STATE OF MINNESOTA

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Katie Sieben Chair
Dan Lipschultz Vice Chair
Valerie Means Commissioner
Matthew Schuerger Commissioner
John Tuma Commissioner

In the Matter of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Optional Integrated Resource Plan

Docket No. ET6125/RP-19-425

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE'S RESPONSES TO SIERRA CLUB, FRESH ENERGY, AND THE MINNESOTA CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY'S FIRST SET OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

As directed by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission or MPUC),
Basin Electric Cooperative (Basin) submits these responses to the Information Requests (IRs)
served by the Sierra Club, Fresh Energy and Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
(MCEA) (collectively, Environmental Intervenors). In its October 4, 2019 Order, the MPUC
directed Basin to "respond to Information Requests from the parties that are within the statutory
scope of this type of proceeding." The Commission Order further directed that if Basin declined
to respond, it should "file with the Commission specific objections to each separate request . . .
detailing why the particular request is beyond the scope of Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, sub[d].
2b."²

The parties agree that Basin is not required to file an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).

Basin has elected to submit a report (referred to hereinafter as "Optional-IRP Report") under

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¹ Order at 4.

² *Id*.

Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b (sometimes referred to hereinafter as "Optional-IRP Report Statute" or "Statute"), because of its limited presence in Minnesota. Basin is a three-tier generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, meaning that Basin supplies wholesale power to its member distribution cooperatives, which, in turn, supply retail electric power to residential, commercial, industrial, and agriculture members. It currently serves 141 cooperatives in nine states. Basin's members own and, through its board of directors, control the cooperative. Basin's members elect its 11-member board of directors. These directors have been elected to the boards of their local distribution systems and then, with the exception of District 9, which includes Minnesota, to their respective intermediate G&T systems. Many of Basin's Class A members are G&T electric cooperatives.

The parties also agree that Basin's 12 Minnesota member cooperatives constitute nine percent of Basin's membership.³ Basin indirectly serves the need of only 2.6 percent of Minnesota's annual total retail sales.⁴ Basin has no generation facilities in Minnesota.⁵ Basin also has no plans to build generation facilities in Minnesota, but Basin has acknowledged that should it ever choose to do so it will be subject to the Minnesota's requirements governing such projects.6

Where the parties apparently disagree is regarding the scope of the Commission's jurisdiction given Basin's limited contacts to Minnesota and the scope of permissible information requests in this proceeding. The current dispute revives an old issue. The roots of this issue date back to Basin's original 2008 IRP filing. In that proceeding, Basin first raised jurisdictional

³ 2019 Optional-IRP Report at 1.

⁴ *Id*.

⁵ *Id.* at 6.

⁷ See In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan (June 18, 2008).

issues in connection with the Department's insistence on receiving detailed, confidential load and forecast information from Basin's 113 out of state cooperatives.⁸ In that case, the Commission declined to order Basin to provide the information as a matter of comity.⁹

Subsequently, in reaction to Basin and Dairyland Power Cooperative's (Dairyland) legislative testimony regarding their respective experiences with the Minnesota IRP process, the 2012 Legislature created the streamlined Optional-IRP Report option, ¹⁰ which Basin and Dairyland have since elected.

In connection with Dairyland's initial Optional-IRP Report in 2013, environmental intervenors served extensive IRs. 11 Dairyland in turn raised multiple objections to the IRs. 12 While the Commission noted the existence of this dispute, it declined to order Dairyland to respond to the IRs. 13 Instead, the Commission merely set forth an abbreviated annual procedure for future O-IRP proceedings for Dairyland (which are identical to the procedures established for Basin) as follows:

The Commission establishes the following procedure for future filings:

- Initial comments will be due 30 days from the filing of the report, with reply comments due ten days later.
- The parties may issue information requests within the initial and reply comment periods.

⁸ A copy of Casey Jacobson's letter is attached as Exhibit A.

⁹ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Order Accepting Plan at 7 (Feb. 11, 2010) ("In the interest of comity the Commission will refrain from compelling Basin to provide the disputed data at this time.").

¹⁰ 2012 Minn. Laws ch. 268 (codified at Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b).

¹¹ In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Information Request Nos. 1-9 of IWLA, Fresh Energy, Sierra Club, and MCEA to Dairyland Power (July 29, 2013).

¹² In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Reply Comments of Dairyland Power Coop. (Aug. 12, 2013).

¹³ In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Order Acknowledging Receipt of Compliance Report and Closing Docket at 1 (Oct. 3, 2013).

• If no comments are received requesting Commission action, the docket will be closed 60 days after the date of the initial filing. ¹⁴

I. General Responses

Except for the IR contained in Information Request #5, relating to Basin's forecast of anticipated load growth, Basin objects to the IRs as beyond the scope of the Optional-IRP Report Statute. 15

A. Plain Meaning of the Optional-IRP Report Statute

Basin's objection to the IRs is based on the specific language of the Optional-IRP Report
Statute that unambiguously limits the issues in its Optional-IRP Report to "projected demand
levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation
deficiencies." Given the limited issues in an Optional-IRP Report, the reasonable discovery in
this case should be limited, as a matter of law, to the issues the Optional-IRP Report addresses.
The Environmental Intervenors have not recognized this limitation nor have they explained how

Optional integrated resource plan compliance for certain cooperatives. For the purposes of this subdivision, a "cooperative" means a generating and transmission cooperative electric association that has at least 80 percent of its member distribution cooperatives located outside of Minnesota and that provides less than four percent of the electricity annually sold at retail in the state of Minnesota. A cooperative may, in lieu of filing a resource plan under subdivision 2, elect to file a report to the commission under this subdivision. The report must include projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies. To supply the information required in a report under this subdivision, a cooperative may use reports submitted under section 216C.17, subdivision 2, reports to regional reliability organizations, or similar reports submitted to other state utility commissions. A report must be submitted annually by July 1, but the commission may extend the time if it finds the extension in the public interest. Presentation of the annual report shall be done in accordance with procedures established by the commission. Data in a report under this subdivision may be aggregate data and need not be separately reported for individual distribution cooperative members of the cooperative. The commission may take whatever action in response to a report under this subdivision that it could take with respect to a report by a cooperative under subdivision 2.

¹⁴ *Id*.

¹⁵ Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, provides:

¹⁶ Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b.

their IRs will lead to the production of information that will be relevant or useful in conjunction with Basin's Optional-IRP Report.¹⁷

Contrary to the argument advanced by Environmental Intervenors in support of their petition to intervene, Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, does not empower the Commission to allow discovery beyond the limited issues specified in the statute. In support of their argument, Environmental Intervenors point to the last sentence in Subdivision 2b, 18 which provides: "The commission may take whatever action in response to a report under this subdivision that it could take with respect to a report by a cooperative under subdivision 2." However, consistent with the limited jurisdiction of the Commission with respect to Basin, Subdivision 2 provides only that for cooperatives "the commission's order shall be advisory and the order's findings and conclusions shall constitute prima facie evidence which may be rebutted by substantial evidence in all other proceedings." Subdivision 2 does not expand the scope of permissible discovery in connection with an Optional-IRP Report.

Environmental Intervenors have not explained why they should be allowed to pursue discovery relating to issues that are not before the Commission in conjunction with Basin's Optional-IRP Report.

B. Legislative and Regulatory History

Basin believes the unique and narrow scope of the Optional-IRP Report Statute is unambiguous. Accordingly, any permissible discovery afforded by the Statute should be

¹⁷ Although Basin believes the language in the Optional-IRP Report Statute is unambiguous, should it be argued that the Statute is somehow ambiguous, the legislative and regulatory history becomes relevant, and it confirms (as discussed in Section I.B. below) that the Legislature intended to limit the issues that must be addressed in an Optional-IRP Report.

¹⁸ Pet. to Intervene at 3 (quoting Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b).

¹⁹ Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b.

