

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF) BLACK HILLS POWER, INC. DBA BLACK) HILLS ENERGY FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2017) VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ANNUAL) REPORT AND APPROVAL TO END THE) VEGETATION MANAGEMENT REGULATORY) ASSET)))	ORDER GRANTING APPROVAL OF 2017 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT AND TO END VEGETATION MANAGEMENT REGULATORY ASSET EL17-021
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On May 1, 2017, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a filing from Black Hills Power, Inc. dba Black Hills Energy (BHE), for approval of its 2017 Vegetation Management Annual Report and for approval to end the Vegetation Management Regulatory Asset (VMRA). Per the Settlement Stipulation in Docket EL12-061, BHE is required to provide an annual report to demonstrate the actual vegetation management costs incurred and an explanation of the progress made on the overall five year plan. BHE requests an order from the Commission approving its vegetation management activities from December 1, 2015 through March 31, 2017; the VMRA balance as of March 31, 2017; and for BHE to end the VMRA, subject to the condition that such approval shall not preclude Commission review of the project, including project and cost management, accounting data and methods, and the resulting balance in the regulatory asset, for prudence and reasonableness for rate recovery in any determination of rates, including both rate filings by BHE and rate reviews initiated by the Commission.

On May 4, 2017, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of May 19, 2017, to interested individuals and entities on the Commission's PUC Weekly Filings electronic listserv. No petitions to intervene or comments were filed.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-34A.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on June 16, 2017, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the December 1, 2015 through March 31, 2017 vegetation management activities, the VMRA balance as of March 31, 2017, and for BHE to end the VMRA, subject to the condition that such approval shall not preclude Commission review of the project, including project and cost management, accounting data and methods, and the resulting balance in the regulatory asset, for prudence and reasonableness for rate recovery in any determination of rates, including both rate filings by BHE and rate reviews initiated by the Commission. It is therefore

ORDERED, that BHE's vegetation management activities from December 1, 2015 through March 31, 2017, VMRA balance as of March 31, 2017, and request to end the VMRA are hereby approved, subject to the condition that such approval shall not preclude Commission review of the project, including project and cost management, accounting data and methods, and the resulting

balance in the regulatory asset, for prudence and reasonableness for rate recovery in any determination of rates, including both rate filings by BHE and rate reviews initiated by the Commission and does not guarantee any such recovery.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 20th day of June, 2017.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically or by mail.

By: Karen E. Bremer

Date: 06/20/17

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Kristie Fiegen
KRISTIE FIEGEN, Chairperson

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner

Chris Nelson
CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner