 **Q. Based on the economic principles described above, you testified that it was**
18 **inappropriate for PacifiCorp to assume the BCC supplemental quantity pricing**
19 **before the base quantity was exhausted. Correct?**

20 A. Yes.

21 **Q. PacifiCorp disagreed with your testimony. Did you find PacifiCorp’s reply to this**
22 **convincing?**

23 A. Not at all.

1 **Q. What specifically did PacifiCorp say regarding your recommendation that**
2 **PacifiCorp’s fuel cost assumption for Jim Bridger in GRID—which is equal to the**
3 **BCC supplemental price—be replaced with a higher cost fuel source?**

4 A. Mr. Staples stated that “GRID would select alternative resources with a cost lower than
5 BCC’s base plan but higher than BCC’s incremental cost because the model would not
6 recognize the availability of BCC’s lower cost incremental production.”²⁸

7 **Q. Do you agree that this is problematic?**

8 A. No. Contrary to PacifiCorp’s assertion that this will result in higher costs, this scenario
9 can and will lead to lower costs. This is because, as explained above, the base quantity is
10 significantly more expensive than the supplemental quantity. Thus, it is generally
11 favorable for the model to select an alternative resource that can displace coal from BCC,
12 even if the alternative is more expensive on a per unit basis than the BCC supplemental
13 coal supply.

14 **Q. Can you provide an illustrative example of this?**

15 A. Yes. Please see the table below showing how displacing BCC coal using an alternative
16 resource higher in cost than the BCC supplemental price but lower than the BCC base
17 price can lead to lower overall costs.

²⁸ PAC/400 at Staples/66:11-13.

1 **Confidential Table 2: BCC Coal Cost Comparison**

Resource	Price (\$/MMBtu)	Quantity (PAC's 2022 TAM, MMBtu)	Quantity (50% BCC Replacement Scenario, MMBtu)
BCC Base	█	█	█
BCC Supplemental	█	█	0
Alternative Resource	█	0	█
Total Quantity		█	█
Total Cost		█	█

2

3 In the table above, the second column shows the price of different resource options. A
4 hypothetical alternative resource with a price of \$█/MMBtu is assumed to be able to
5 displace BCC coal. This price represents █
6 █, which I believe is a reasonable proxy for a potential replacement resource. The
7 third column shows the quantity of coal consumed under PacifiCorp's initial 2022 TAM
8 projection. The fourth column shows the result of displacing 50 percent of BCC coal with
9 the alternative resource. As is readily apparent, the resulting cost is lower, despite the fact
10 that the alternative resource was more expensive on a per unit basis than the BCC
11 supplemental coal.

1 **E. NPC Adjustment**

2 **Q. Your opening testimony included the following recommendation: “The Commission**
3 **should direct PacifiCorp to revise the NPC component of the proposed 2022 TAM to**
4 **account for inappropriate coal fuel costs forecasted for the Jim Bridger plant which**
5 **arise from incorrect assumptions about the marginal cost in GRID and lack of**
6 **consideration for the flexibility of this fuel source.”²⁹ Do you continue to have the**
7 **same recommendation?**

8 A. Yes, I do.

9 **Q. Did your opening testimony provide an example of the potential cost savings to**
10 **PacifiCorp's customers that would result from a revised NPC that removed**
11 **inappropriate fuel costs forecasted for Jim Bridger?**

12 A. Yes. The GRID run I mentioned above and in my opening testimony (provided by
13 PacifiCorp in SC 2.22) shows NPC cost savings of approximately \$ [REDACTED].³⁰

14 **Q. Based on this example, is there any action that the Commission could take**
15 **immediately, without requiring PacifiCorp to conduct further analysis, to revise the**
16 **NPC component of the proposed 2022 TAM to account for inappropriate coal fuel**
17 **costs forecasted for the Jim Bridger plant?**

18 A. Yes. The Commission could reduce the 2022 NPC recoverable through the TAM by \$ [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED] (or about \$ [REDACTED] Oregon allocated). This reflects the results of the GRID run
20 PacifiCorp performed using the actual costing tier values (*i.e.*, average cost) for Jim
21 Bridger’s fuel inputs. I recommend that the Commission take this action.

²⁹ Sierra Club/100 at Burgess/2:6-9.

³⁰ Sierra Club/123.