²⁰ Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, Subd. 2.

similarly limited. However, if it is asserted that some statutory ambiguity exists or interpretation is necessary, Minn. Stat. § 645.16 directs that legislative intent and the occasion and necessity for the law be reviewed. Accordingly, a review of both the regulatory and legislative history leading up to the establishment of the Optional-IRP Report Statute becomes relevant.

1. Regulatory History Before Enactment of the Optional-IRP Report Statute

Before 2008, Basin was not required to file an IRP with the MPUC. In 2008, the IRP requirement was triggered when Basin exceeded for the first time the threshold of "serving, either directly or indirectly, the needs of 10,000 retail customers in Minnesota" pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 1(b). As a cooperative, Basin was then (as now) governed by its member-elected board of directors. Accordingly, although Basin was required by statute to prepare an IRP, the IRP had no regulatory effect as it was merely advisory. In addition, in the case of Basin, the relevance and usefulness of a Minnesota IRP was limited as virtually all of Basin's operations were then (as now) outside Minnesota. Under these circumstances, the preparation of Basin's IRP was an extremely time-consuming and expensive process given the Commission's limited jurisdiction. In fact, Basin found at that time that the extensive work necessary to prepare the Minnesota IRP greatly exceeded the combined time and effort to fulfill regulatory reporting requirements of the other eight states in Basin's service area.

After Basin filed its 2008 IRP, the substantive response of the Office of Energy Security (OES) of the Minnesota Department of Commerce (Department) was delayed for more than a year. Then, in July 2009 (still in connection with the 2008 IRP), the OES requested an immense

volume of confidential forecasting information from Basin's 113 non-Minnesota members.²¹ If provided, the OES indicated it would review this information "over time."²²

At this point, Basin declined to provide the requested information regarding its out-of-state members. The OES claimed that it and the Commission both had broad and liberal discovery powers. In response, Basin's counsel Casey Jacobson sent a letter to the Department, which explained that the broad discovery powers generally asserted by the Department and the Commission were inapplicable to a cooperative's advisory IRP.²³ She explained that since Basin was governed by its membership's elected board of directors, it was not subject to the broad discovery applicable to "public utilities" referenced in Minn. Stat. § 216B.13. She also noted that even the broad examination powers of the Commission over a public utility were by statute limited to the business or affairs "within the state."

In 2010, the Commission accepted the 2008 IRP, declining to order Basin to provide non-Minnesota member data as a matter of comity.²⁴ At this point, the biennial IRP due in 2010 was delayed to 2012 and subsequent action later delayed the 2010 IRP to 2013.²⁵

2. Legislative History

In 2012, Basin and Dairyland, a cooperative like Basin with a limited presence in Minnesota, took their respective Minnesota IRP experiences to the Legislature. Both House and

²¹ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Information Request 16 (July 1, 2009).

²² In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Comments of the Minnesota Office of Energy Security at 7 (Aug. 3, 2009).

²³ A copy of Casey Jacobson's letter is attached to this Response as Exhibit A.

²⁴ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Order Accepting Plan (Feb. 11, 2010).

²⁵ *Id.* at 8; In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s 2008 Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-08-846, Order Extending Due Date for Next Resource Plan Filing (Dec. 23, 2011).

Senate energy committees passed legislation that simply exempted cooperatives with a relatively minor presence in the state from providing an IRP.²⁶

When this legislation was awaiting final action on the House and Senate floors, the

Department approached the authors and the cooperatives, with a proposal that would allow Basin
and Dairyland to elect to not file an IRP, and instead provide an annual presentation report to the

Commission regarding the expected level of demand and generation resources for the next 15

years and addressing any generation deficiencies identified in the report.²⁷ At this point, a

compromise was struck, with the legislative authors, Basin, and Dairyland agreeing to substitute
a revised version of the language proposed by the Department. Language was added to the

Department proposal to clarify that data in the report may be aggregate data, and data need not
be separately reported for individual members. Further, language was included to provide that
presentation of the annual report would be done in accordance with procedures established by the

Commission.²⁸ The occasion and purpose of the Optional-IRP report legislation was concisely
explained to the Senate by the author, Senator Sparks:

