## OF OREGON

In the Matter of )

AVISTA CORPORATION, dba AVISTA ) ORDER
UTILITIES, )

Petition Requesting Authority to Revise Its )
Book Depreciation Rates. )

DISPOSITION: STIPULATION II ADOPTED

### I. BACKGROUND

On October 12, 2007, Avista Corporation, doing business as (dba) Avista Utilities (Avista or the Company), filed a petition, with the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission), requesting authority to revise its book depreciation rates to be consistent with the results of a recently completed depreciation study (the Study). The Study indicated that the annual depreciation expense on Avista's books should be reduced by approximately \$3.1 million, based on the average service life rates of gas plant in service as of December 31, 2006. Consistent with the Study, Avista's petition requested authorization to revise the Company's book depreciation rates by approximately \$3.1 million.

On November 29, 2007, a prehearing conference was held in Salem, Oregon, and a procedural schedule to review Avista's petition was established. The Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon (CUB) noticed its intervention, and the petition to intervene of the Northwest Industrial Gas Users (NWIGU) was granted.

The schedule established in the proceeding included sufficient time for Commission Staff (Staff), parties and interested persons to fully review the Company's depreciation study and petition. The schedule also allowed for settlement discussions.

As a result of settlement discussions, Avista, Staff, CUB and NWIGU (collectively the Stipulating Parties) executed, on January 14, 2008, a first Stipulation (Stipulation I) regarding an early implementation date for new depreciation rates for Avista. On January 28, 2008, the Commission adopted Stipulation I, in its entirety. Stipulation I implemented an approximately \$3.1 million decrease in Avista's depreciation expense, effective as of January 1, 2008. Should the Commission eventually adopt different depreciation rates at the end of a full review of Avista's depreciation

study, Stipulation I set forth an adjustment mechanism to implement the Final Approved Depreciation Rates (as defined in Stipulation I) in a manner that would hold customers harmless.

### II. STIPULATION II

As a result of continued settlement discussions after Stipulation I, the Stipulating Parties executed a second Stipulation (Stipulation II) on March 7, 2008. In Stipulation II, the Stipulating Parties agreed to further reduce Avista's depreciation expense by \$320,519, for a total reduction in depreciation rates of \$3,427,863. Attachment A to Stipulation II (Appendix A, Page 9) provides full detail about the affected accounts and rates. The Stipulating Parties agree that the Final Approved Depreciation Rates shall be effective as of April 1, 2008, and shall be reflected in base rates coincident with implementation of new base rates at the conclusion of Avista's general rate case, in Docket No. UG-181.

The Stipulating Parties further agree that the adjustment to base rates shall be spread as a uniform percentage decrease in margin revenue to three rate schedules: Residential Service Schedule 410, General Service Schedule 420 and Transportation Service Schedule 456. The decrease in revenue for each schedule shall be applied as a decrease to usage (per therm) charge(s). Attachment B to Stipulation II (Appendix A, Page 10) shows the rates, and timing thereof, by service schedule resulting from the application of Stipulation II revenue decrease.

### III. CONCLUSION

We have examined Stipulation II and the Stipulating Parties' Joint Testimony. We conclude that Stipulation II appropriately reduces rates and is in the public interest. We find that the methodology to adjust base rates set forth in Stipulation II is appropriate. We adopt Stipulation II in its entirety, and direct Avista to adjust base rates consistent with Stipulation II and this Order.

### **ORDER**

### IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Stipulation II, executed on March 7, 2008, by Avista Utilities, Commission Staff, the Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon, and the Northwest Industrial Gas Users, is adopted.

2. Avista Utilities shall adjust base rates consistent with Stipulation II.

Made, entered, and effective

MAR 3 1 2008

Lee Beyer
Chairman

Ray Baum
Commissioner

A party may request rehearing or reconsideration of this order pursuant to ORS 756.561. A request for rehearing or reconsideration must be filed with the Commission within 60 days of the date of service of this order. The request must comply with the requirements in OAR 860-014-0095. A copy of any such request must also be served on each party to the proceeding as provided by OAR 860-013-0070(2). A party may appeal this order by filing a petition for review with the Court of Appeals in compliance with ORS 183.480-183.484.

### BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON

### UM 1351

In the Matter of	)	
AVISTA CORPORATION, dba AVISTA UTILITIES,	) ) )	STIPULATION FOR FINAL IMPLEMENTATION OF DEPRECIATION RATES
Petition Requesting	)	
Authority to Revise Its	)	
Book Depreciation Rates	)	

This Stipulation is entered into for the purpose of implementing Avista Corporation's (Avista) final book depreciation rates.

### **PARTIES**

The Parties to this Stipulation are Avista, the Staff of the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Staff), the Citizens' Utility Board (CUB), and the Northwest Industrial Gas Users (NWIGU) (collectively, "Parties").

### BACKGROUND

1. On October 12, 2007, Avista filed a petition requesting authority to revise its book depreciation rates. The Company requested authorization to revise its book depreciation rates consistent with the results of a study recently undertaken by the Company. That study shows that the annual depreciation expense on the Company's books should be reduced by approximately \$3.1 million based on the average service life rates of gas plant in service as of December 31, 2006. Accordingly, the Company requested authorization to revise its

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Avista hired Gannett Fleming, Inc. to undertake a depreciation study of its depreciable electric, gas and common plant in service as of December 31, 2004. The objective of this assignment was to recommend depreciation rates to be utilized by Avista for accounting and ratemaking purposes.

depreciation rates to reflect this \$3.1 million decrease in book depreciation expense. On October 29, 2007, a prehearing conference was held that established the procedural schedule for this Docket.

- 2. The Parties in this Docket recognized the need for sufficient time for Staff and interested Parties to complete their review of the Company's depreciation study. Accordingly, the Parties entered into a Stipulation on January 14, 2008, that provided for implementation of the Company's proposed new depreciation rates effective January 1, 2008, together with agreement to adjust for any differences between the depreciation rates ultimately approved in this Docket, and the depreciation rates implemented January 1, 2008. This Stipulation was approved by Order No. 08-100 of this Commission, on January 28, 2008.
- 3. On February 26, 2008, a settlement conference was held, and the participating Parties reached final agreement on revisions to the Company's book depreciation rates. If ultimately approved by the Commission, such rates would constitute the Final Approved Depreciation Rates, as referenced in the earlier Stipulation of January 14, 2008.

### AGREEMENT

- 4. The Parties have agreed to an overall reduction of \$3,427,863 in the annual depreciation expense. (This represents a further \$320,519 reduction in depreciation expense beyond what the Company had originally filed.) Attachment A provides detail of the affected plant accounts and specified depreciation rates.
- 5. The agreed-upon depreciation rates set forth in this Stipulation shall be effective April 1, 2008, and shall be reflected in base rates coincident with implementation of new base rates resulting from the settlement of all remaining issues in the Company's general rate case in Docket No. UG-181.

- 6. The adjustment to base rates, as discussed in paragraph 5, above, resulting from this Stipulation, shall be spread as a uniform percentage decrease in margin revenue to Residential Service Schedule 410, General Service Schedule 420 and Transportation Service Schedule 456. The decrease in revenue for each Schedule will be applied as a decrease to the usage (per therm) charges(s). Attachment B shows the rates, and timing thereof, by service schedule resulting from the application of the revenue decrease described above, together with the rate changes set forth in the prior Settlement Stipulation in Docket No. UG-181.
- 7. The Parties agree that this Stipulation is in the public interest and results in an overall fair, just and reasonable outcome.
- 8. The Parties agree this Stipulation represents a compromise in the positions of the Parties. As such, conduct, statements, and documents disclosed in the negotiation of this Stipulation shall not be admissible as evidence in this or any other proceeding. Further, this Stipulation sets forth the entire agreement between the Parties and supersedes any and all prior communications, understandings, or agreements, oral or written, between the Parties pertaining to the subject matter of this Stipulation.
- 9. This Stipulation will be offered into the record in this proceeding as evidence pursuant to OAR 860-014-0085. The Parties agree to support this Stipulation throughout this proceeding and any appeal. The Parties further agree to provide witnesses to sponsor this Stipulation at the hearing, or, in a party's discretion, to provide a representative at the hearing authorized to respond to the Commission's questions on the party's position as may be appropriate.
- 10. If this Stipulation is challenged by any other party to this proceeding, the Parties to this Stipulation reserve the right to cross-examine witnesses and put on such case as they deem appropriate to respond fully to the issues presented, including the right to raise issues that are

incorporated in the settlement embodied in this Stipulation. Notwithstanding this reservation of rights, the Parties agree that they will continue to support the Commission's adoption of the terms of this Stipulation.

- 11. Should the Commission fail to adopt the Stipulation, or should the Commission materially modify the Stipulation, any Party hereto shall have the right to withdraw from the Stipulation and proceed with a resolution of all issues in this proceeding.
- 12. By entering into this Stipulation, no Party shall be deemed to have approved, admitted, or consented to the facts, principles, methods, or theories employed by any other Party in arriving at the terms of this Stipulation. No Party shall be deemed to have agreed that any provision of this Stipulation is appropriate for resolving the issues in any other proceeding.
- 13. This Stipulation may be executed in counterparts and each signed counterpart shall constitute an original document. The Parties further agree that any facsimile copy of a Party's signature is valid and binding to the same extent as an original signature.
- 14. This Stipulation may not be modified or amended except by written agreement among all Parties who have executed it.

This Stipulation is entered into by each Party on the date entered below such Party's signature.

DATED thisday of March 2008	
AVISTA CORPORATION	STAFF OF THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
By:	By:
NORTHWEST INDUSTRIAL GAS USERS	CITIZENS' UTILITY BOARD
By:	By:
Date:	Date:

### **ORDER NO. 08-182**

This Stipulation is entered into by each Party on the date entered below such Party's signature. DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of March 2008 **AVISTA CORPORATION** STAFF OF THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON Date: Date: NORTHWEST INDUSTRIAL GAS USERS CITIZENS' UTILITY BOARD By: <u>Paulo</u> E. Hyror Date: <u>3/6/08</u> By:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

STIPULATION

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### ORDER NO. 08-182

This Stipulation is entered into by each Party on the date entered below such Party's signature.

DATED this day of March 2008	
AVISTA CORPORATION	STAFF OF THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
By: Date:	By: 2480 Date: March 7, 2008
NORTHWEST INDUSTRIAL GAS USERS	CITIZENS' UTILITY BOARD
By:	Ву:
Date	Date:

STIPULATION

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This Stipulation is entered into by each Party on the date entered below such Party's

ORDER NO. 08-182

signature.	
DATED this day of March 2008	
AVISTA CORPORATION	STAFF OF THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
By: Date:	By:
NORTHWEST INDUSTRIAL GAS USERS	CITIZENS' UTILITY BOARD
By: Date:	By: Rob Ose Date: 3-7-08

STIPULATION

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UM 1351 - Avista Settlement Depreciation Rates