1 **Q. Please explain why a \$ [REDACTED] NPC reduction is appropriate.**

2 A. \$ [REDACTED] is equal to the reduction in NPC under the GRID run conducted by
3 PacifiCorp in response to SC 2.22.³¹ This scenario is nearly identical to the 2022 TAM
4 model run in PacifiCorp's initial filing, except for one important change, which was to
5 adjust the input assumption for Jim Bridger fuel costs. In making this change, the
6 \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu costing tier price³² (*i.e.* average cost) was substituted for the marginal
7 fuel cost of \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu³³ that PacifiCorp had initially (and incorrectly) assumed,
8 which is based on the BCC supplemental price.³⁴

9 **Q. Why is the average cost appropriate to use for Jim Bridger?**

10 A. The average cost of \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu is numerically closer to the BCC base coal price of
11 \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu.³⁵ As explained in my opening testimony, the BCC base is more
12 reflective of the true marginal cost of fuel at Jim Bridger than the BCC supplemental cost
13 that PacifiCorp initially assumed. Because the TAM is forward looking, the ongoing
14 marginal cost is the correct lens to evaluate a future year's fuel costs (*e.g.*, 2022). This is
15 especially true because PacifiCorp owns the Bridger mine and can make plans in advance
16 for a substantially reduced BCC coal volume. Under this scenario, there is no need for the
17 BCC supplemental coal quantity, and thus each incremental MWh generated consumes
18 BCC base coal (rather than supplemental). Consumption from the BCC Base and Black

³¹ Sierra Club/123 (SC 2.22 model run); Confidential workpaper accompanying the Direct Testimony of David Webb (PAC/100) "ORTAM22 NPC CONF.xlsm" (2022 TAM model run).

³² Sierra Club/106 at Burgess/1.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ Confidential workpaper accompanying the Direct Testimony of Dana Ralston (PAC/200) "BRIDGER.xlsx" at "Detail" tab.

³⁵ *Id.*

1 Butte coal sources are substantially reduced or eliminated, and overall Jim Bridger fuel
2 costs (and total NPC) are also significantly reduced.

3 **Q. In your opening testimony, you stated that there are certain fixed costs at BCC that**
4 **might warrant a [REDACTED] percent reduction in the marginal fuel costs. Is this accounted**
5 **for in the GRID run conducted by PacifiCorp in response to SC 2.22?**

6 A. Yes. PacifiCorp's assumed 2022 coal prices at Jim Bridger are as follows:³⁶

7 \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu for BCC Base

8 \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu for BCC Supplemental

9 \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu for Black Butte (currently uncontracted)

10 Thus, the use of the average (costing tier) fuel price (\$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu) is already more
11 than [REDACTED] percent below the BCC base price.

12 **Q. Does this still allow PacifiCorp to recover fixed costs at BCC?**

13 A. Yes. The use of the Jim Bridger average price (\$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu) is actually somewhat
14 conservative in the sense that it reflects a price more than [REDACTED] percent below the true
15 marginal fuel cost (*i.e.*, BCC base coal, \$ [REDACTED]/MMBtu). At this price, the remaining
16 quantity of coal consumed should still be able to support recovery of fixed costs at BCC,
17 assuming production at the BCC and Black Butte mines are appropriately scaled down in
18 2022 (including any newly incurred fixed costs).

³⁶ *Id.*

1 **Q. Since your opening testimony, has PacifiCorp provided any new information on**
2 **costs they have already incurred (including fixed costs) that are attributable to 2022**
3 **BCC production?**

4 A. Yes. According to SC 5.5(b), these costs amount to \$ [REDACTED], of which only \$ [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED] match the categories that PacifiCorp has identified as “wholly identifiable fixed
6 costs.”³⁷

7 **Q. How do these sunk costs compare to the 2022 Jim Bridger fuel expenditures**
8 **projected in the GRID run using the average (costing tier) fuel price?**

9 A. They are substantially lower. The GRID run projected coal fuel expenditures at Jim
10 Bridger in 2022 of \$ [REDACTED]³⁸ which should be more than sufficient to recover the
11 \$ [REDACTED] in costs that PacifiCorp has already incurred, leaving \$ [REDACTED] to cover
12 any remaining costs of scaled down BCC production and other obligations at Jim
13 Bridger.