This amendment represents a compromise between the administration and Dairyland and Basin Power Cooperatives. I would like to thank Deputy Commissioner Bill Grant, Division of Energy Resources and his staff for working with us on this language. It secures their ability to determine resource adequacy while offering an alternative and streamlined regulatory filing process. The amended language creates an alternative reporting requirement for an electrical cooperative that has at least 80% of its members' distribution cooperatives located outside of Minnesota, and provides less than 4% of electricity annually sold at

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²⁶ House File 2747 and Senate File 2098 with copies of the prepared legislative testimony of Basin and Dairyland are attached as Exhibit B.

²⁷ See e-mail dated April 17, 2012 from Peter Brickwedde to Steve Tomac (from Basin) and Kenric Scheevel (from Dairyland) attached as Exhibit C.

²⁸ See Transcripts of Senator Sparks and Representative Murray presentation and passage of the compromise on the Senate and House floor attached as Exhibit D. Hyperlinks to the video recording are available for the Senate floor debate at

https://www.senate.mn/media/media_list.php?ls=87&ver=new&archive_year=2012&category=floor&type=video#header (scroll down to April 20, 2012; section begins at 1:14:58) and for the House floor debate at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-jJcidqKuU (section begins at 1:46:41).

retail in Minnesota. The cooperative would be required to annually submit a report to the PUC that must include projected demand levels for the next 15 years, and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies, and also do a presentation of the report in a manner established by the Public Utilities Commission. Members, this compromise will offer significant time and cost savings for the cooperatives, and still meet the goals and objections of the Division of Energy Resources for resource planning purposes. I would appreciate your support of the vote on this amendment and for your support on the bill. Thank you, Madam President.²⁹

The House and the Senate passed the compromise bill, and Governor Dayton signed it into law.³⁰

Although Basin does not believe there is any ambiguity regarding the Optional-IRP Report Statute, should ambiguity be alleged in an effort to broaden the scope of the Statute or somehow authorize the extensive discovery being sought by the Environmental Intervenors, legislative intent controls.³¹ Minnesota law sets forth the following tenets of statutory construction:

645.16 LEGISLATIVE INTENT CONTROLS.

The object of all interpretation and construction of laws is to ascertain and effectuate the intention of the legislature. Every law shall be construed, if possible, to give effect to all its provisions.

When the words of a law in their application to an existing situation are clear and free from all ambiguity, the letter of the law shall not be disregarded under the pretext of pursuing the spirit.

When the words of a law are not explicit, the intention of the legislature may be ascertained by considering, among other matters:

- (1) the occasion and necessity for the law;
- (2) the circumstances under which it was enacted;
- (3) the mischief to be remedied:
- (4) the object to be attained;
- (5) the former law, if any, including other laws upon the same or similar subjects;
- (6) the consequences of a particular interpretation;
- (7) the contemporaneous legislative history; and

²⁹ Transcript of Minnesota Senate Floor Session, April 20, 2012.

³⁰ 2012 Minn. Laws ch. 268 (codified at Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b).

³¹ See Minn. Stat. § 645.16.

(8) legislative and administrative interpretations of the statute.³²

The regulatory and legislative history cited above and applied to the eight factors set forth in Minn. Stat. § 645.16 make clear that the submission of an annual report, in lieu of an IRP, does not envision or empower the Commission, the Department, or any intervenors to engage in the type of extensive discovery being sought by the Environmental Intervenors, especially in view of the limited issues before the Commission in the Optional-IRP Report.

3. Regulatory History After Enactment of the Optional-IRP Report Statute

Since the enactment of Optional-IRP Report Statute in 2012, the Commission has recognized the limited scope of the Optional-IRP Report and the desire of the Legislature to create a streamlined process for qualifying cooperatives. On every previous occasion, the Commission has acted in a manner consistent with limiting the issues in Optional-IRP Report proceedings to those directly related to "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies" as provided under Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b.