[10] SETTLEMENT [1] FILED Reduction in Depreciation Study Expense due Existing Proposed Settlement increase or Annual Settlement 2006 Avg. Existing Annual Study Annual Increase or Account (Decrease) Settlement Rate Deprec (Decrease) Description Balance Rate Deprec Rate Deprec. Number GAS PLANT - OREGON PRODUCTION - LPG & LNG 3,591 2,347 (54) 2.401 5.33 311.0 Liquified Petroleum Gas Equipment 67,374 1.85 1,244 5.41 3,645 3,591 2,347 (54) 67,374 1.244 3.645 2,401 Total DISTRIBUTION PLANT (1.532)(288)3.05 5,847 2.40 4,602 (1,245)2.25 4,315 191.762 375.0 Structures & Improvements 1.079.888 (1,734,364) (90,678) 2,814,252 1.42 1,170,566 (1,643,686)1.31 82,434,223 3.41 376.0 Mains 16,417 (42,316) (236) 1.39 378.0 Measuring/Regulating Station Equipment 1,181,089 4.97 58,733 1.41 16,653 (42.080)1.59 10,373 (20,070)(3,262)13 635 (16.808) 379.0 Measuring/Regulating City Gate Equipment 2.09 652,399 4.67 30,443 1.78 917,212 (1,453,930) (123,669) 1,040,881 (1,330,261)2,371,142 2.02 380.0 Services 51,528,771 4.60 705,584 (50,805)2.34 609,249 (147,140)(96,334)756,389 2.71 381.0 Meters 26.036.298 2 91 (37,010)0.65 5,041 (37,010)0.65 5,041 0 5.42 42,051 385.0 Measuring/Regulating Industrial Equipment 775,599 0.00 33 0.00 539 (6.12)(33)387.0 Other Equipment 2,642,496 (3,436,328) (314,467) 2,956,963 (3,121,861) 6,078,824 162,800,680 Total GAS GENERAL PLANT (4,135)109,353 0.85 15,282 (94,071)0.62 11,147 (98.206)1,797,882 6.08 390.1 Structures & Improvements 1,341 2,328 705 20.00 1,341 705 20.00 0 636 6,705 9.49 391.1 Computer Equipment 673 0 1,655 4.22 2,328 673 4.22 55,173 3.00 393.0 Stores Equipment 76,198 43,038 43.038 9.20 4.00 33,160 9.20 76,198 828,234 394.0 Tools, Shop & Garage Equipment 12.41 42,615 31,644 0 31.644 343,390 3.19 10,971 12.41 42.615 395.0 Laboratory Equipment 39,342 25,733 0 25,733 12.79 39 342 307,600 4.42 13,609 12 79 397.0 Communication Equipment 63.85 4,914 4 364 0 4,914 4,364 550 63.85 397.2 Communication Equipment - Portable 7,696 7 15 (4,135) 12,085 177,884 7,950 182,019 169,934 3.346.680 GAS TRANSPORTATION PLANT 392.0 Transportation Equipment 582 (842) (842) (0) 3.44 16,932 8.41 1,424 8.41 1,424 954 (991)(1,021)1.975 26,056 1,945 7.58 30 396.0 Power Operated Equipment

3.369

6,253,371

42,988

166,257,722

1,536

2,825,508 (3,427,863)

30

3,399

3,146,026 (3,107,345)

(1,833)

(1,863)

(320,519)