14 **Q. Do you believe \$ [REDACTED] is sufficient to cover all of the relevant cost categories**
15 **for Jim Bridger fuel in 2022, including the previously incurred costs, scaled down**
16 **BCC production, and other obligations?**

17 A. Yes. The table below provides a breakdown of the coal fuel-related costs that I estimate
18 would be incurred at Jim Bridger for 2022 under this scenario. Notably the total costs,
19 including fixed costs, are less than \$ [REDACTED].

³⁷ Sierra Club/112 at Burgess/6.

³⁸ Sierra Club/123.

1 **Confidential Table 3: 2022 Jim Bridger Coal Costs under Average Cost Scenario**
 2 **(SC 2.22 GRID Run)**

Cost	MMBtus Delivered	Cost (\$ millions, PAC share)	Type	Notes/Source
Black Butte Coal ([REDACTED] deferred tons)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Fixed (take or pay)	Ralston's BRIDGER workpaper
BCC Coal	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		MMBtu equal to [REDACTED] % of initial TAM estimate ³⁹
<i>Labor and Benefits</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Variable</i>	[REDACTED] % of initial TAM estimate provided in Ralston's Cost Comparison workpaper ⁴⁰
<i>Materials & Supplies</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Variable</i>	See above
<i>Other Controllable Costs</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Variable</i>	See above
<i>Royalties and Taxes (excl. property tax)</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Variable</i>	See above
<i>Coal Inventory & Deferred Longwall</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Variable (already incurred)</i>	Sierra Club 5.5(b)
<i>Depreciation & Depletion</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Fixed (already incurred)</i>	Sierra Club 5.5(b)
<i>Other Fixed Costs</i>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<i>Fixed</i>	Sierra Club 2.5(c) Management Fee, Insurance, Property Tax (excludes reclamation)
Total	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		Total MMBtu equal to GRID run w/ average cost. Total cost is less than \$ [REDACTED] projected in GRID run.

3

³⁹ I have assumed a [REDACTED] percent reduction in total BCC production for the following reasons. First, the total coal burn for Jim Bridger under the SC 2.22 GRID run is [REDACTED] MMBtu. I assumed that [REDACTED] MMBtu would be fulfilled by the deferred Black Butte tonnage, leaving [REDACTED] MMBtu to be supplied by BCC, which is [REDACTED] percent of the total BCC volume that PacifiCorp assumed in their initial 2022 forecast.

⁴⁰ Each variable cost category listed in this table is scaled down to [REDACTED] percent of PacifiCorp's initial estimate in accordance with the reduced BCC production. Cost categories identified as fixed or already incurred were not scaled down.

1 **Q. Are there any BCC coal cost categories included in PacifiCorp's initial 2022**
2 **projections that are not included in the table above?**

3 A. Yes. There are no BCC supplemental coal costs included because the volume of projected
4 coal consumption in this scenario did not exceed the 2022 BCC base quantity.
5 Additionally, the table above does not include any final reclamation costs. As explained
6 in my opening testimony, I believe PacifiCorp has mischaracterized this item as an
7 entirely fixed cost and may also be inflating these costs for other reasons. For these
8 reasons, I have excluded it from the table. However, even if final reclamation costs were
9 included at the full amount PacifiCorp specified in SC 2.5(c) (*i.e.*, approximately \$ [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]), the total Jim Bridger fuel costs would only increase to \$ [REDACTED]. This is
11 very close to the \$ [REDACTED] in Jim Bridger expenses projected in the costing tier
12 (average price) GRID run. If the full amount of PacifiCorp's expected reclamation costs
13 are included, that would equate to a total NPC reduction of about \$ [REDACTED] (\$ [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED] Oregon allocated) rather than \$ [REDACTED] (\$ [REDACTED] Oregon allocated).

15 **Q. What is your final recommendation based on this?**

16 A. I still recommend that the Commission order PacifiCorp to use an appropriate marginal
17 cost for the Jim Bridger plant in its GRID model and adjust NPC accordingly. Because
18 the Jim Bridger average cost is a reasonable approximation of the plant's true marginal
19 cost, the Commission should reduce the authorized NPC recovered through the TAM by
20 \$ [REDACTED] based on the GRID model run using Jim Bridger's average price, provided by
21 PacifiCorp in response to SC 2.22. In the alternative, if the Commission believes that
22 PacifiCorp's estimated final reclamation costs of \$ [REDACTED] for 2022 are prudent, then
23 I recommend that the NPC be reduced by \$ [REDACTED].