In 2012, Basin made its initial filing, then supplemented it with information about distributed generation and an explanation of how environmental costs were not applicable to this Optional-IRP Report because Basin has no generation in Minnesota.³³ In response, the Commission "acknowledge[d] receipt of Basin's compliance report, [found] the report complete as supplemented, and [] close[d] the . . . docket without findings on the report's merits."³⁴

In 2013, as the Commission wrote in its summary of proceedings, "[T]he Minnesota Department of Commerce filed a letter stating that it would not be providing comments on

³² Id.

³³ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance Rpt., Docket No. E-6125/RP-12-723, Basin Elec. Power Coop. 2012 Optional-IRP Report (Dec. 19, 2012).

³⁴ *Id.*

Basin's report because the report did not contain the detailed information necessary to assess the adequacy of Basin's system-wide resources." Nevertheless, "[i]n view of the limited scope of compliance reports, and without limiting its options for future filings, [the] Commission acknowledge[d] receipt of Basin's compliance report, f[ound] the report complete, and . . . close[d] the . . . docket." Occupance of the complete of

Also in 2013, Dairyland filed an Optional-IRP Report. As in this docket, environmental intervenors served extensive IRs.³⁷ Dairyland objected to the IRs.³⁸ Appropriately, the Commission declined to order Dairyland to respond to the IRs. Instead, the Commission merely set forth an abbreviated annual procedure for future Optional-IRP Report proceedings for Dairyland.³⁹

In response to Basin's 2014 Optional-IRP Report, MCEA, which was not a party to the proceedings, submitted comments seeking information about environmental costs and greenhouse gas reduction.⁴⁰ The Commission declined to require production because the information sought was about generation outside of Minnesota. The Commission noted "subdivision 2b's evident goal of streamlining the compliance process for qualifying cooperatives."

³⁵ In the Matter of Basin Electric Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance Report, Docket No. ET-6125/RP-13-562, Order Acknowledging Receipt of Compliance Rpt. and Closing Docket (Sept. 26, 2013). ³⁶ *Id.* (emphasis added).

³⁷ In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Information Request Nos. 1-9 of IWLA, Fresh Energy, Sierra Club, and MCEA to Dairyland Power (July 29, 2013). ³⁸ In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Reply Comments of Dairyland Power Cooperative (Aug. 12, 2013).

³⁹ In the Matter of Dairyland Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. E-002/RP-13-565, Order Acknowledging Receipt of Compliance Report and Closing Docket at 3 (Oct. 3, 2013).

⁴⁰ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s Optional Integrated Res Plan Compliance Rpt., Docket No. ET-6125/RP-14-534, Initial Comments (Aug. 12, 2014).

⁴¹ In the Matter of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Optional Integrated Resource Plan Compliance Report, Docket No. ET-6125/RP-14-534, Order Acknowledging Receipt of Compliance Report and Closing Docket (Dec. 16, 2014) (emphasis added).

As part of Basin's 2015 Optional-IRP Report, the Department sought, and Basin provided, information about resource adequacy, which is a topic properly considered within the scope of the Optional-IRP Report Statute. ⁴² In that proceeding, the Department intervened as a matter of right. ⁴³ Based on that record, the Commission closed the docket, noting that "[b]y closing the docket, the Commission is not making a finding that it endorses, approves, or has otherwise made a determination on the merits of the Basin filing or on the reliability of Basin's system."

In 2016, Basin submitted its report under the Optional-IRP Report Statute. In response, the Department submitted a letter stating that "[g]iven the limited scope of these filings and the current workload and resource constraints being experienced by the [Department], the Department does not intend to submit comments The Department's lack of participation is not intended to be an indication of, nor a response to, any assessment of the merits of the Cooperative[']s[] filing[]."⁴⁵ On that record, the Commission closed the docket, noting that "[b]y closing the docket, the Commission is not making a finding that it endorses, approves, or has otherwise made a determination on the merits of the Basin filing or on the reliability of Basin's system."⁴⁶

In 2017, "Basin[] filed its Optional Integrated Resource Plan Compliance filing as contemplated by Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, Subd. 2b. No party commented within the 30 day

⁴² In the Matter of Basin's Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance, Docket No. ET6125/RP-15-643, Reply Comments (June 30, 2015).

