ORDER NO. 26-426

ENTERED Nov 10 2026

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

OF OREGON

UG 527

In the Matter of NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY, dba NW NATURAL, Application for an Alternative Rate Mechanism, New Schedule 123.	ORDER

DISPOSITION: ISSUE FUND GRANT REQUEST APPROVED

On September 11, 2026, the Alliance of Western Energy Consumers (AWEC) filed a request for final payment from the 2026 Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural Issue Fund. The Fifth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement (approved by the Commission in Order No. 22-506)[1] governs the procedures for payment of Issue Fund Grants. AWEC was precertified as the Northwest Industrial Gas Users to receive Issue Fund Grants on February 3, 2004, in Order No. 04-055.[2] The Commission delegated responsibility to sign uncontested orders relating to Intervenor Funding Agreements, including authorizing partial or final payments to the Chief Administrative Law Judge, consistent with Order No. 25-408.[3]

In Order 26-006, the Commission approved AWEC's original proposed budget and authorized a grant of up to $80,000.00 from the 2026 NW Natural Issue Fund.[4] AWEC requests final payment of $80,000.00 from the 2026 NW Natural Issue Fund, noting it incurred expenses sufficient to justify the final payment amount in these proceedings, as described in AWEC's confidential Attachment A.

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[1] *In the Matter of Public Utility Commission of Oregon, Approval of the Fifth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement*, Docket No. UM 2264, Order No. 22-506 (Dec. 29, 2022).
[2] *In the Matter of Northwest Industrial Gas Users Application for Precertification for Preauthorized Matching Grants,* Docket No. UM 1127, Order No. 04-055 (Feb. 3, 2004).
[3] *In the Matter of Public Utility Commission of Oregon, The Delegation of Certain Duties and Powers of the Public Utility Commission of Oregon*, Docket No. CD 27, Order No. 25-408 (Oct. 15, 2025).
[4] Order No. 26-006 (Jan. 20, 2026).

Under the Agreement, the Request for Final Payment must:

1. Itemize the expenses, payees and hourly rates of amounts to be reimbursed;
2. Demonstrate that the expenses are reasonable and are directly attributable to issues and positions pursued on behalf of a particular customer class and consistent with the intervenor's proposed budget;
3. Provide information sufficient to show that the intervenor has complied with any conditions imposed on the Issue Fund Grant; and
4. Specify whether the request for payment is for a progress payment or a final payment and indicate whether any approved budget amount may be released back to the applicable Issue Fund.

Further, under the terms of the Agreement, AWEC must establish that it has "used in-house resources or outside funding to account for or pay at least 20% of the Eligible Expenses for the work to be performed in the proceeding for which the intervenor is seeking an Issue Fund Grant."[5] AWEC provided the required documentation in its request.

The Agreement provides that the Commission will make a determination in each proceeding as to how the participating utilities are to recover the funding grants from the various customer classes. Under Section 7.7(b), Issue Fund Grants should be allocated so as to fairly align the costs of the advocacy with the intended potential beneficiaries of the advocacy.[6] The Commission has considered the intended beneficiaries and finds that the issue fund expenditures should be allocated to NW Natural's industrial customers.

The Commission finds that AWEC has met the requirements of the Agreement, and its request should be approved. Section 7.8 of the Agreement provides that the utility must pay the Issue Fund Grant to the requesting intervenor within 30 days after receipt of the Commission directive.

[5] Order No. 22-506 at Appendix A, 20-21.
[6] *Id*. at Appendix A, 28-29.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Alliance of Western Energy Consumers has met the requirements of the Fifth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement and its request is approved.

2. Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural pay $80,000.00 from its 2026 NW Natural Issue Fund to the Alliance of Western Energy Consumers within 30 days after receipt of this Order, and the grant be assessed to NW Natural's industrial customers.

Made, entered, and effective Nov 10, 2026.

Alison Lackey
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Administrative Hearings Division