1 **3. Coal Contract Terms**

2 **A. Prudence of Minimum Takes**

3 **Q. How did PacifiCorp characterize your testimony regarding the prudence evaluation**
4 **of coal contracts with minimum take provisions?**

5 A. PacifiCorp stated that “[i]t is unreasonable to simply ignore these very real costs, based
6 solely on Sierra Club’s supposition that when GRID shows that a minimum take
7 provision is not met, it must be a result of an imprudent coal supply agreement.”⁴¹

8 **Q. Do you believe this is a fair characterization?**

9 A. No. I did not argue that 100 percent of the costs of any contract (especially existing
10 contracts) should be considered imprudent when the associated plant cannot
11 economically meet its minimum take requirement. However, I do believe that entering
12 into a new contract for a plant that has a demonstrable risk of not meeting the minimum
13 take quantity could be deemed imprudent and that customers should not be responsible
14 for any penalty payments resulting from PacifiCorp’s decision to enter into a new coal
15 supply agreement with minimum take requirements that it cannot economically meet.

16 **Q. Did you recommend any specific remedies to protect PacifiCorp customers against**
17 **risky (and potentially imprudent) contracting decisions?**

18 A. Yes. I recommended several specific remedies, including two that I reiterate here. First, I
19 recommended that the minimum take quantities for new contracts should not be set too
20 high. In doing so, I suggested that 50 percent of the total projected volume was a
21 reasonable level that would reduce risk to customers. If a contract minimum take exceeds
22 this level then it should be subject to further scrutiny. However, I did not explicitly state

⁴¹ PAC/400 at Staples/57:3-5.

1 that a contract in excess of 50 percent would be automatically deemed imprudent; rather,
2 PacifiCorp must provide additional justification for why the Commission should approve
3 a coal supply agreement with minimum take requirements in excess of 50 percent of
4 anticipated burn. Second, I recommended that any penalties incurred by failing to meet
5 the minimum take quantity should not be automatically passed through to customers. I
6 believe this is warranted because it ensures that PacifiCorp is subject to appropriate
7 competitive pressures when negotiating its fuel supply agreements. In essence,
8 PacifiCorp would be exposed to the same risk factors that a merchant generator would be
9 exposed to.

10 **Q. Regarding the second remedy (*i.e.*, PacifiCorp pays any penalties for not meeting**
11 **minimum take quantities), do you believe that an unfair risk would be placed on**
12 **PacifiCorp?**

13 A. No. In fact, multiple PacifiCorp witnesses testified that there is little risk of not meeting
14 the minimum take quantities. For example, with respect to the new Hunter CSAs, Mr.
15 Schwartz states that “[t]here is little risk that the minimum take provisions will exceed
16 the coal burn over the next three years and the commitment is certainly not imprudent.”⁴²
17 Similarly, Mr. Ralston states that “it is extremely unlikely that the Company has entered
18 minimum take obligations that will be below the burn requirements at the Hunter
19 plant.”⁴³ As such, PacifiCorp should have no problem accepting the cost responsibility of
20 any shortfall payments associated with this contract.

⁴² PAC/500 at Schwartz/36:4-6.

⁴³ PAC/600 at Ralston/41:3-4.

1 **Q. Did PacifiCorp call into question the need for additional scrutiny on CSAs that**
2 **exceed 50 percent of the anticipated coal burn?**

3 A. Yes. In particular, Mr. Schwartz stated: “In all my experience, I have never encountered a
4 coal buyer willing to have as little as 50 percent of its projected burn under contract for
5 the upcoming year.”⁴⁴

6 **Q. How do you respond?**

7 A. While Mr. Schwartz undoubtedly has a long history working for the coal industry, he
8 may be less familiar with some of the more recent trends that point towards increasing
9 shares of coal being delivered through spot contracts or shorter term lengths, rather than
10 long-term arrangements with a high level of fixed deliveries. For example, a recent article
11 published by S&P Global Market Intelligence stated the following: “Across the country
12 in 2020, about 48.1% of coal deliveries arrived at U.S. power plants on spot contracts or
13 on contracts with less than a year remaining on the term. Depending on the month in
14 2020, between 69.5% and 74.1% of coal delivered to U.S. power plants arrived through
15 spot deals or contracts with less than three years remaining in the term.”⁴⁵

16 **Q. Mr. Schwartz criticizes your recommendation of a 50 percent threshold for the**
17 **minimum take quantity relative to expected fuel burn on new coal supplies. How do**
18 **you respond?**

19 A. While it may be true that many utilities do not adhere specifically to a 50 percent
20 threshold at present, the purpose of proposing a lower threshold is that it anticipates

⁴⁴ PAC/500 at Schwartz/30:18-20.