Total

TOTAL GAS PLANT - OREGON

# OPUC STAFF MODEL

# PROPOSED RATES SPREAD AND RATE DESIGN PER DEPRECIATION STIPULATION & UG-181 SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Line #		OREGON TOTAL	Residential Service SCH 410	General Service SCH 420	Large General SCH 424	Interruptible Service SCH 440	Seasonal Service SCH 444	Special Contracts SCH 447	Transportation Service SCH 456	
- 70	ANNUAL THERMS Beginning volumetric rate (\$/therm)	125,959,650	,373,825 1.42914	9,061	,830 5402	5,306	186,221	5,673,162 NA	35,312,245 Various	
20 44 FC	Schedule 450 Block Demittions (in triousand Inerms) Schedule 456 Block Volumes (Therms) Schedule 456 Berinning Rates (Sitherm)	7.4.6	4,104,435 7	7,199,917 5	5,166,154 1	17,490,196 1	Civer 500 1,351,543 \$ 0.02520		35,312,245	
9 1	Beginning Volumetric Revenues (************************************	\$ 119,571,215	62,108	260	201	1118	\$233,476	\$ 476,072	\$2,322,979	
- 00 1	Beginning Customer Charge (\$month)	92,410	\$ 2	\$ 6	\$ 65	0 9	0\$	\$ 0	\$ 187.50	
5 t	Beginning Customer Charge Kevenues BEGINNING TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 5,821,056 \$ 125,392,271	\$ 4,885,440 \$ 75,447,548	\$ 778,176 \$ 38,918,436	\$ 76,440 \$ 4,728,641	\$ 0, \$ 3,184,118	\$ 0 \$ 233,476	\$ 0 \$ 476,072	\$ 81,000 \$ 2,403,979	
12	Revenue Requirement Decrease from Depreciation Stipulation	\$ 321,000								
13	Current Margin = Total Revenues minus Gas Costs Share (Excluding Scheds. 424, 440, 444, 447) of Current Margin	\$ 32,089,154	\$ 20,566,063 67.70%	\$ 7,407,019 24.38%	\$ 734,731 0.00%	\$ 468,300 0.00%	\$ 32,989	\$ 476,073 0.00%	\$ 2,403,979 7.91%	
15 16	Unconstrained Allocation of Revenue Requirement Decrease Temporarily Constrained Allocation of Revenue Requirement Decrease (+) Revenue Requirement Decrease (+) or Increase (-) Carried Over to Nov 1	\$ 321,000 \$ 321,000	\$217,325 \$220,549 -\$3,223	\$78,271 \$79,432 -\$1.161	0,00	0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	08 68	\$25,403	
, <del>2</del>	000 Pil 900 Pi	000 990 9			3	3	3	2		
50 -	Other Nevertue Neguliement inclease - April 1, 2000 Proposed rev. req. adjustment (% over beginning total rev's)	0.69%	0.87%	0.87%	-2.00%	-1.75%	-2.00%	0.00%	0.87%	
2 23	Proposed rev. req. adjustment (\$) Proposed monthly customer charge (\$)	\$ 866,000	\$ 659,667	\$ 340,279	-\$ 94,573 \$ 55 50	-\$ 55,722	-\$ 4,670	0\$	\$ 21,019	
ខេ	Revenue Requirement Increase from Customer Charge	\$ 607,068	\$ 488,544	\$ 129,696	-\$ 11,172	9 69	9 9	9 C 9 69	0 \$	
24	Revenue Requirement Increase from Volumetric Charges Combined Dentaciation Decrease and Other: Rev. Ren. Volumetric Charge Increase (+)	\$ 258,932 -\$ 62 068	\$ 171,123	\$ 210,583	-\$ 83,401 -\$ 83,401	-\$ 55,722	-\$ 4,670	O \$	\$ 21,019	
27 28	Percentage Revenue Requirement Increase Applied to Volumetric Charges Proposed Volumetric Rates, Tailf Sales Schedules		\$1.42814	\$1.35001	\$1.23154 \$1.23154	\$0.93237	\$1.22868	0.0000% NA	0.0000% NA	
23 23		,	2007	0.00	2000	1000	40.02020			
30	Revenue Requirement Increase Due to JP Storage Addition 11/01/08 Share (Excluding Special Contracts) of Annual Therms Throughput	\$ 724,000 100.00%	41.05%	23.57%	3.08%	2.79%	0.15%	0.00%	29.36%	
33 23	Share (Excluding Special Contracts) of Annual Sales Therms Weinhied Shares: 14% Throughout 86% Sales	100.00%	58.10%	33.36%	4.37%	3.95%	0.22%	0.00%	0.00%	
35 35	Allocation of JP Revenue Requirement Increase	\$ 724,000	\$ 403,387	\$ 231,613	\$ 30,310	\$ 27,413	\$ 1,521	\$ 0	\$ 29,756	
36	Other Revenue Requirement Increase - November 1, 2008	\$ 693,000								
37	Proposed rev. req. adjustment (% over beginning total rev's) Proposed rev. req. adjustment (\$)	0.55% \$ 693,000	0.73% \$ 547,888	0.73% \$ 282,619	-2.00%	-1.75%	-2.00%	0.00% \$ 0	0.73%	
39	Proposed monthly customer charge (\$)	•	\$ 6.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 46.00	\$	8	0 \$	\$ 187.50	
40	Revenue Requirement Increase from Customer Charge Other Revenue Requirement Increase from Volumetric Charges	\$ 607,068 \$ 85,932	\$ 488,544	\$ 129,696 \$ 152,923	-\$ 11,172	\$ 0	\$ 4.670	0 0 \$ \$	\$ 17,457	
42	JP Revenue Requirement Increase Adjusted for April 1 to Nov. 1 Depreciation Decrease Carryover	\$ 724,000	\$ 406,610	\$ 232,774	\$ 30,310	\$ 27,413	\$ 1,521	9 6	\$ 25,372	
4 4 4	Combined Depreciation Carl Jover, June; and St. 1884, Volumetric Charges  Percentage Rev. Red. Increase Applied to Beginning Volumetric Charges  Continued to the Combined Com	300 p	0.6603%	1.0113%	-1.1412%	-0.8891%	-1.3484%		1.8437%	
46			0.5903%	%1ccs.1	-2.8338%	-2.6391%	-3.3484%	N A	1.8837%	
47	Proposed Nov. 1 Volumetric Rates, Tariff Sales Schedules Proposed Nov. 1 Schedule 456 Block Rates		\$1.43758	\$1.36361 \$0.07900	\$1.21723	\$0.92394	\$1.21178	NA	NA A	
50	Revenues from Nov. 1 Volumetric Rates, Tariff Sales Schedules		\$70,978,636.13	\$38,657,108	\$4,515,709	\$3,100,087	\$225,659	\$ 476,072	NA	
51 52	Revenues from Nov. 1 Schedule 456 Block Rates Revenues from Nov. 1 Customer Charges		\$539,234.04 \$5,862,528	\$568,794.63 \$1,037,568	\$335,309.20 \$54,096	\$887,783.18 \$0	\$34,686.83 \$0	Ą	\$ 2,365,808 \$81,000	
53	TOTAL REVENUES FROM PROPOSED NOV. 1 RATES	\$ 127,354,271	\$76,841,164	\$39,694,676	\$4,569,805	\$3,100,087	\$225,659	\$476,072	\$2,446,808	
25 24	101AL INCKEASE OVER THE CURRENT TARIFF (%) TOTAL INCREASE OVER THE CURRENT TARIFF (%)		\$ 1,393,616 1.85%	\$ 776,240 1.99%	-\$ 158,836 -3.36%	-\$ 84,031 -2.64%	-\$ 7,818 -3.35%	0.00%	\$ 42,829 1.78%	