⁴³ See Minn. Admin. R. 7829.0800, subp. 3. ("The department and the Office of the Attorney General may intervene as of right in any proceeding before the commission.").

⁴⁴ In the Matter of Basin's Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance, Docket No. ET6125/RP-15-643, Reply Comments (June 30, 2015).

⁴⁵ In the Matter of Basin's Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance, Docket No. ET6125/M-16-565, Letter (July 25, 2016) (emphasis added).

⁴⁶ In the Matter of Basin's Optional Integrated Res. Plan Compliance, Docket No. ET6125/RP-16-565, Notice Closing Docket (Dec. 19, 2016).

comment period." ⁴⁷ Neither the Department nor any other entity submitted any comments. On that record, the Commission closed the docket. ⁴⁸

Regarding Basin 2018 Optional-IRP Report, Basin submitted it on June 28, 2018.⁴⁹ As of October 2019, no entity has filed any comments, and the Commission has taken no action on the Optional-IRP Report.⁵⁰

The Environmental Intervenors' information requests currently before the Commission arise out of Basin's 2019 Optional-IRP Report, filed June 27, 2019.⁵¹

II. Specific Responses:

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-1

July 16, 2019

Request: For <u>each</u> of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's coal fired electric generating units referenced on page 3 of its IRP, please provide the following information:

- a. Remaining book life for each unit as of the present date
- b. A copy of most recent depreciation study/analysis, and the current depreciation schedule
- c. Fixed operating and maintenance expenses ("O&M") by unit for the last three years
- d. Variable O&M by unit for the last three years
- e. Fuel contract duration and terms
- f. Percentage of fuel by unit that is purchased on the spot market
- g. Break fees, if any, that are stipulated in existing fuel contracts
- h. Copies of the existing fuel contracts
- i. Planned capital additions

⁴⁷ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s Operational Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. ET6125/RP-17-518, Notice Closing Docket (Nov. 29, 2017).

⁴⁸ *Id*.

⁴⁹ In the Matter of Basin Elec. Power Coop.'s Operational Integrated Res. Plan, Docket No. RP-18-437 (June 28, 2018).

⁵⁰ *See* Docket No. RP-18-437.

⁵¹ As noted above, in connection with Basin's original 2008 advisory IRP, Basin questioned the jurisdiction and authority of the Department and the Commission to require disclosure of detailed, confidential load forecast information from Basin's out of state cooperative members. *See* Casey Jacobson's letter, Exhibit A. Basin did not provide this information, and the Commission in 2010 as a matter of comity declined the Department's request to order Basin to provide this information. Now, in conjunction with providing Basin's advisory Optional-IRP Report, the jurisdiction of Minnesota's regulatory agencies to require Basin to provide disaggregated information about its out-of-state facilities is even more remote. The Optional-IRP Report Statute does not provide Minnesota regulators with jurisdiction to require Basin to respond to Environmental Intervenors' Information Requests seeking disaggregated information regarding Basin's facilities located outside of Minnesota. Basin is unaware of any statute that would purport to confer this jurisdiction.

- 1. Environmental capital expenditures
- 2. Non-environmental capital expenditures
- 3. Depreciable life for each of the above capital additions
- j. Recent capital additions
 - 1. Identify and describe any capital project over \$5 million at any unit over past 5 years
- k. Outage information
 - 1. Number and duration of forced outages, maintenance outages, and other derating events, by unit, by month, over past five years
 - 2. Projected effective forced outage rate, by unit, by month, for next 10 years
 - 3. Any planned derates or uprates of coal plant capacity for next 10 years
 - 4. Current heat rate of each unit and projected changes in heat rate for each unit for next 10 years.