⁴⁵ Taylor Kuykendall, *US coal deliveries increasingly arrive to power plants on shorter-term contracts*, S&P Global (June 25, 2021), available at <https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/us-coal-deliveries-increasingly-arrive-to-power-plants-on-shorter-term-contracts-65162319> (attached as Exhibit Sierra Club/203).

1 where trends are headed given the general headwinds for coal economics. That said, I
2 would be willing to consider a minimum take threshold other than 50 percent, within
3 reason, provided that it is consistent with the overall trend towards lower volumes and
4 shorter term lengths.

5 **Q. Mr. Schwartz claims that the largest U.S. producers of coal have over 79 percent of**
6 **their coal sales committed under contract.⁴⁶ Do you find this to be a compelling**
7 **rationale for a higher minimum take for new contracts?**

8 A. No. While I do not dispute the 79 percent figure, it is worth noting that this figure: 1)
9 does not necessarily equate to the whole industry; 2) does not specify the length of
10 contracts; 3) does not mean these contracts aren't overly optimistic about future coal
11 needs.

12 **Q. Would you be willing to revise your recommendation on the 50 percent minimum**
13 **take quantity threshold if PacifiCorp accepts full cost responsibility for any penalty**
14 **payments?**

15 A. Possibly. However, this would depend upon ensuring there is rigorous oversight of
16 PacifiCorp's dispatch practices to ensure that coal is not over-generated simply to meet
17 the minimum quantity.

⁴⁶ PAC/500 at Schwartz/35:3-4.

1 **B. Hunter Coal Supply Agreements**

2 **Q. Regarding the minimum take provisions proposed for the Hunter contracts, what**
3 **does PacifiCorp's reply testimony say?**

4 A. According to Mr. Schwartz, "The minimum take provisions under the Hunter CSAs are
5 only equal to [REDACTED] of the expected three-year average burn at Hunter. Even if the
6 burn at Hunter turns out to be [REDACTED] below the expected burn, the Company will not
7 have a problem meeting its minimum take obligations under the new CSAs."⁴⁷

8 **Q. Do you agree with this assessment?**

9 A. Not necessarily. While the minimum take at Hunter is equal to only [REDACTED] percent of the
10 *expected* burn, this percentage is well below what PacifiCorp forecasted for a plausible
11 low burn scenario, which showed the minimum take equal to [REDACTED] percent of the projected
12 burn.⁴⁸ Thus, while it may be true that the Hunter minimum take could accommodate a
13 burn that is [REDACTED] percent below expectations, it would not be able to accommodate a burn
14 that is [REDACTED] percent below expectations. Such a scenario is not unreasonable, especially
15 given potential federal policies that could significantly limit carbon emissions. This
16 would also be similar to reduced burn expectations that have occurred at other PacifiCorp
17 plants which I address in my opening testimony.

⁴⁷ *Id.* at Schwartz/35:10-13.

⁴⁸ Sierra Club/117.

1 **4. Operational Dispatch Practices**

2 **A. iOpt/PCI Forecasts**

3 **Q. PacifiCorp’s reply testimony spent considerable time responding to your**
4 **observation that the actual dispatch at Jim Bridger often deviates from the forecast**
5 **produced by PacifiCorp’s energy traders in iOpt or Power Costs Incorporated**
6 **(“PCI”).⁴⁹ Do you agree with the Company’s assessment?**

7 A. I do in part. In fact, I never disputed the notion that there may be some modest deviations
8 between the forecast and the actual dispatch. That outcome is expected and reasonable.
9 Instead, my primary critique was that the input assumptions used to generate the initial
10 forecast were incorrect because they rely upon the BCC supplemental pricing. The
11 extreme difference between the BCC supplemental price and the BCC base price is
12 significant enough that generation from Jim Bridger is likely being systematically over
13 forecasted by iOpt/PCI, regardless of any subsequent deviations from the forecast.