Schedules 424 and 444 are to receive a 4% revenue requirement reduction and Schedule 440 is to receive a 3.5% reduction. The resulting net revenue requirement reduction and Schedule 440 is to receive a 3.5% reduction. The resulting net revenue requirement of Schedule 420 is to be increase applied to the current proform revenues/revenue requirement of Schedule 420 is to be increased from \$5 per month to \$6. The Customer Charge for Schedule 420 is to be increased from \$5 per month to \$6. The Customer Charge for Schedule 420 is to be reduced by \$19 per month. Are to take place on April 1, 2008, with the balance of those charges to take place on Nov. 1, 2008.

The Jackson Paris Schedule 447 excluded), with 14% of the rev. req. allocated in proportion to the Schedules relative shares of Annual Therms (Special Contracts Sched. 447 excluded), with 14% of the rev. req. allocated in proportion to the share of fotal annual throughput (i.e., Transportation Service Schedules 40, 30, and 456, and spread in proportion to care in a proportion to the shared of total annual throughput (i.e., Transportation Service Schedules 40, 420, and 456, and spread in proportion to care in a partially offsetting rate is revenues, with the constraint that a portion of the Schedules 40, 40, 20, and 456, and spread in proportion to care in a partially offsetting rate in reservents a seven months later (Nov. 1).

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