14 **B. Proper Proceeding to Examine Dispatch Practices**

15 **Q. In its reply testimony, PacifiCorp argued that the Commission should not examine**
16 **the Company’s dispatch practices in the PCAM, stating that “[t]he Commission also**
17 **reiterated that it will not redesign the PCAM parameters until ‘around 2024.’”⁵⁰**

18 **How do you respond?**

19 A. Based on the analysis I presented in my opening testimony, I think there is reason to
20 believe that PacifiCorp may be underestimating the fuel cost of its coal plants when
21 determining optimal dispatch. This leads to an inefficient outcome that could be causing
22 tens of millions of dollars in additional costs to PacifiCorp customers each year than

⁴⁹ PAC/400 at Staples/67:18-70:2.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at Staples/59:19-21 (quoting Order No. 20-473 at 130).

1 necessary. It would be unfortunate if the Commission were prevented from examining
2 this issue sooner than 2024. This is especially salient due to the fact that PacifiCorp is
3 poised to join an organized regional energy market that could exacerbate the effect of
4 these dispatch practices.⁵¹ Moreover, it is clear that there is a linkage between
5 PacifiCorp's forecasted fuel consumption examined in the TAM and the actual fuel
6 consumption examined in the PCAM. While some aspects of these issues may need to be
7 addressed more thoroughly in the PCAM proceeding, it does not make sense to construct
8 artificial procedural barriers to gathering relevant information on PacifiCorp's dispatch
9 practices that may inform future TAM and/or PCAM proceedings. As such a continue to
10 recommend that the Commission examine these issues soon.

11 ***C. Economic Cycling Analysis***

12 **Q. How did PacifiCorp respond to your critique that they had not adequately**
13 **considered the costs and benefits of economic cycling at coal plants like Jim**
14 **Bridger?**

15 A. PacifiCorp argued that such an analysis was unnecessary and provided a hypothetical
16 example suggesting that it would be exceedingly rare for the Company to break even
17 from cycling Jim Bridger due to startup costs.⁵²

18 **Q. Did you find this hypothetical example convincing?**

19 A. No. While the example presented is a plausible scenario, it is in no way representative of
20 all possible system conditions PacifiCorp is likely to face. For example, there are many

⁵¹ Pete Danko, *Going for the grid: PGE, PacifiCorp undertake a new effort*, Portland Business Journal (Sept. 26, 2019), available at <https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/news/2019/09/26/going-for-the-grid-pge-pacificorp-undertake-a-new.html>.

⁵² PAC/400 at Staples/58:3-59:2.

1 times when the market price would be well below the hypothetical \$ [REDACTED]/MWh value
2 PacifiCorp analyzed. In instances where the price was lower, it is much more likely that
3 economic cycling would make sense on a shorter timeframe than 53 days. Therefore,
4 PacifiCorp's example is not sufficient to disprove that Jim Bridger could be operating
5 uneconomically on a semi-regular basis.

6 **Q. How else did PacifiCorp challenge your analysis in opening testimony of Jim
7 Bridger cycling?**

8 A. PacifiCorp pointed out that I only analyzed a very short time period, and that Jim Bridger
9 still would have been profitable if the plant had operated at a lower level than
10 PacifiCorp's forecast suggested was the optimal level.⁵³

11 **Q. Do you agree with PacifiCorp's conclusions?**

12 A. No. First, it is telling that in this instance PacifiCorp argues that the plant should have
13 operated at a lower level than its own forecast suggested. Second, if PacifiCorp is
14 confident that this one example is not indicative of a larger trend, then I would think the
15 Company would be eager to conduct an analysis to show that the plant is more profitable
16 without cycling over the course of an entire year. However, PacifiCorp refuses to do so.

17 **Q. Have you conducted any additional analysis for a longer time period than what you
18 presented in your opening testimony?**

19 A. Yes. I extended my previous analysis of a single five-day period to cover the full range of
20 iOpt/PCI forecasts PacifiCorp provided from January 2020 through May 2021. This
21 revealed that there were many more instances where the generation units at the Jim

⁵³ *Id.* at Staples/61:4-11.

1 Bridger plant were operating at an economic loss. In fact, many of the instances I
2 identified showed losses that were greater than the startup/cycling costs, meaning it
3 would have been more cost effective to cycle the unit off. It is important to note that in
4 some instances the losses for a single day did not exceed the cycling cost, however the
5 losses over the course of several days did exceed these cycling costs. To capture this
6 effect, I examined the sum of economic gains/losses for every five-day period within the
7 time period for which data was provided. The table below summarizes the results of this
8 more comprehensive analysis.

9 **Confidential Table 4: Jim Bridger Economic Cycling Analysis⁵⁴**

Generation Unit	5-Day Periods with Economic Losses Exceeding Startup Costs (January 2020 through May 2021) ⁵⁵	
	Number of Instances	% of Total
Jim Bridger 1		
Jim Bridger 2		
Jim Bridger 3		
Jim Bridger 4		

10 **5. Miscellaneous Issues**

11 ***A. Mischaracterization of Arguments Regarding Dispatch Versus Costing Tier***

12 **Q. Do you believe PacifiCorp's reply correctly characterized your arguments**
13 **regarding the use of the dispatch tier and costing tier prices in the GRID model?**

14 **A.** No. As one example, PacifiCorp seems to imply that my position is that use of a dispatch
15 tier price to account for a minimum take contract is never warranted.⁵⁶ Instead, I am
16 arguing that some of the specific dispatch tier cost inputs PacifiCorp uses for this purpose

⁵⁴ Confidential Attachments to PacifiCorp Response to Sierra Club Data Request 2.18.

⁵⁵ The instances correspond to individual days, with the 5-day period following that day. Thus a 5-day period starting on 1/1/2021 could overlap with a 5-day period starting on 1/2/2021.

⁵⁶ PAC/400 at Staples 52:16-18.

1 are not correct, most notably the dispatch tier price used for the Jim Bridger plant
2 discussed at length above.

3 **Q. PacifiCorp compared the use of marginal costs to the cost of taking a car trip to the**
4 **store.⁵⁷ Do you think this analogy makes sense?**

5 A. No. PacifiCorp's analogy fails because the evaluation of future NPC is forward looking
6 and must consider all of the relevant costs. Thus, for PacifiCorp's analogy, the more
7 important consideration is not whether to make a daily trip to the store, but whether or
8 not to buy or lease the car in the first place. This would be the equivalent of entering a
9 contract or updating an affiliate mine plan. In those cases, any fixed expenses (*e.g.*, a
10 monthly car payment) that have yet to be incurred are appropriate to consider. In no way
11 is this "counter to basic economic principles."⁵⁸ As a concrete example, PacifiCorp states
12 the following regarding BCC: "While BCC is an affiliate captive mining operation
13 adjacent to the plant and can adjust coal production quantities to comply with reasonable
14 changes in fuel requirements at the plant over time, most base costs *within the year of the*
15 *mine plan* are fixed and unavoidable."⁵⁹ Because the TAM is evaluated in the year *before*
16 *the year of the mine plan*, however, many of these costs are not yet fixed and may still be
17 avoidable.

⁵⁷ PAC/400 at Staples/53:12-22.

⁵⁸ *Id.* at Staples/53:22.

⁵⁹ *Id.* at Staples/54:13-16 (emphasis added).

1 **B. California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”) Decision**

2 **Q. In his reply testimony, Mr. Ralston stated that “[t]he CPUC rejected Sierra Club’s**
3 **argument in its entirety and found that there was no evidence that any of**
4 **PacifiCorp’s specific coal supply agreements were imprudent.”⁶⁰ Do you believe this**
5 **is an accurate characterization of the CPUC’s decision in the case referenced (*i.e.*,**
6 **the 2020 ECAC)?**

7 A. No. None of the newly executed coal supply agreements or open positions being
8 considered in the 2022 OR TAM were evaluated by the CPUC in the 2020 ECAC case
9 referenced. Sierra Club did recently provide arguments in the 2021 ECAC on some of
10 coal contracts at issue in the current 2022 TAM case. However, a decision by the CPUC
11 on the 2021 ECAC is still pending.

12 **C. Open Positions**

13 **Q. Did PacifiCorp admit that it assumes open positions for 2022 would include**
14 **minimum take provisions?**

15 A. Yes. Specifically, Mr. Ralston stated the following: “Sierra Club is correct that the
16 Company has assumed that the open position for 2022 will be filled by CSAs with
17 minimum take provision for the Naughton plant and the Black Butte CSA for the Jim
18 Bridger plant”⁶¹

19 **Q. Do you find this to be problematic?**

20 A. Yes. For Black Butte in particular, the dispatch tier costs PacifiCorp assumes are
21 excessively low. Because this is a new contract, it is incorrect to assume that the dispatch

⁶⁰ PAC/600 at Ralston/38:11-13.

⁶¹ *Id.* at Ralston/39:2-4.

1 tier costs should be so low given that the contract (including minimum take provisions) is
2 not yet finalized.

3 ***D. Reliability***

4 **Q. Did PacifiCorp raise concerns over grid reliability related to not having enough**
5 **coal?**

6 A. Yes. Specifically, Mr. Schwartz suggested that recent power shortages in Texas are
7 indicative of what could happen if there is not enough coal fuel.⁶²

8 **Q. Do you agree with this comparison?**

9 A. No. The circumstances of the recent outages in Texas are wholly inapplicable to
10 PacifiCorp's situation. While there are important lessons to be drawn from this tragic
11 event, invoking it here represents nothing more than a scare tactic.

12 **Q. Can you elaborate on some of the differences between the Texas power system and**
13 **PacifiCorp's system?**

14 A. Yes. First, the Texas system, also known as "ERCOT" is its own interconnection that is
15 islanded from neighboring power grids. Thus, ERCOT was unable to benefit from the
16 resource sharing that occurs routinely in the Western Interconnection, and that PacifiCorp
17 could likely avail itself of in an emergency event. Second, a major reason for the outages
18 in Texas was the fact that many power plants lacked the winterization measures needed to
19 maintain operations during extreme cold. In contrast, PacifiCorp's system is much more
20 accustomed to winter operations and would not be likely to face the same challenges.
21 Third, while all types of generation experience failures during the outage—including

⁶² PAC/500 at Schwartz/31:14-32:2.

1 wind, nuclear, coal, and natural gas—by far the most significant failures occurred at
2 natural gas power plants rather than coal. Fourth, the Texas power market has a
3 fundamentally different construct than PacifiCorp in that it is fully restructured and there
4 is no central planning process to ensure resource adequacy. This contrasts starkly with
5 PacifiCorp’s system that is vertically integrated and includes a robust Integrated
6 Resource Planning process that ensures a substantial planning reserve margin to maintain
7 reliability. These factors represent just a few of the reasons why drawing parallels
8 between PacifiCorp and ERCOT are not appropriate, and Mr. Schwartz’s reliability
9 concerns should be rejected.

10 ***E. Response to Other Parties***

11 **Q. How did PacifiCorp respond to CUB’s proposal to run a GRID study closing** [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]?

13 **A.** PacifiCorp argued against this proposal, suggesting that it is “not a good use of
14 resources.”⁶³

15 **Q. Do you support CUB’s proposal?**

16 **A.** Yes. Given the significant potential savings from reducing Jim Bridger operations, I
17 disagree with PacifiCorp’s assessment that this would not be a good use of resources.
18 Additionally, I will note that the GRID run PacifiCorp conducted using average costs in
19 response to SC 2.22 also appears to have [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]. As such, I believe the study that CUB is proposing
21 may lead to similar conclusions as the one PacifiCorp has provided in this response.

⁶³ PAC/400 at Staples/40:5-17.

1 **Q. In its reply, PacifiCorp argued against Staff’s position that take or pay adjustments**
2 **(i.e., “reaveraging”) in the informational run are inappropriate.⁶⁴ Do you agree?**

3 A. No, I support Staff’s position on this issue. I believe the reaveraging step PacifiCorp took
4 obfuscates the intent of this informational run. Moreover, I do not believe the results are
5 “meaningless” as PacifiCorp asserts.⁶⁵ Even if there are legitimate fixed costs that
6 PacifiCorp is authorized to recover, it is still useful to understand the optimal operating
7 costs to inform future TAM cycles, contracting decisions, and mine plans.

8 **Q. Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?**

9 A. Yes.

⁶⁴ *Id.* at Staples/41:12-42:8.

⁶⁵ *Id.* at Staples/42:2.

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

In the Matter of

PACIFICORP d/b/a PACIFIC POWER,

2022 Transition Adjustment Mechanism

Docket UE 390

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 6th day of August, 2021, I have served true and correct copies of the Confidential Corrected Rebuttal Testimony of Ed Burgess pursuant to Protective Order No. 16-128 upon all eligible party representatives electronically via encrypted password protected ZIP folders.

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Dated this 6th day of August, 2021 at Oakland, CA.

/s/ Ana Boyd

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