Request 1a.:

Remaining book life for each unit as of the present date

Response to Request 1a.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1b.:

A copy of most recent depreciation study/analysis, and the current depreciation schedule **Response to Request 1b.:**

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1c.:

Fixed operating and maintenance expenses ("O&M") by unit for the last three years

Response to 1c.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1d.:

Variable O&M by unit for the last three years

Response to 1d.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which

are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1e.:

Fuel contract duration and terms

Response to 1e.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1f.:

Percentage of fuel by unit that is purchased on the spot market

Response to 1f.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Basin objects to the request because the documents requested do not exist, and all parties appear to agree (based on the positions taken at the hearing on the petition to intervene on September 12, 2019) that the production of documents that do not exist is unreasonable in this proceeding.

Request 1g.:

Break fees, if any, that are stipulated in existing fuel contracts

Response to 1g.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1h.:

Copies of the existing fuel contracts

Response to 1h.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1i.:

Planned capital additions

- 1. Environmental capital expenditures
- 2. Non-environmental capital expenditures
- 3. Depreciable life for each of the above capital additions

Response to Request 1i.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not

relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1j.:

Recent capital additions

1. identify and describe any capital project over \$5 million at any unit over past 5 years

Response to 1j.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 1k.:

Outage information

- 1. Number and duration of forced outages, maintenance outages, and other derating events, by unit, by month, over past five years
- 2. Projected effective forced outage rate, by unit, by month, for next 10 years
- 3. Any planned derates or uprates of coal plant capacity for next 10 years
- 4. Current heat rate of each unit and projected changes in heat rate for each unit for next 10 years.

Response to Request 1k.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-2

July 16, 2019

Request: Please reference page 5 of the IRP, stating that "Basin Electric released a Power Supply Request for Proposals (RFP) in February of 2019 and received proposal packages back in March 2019."

- a. Please provide a copy of the RFP
- b. Please provide the responses to the RFP
- c. Please provide a summary of the RFP responses, including resource type, size, timing, and price as a levelized cost of energy, if available.

Request 2a:

Please provide a copy of the RFP

Response to Request 2a.:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which

are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Without waiving these objections, Basin will respond to this request by providing the Information contained in Exhibit E.

Request 2b:

Please provide the responses to the RFP

Response to Request 2b:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Request 2c:

Please provide a summary of the RFP responses, including resource type, size, timing, and price as a levelized cost of energy, if available.

Response to Request 2c:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding

Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin object to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Basin objects to the request because the documents requested do not exist, and all parties appear to agree (based on the positions taken at the hearing on the petition to intervene on September 12, 2019) that the production of documents that do not exist is unreasonable in this proceeding.

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-3

July 16, 2019

Request: For each of the company's coal-fired electric generating units referred to on page 3 of the IRP, please provide any existing analysis in Basin Electric Power Cooperative's possession comparing the cost of continued operation of the unit with retiring and replacing the unit's energy and capacity with a combination of any of the following energy resources:

- Demand-side management
- Market purchases
- Purchase power agreements
- Existing natural gas combined cycle plant or combustion turbine(s)
- New natural gas combined cycle plant or combustion turbine(s)
- Conversion of existing natural gas combined cycle plant or combustion turbine(s)
- Combined heat and power
- Wind
- Solar
- Geothermal
- Energy storage
- Demand response
- Any combination of the above

Response to Request 3:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the

statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Basin objects to the request because the documents requested do not exist, and all parties appear to agree (based on the positions taken at the hearing on the petition to intervene on September 12, 2019) that the production of documents that do not exist is unreasonable in this proceeding.

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-4

July 16, 2019

Request: Please refer to page 4 of the IRP. Please provide the agreements under which Basin Electric Power Cooperative purchases output from George Neal Station Unit 4, Walter Scott Units 3 & 4, and Boswell Energy Center Unit 4.

Response to Request 4:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the

statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-5

July 16, 2019

Request: Please refer to page 5 of the IRP: "Basin Electric is forecasting its entire member system to grow by more than 1900 MW between 2019 and 2050; with more than 600 MW of this anticipated load growth related to oil development within the Williston Basin area of North Dakota and Montana." Please provide the referenced load forecast and underlying assumptions.

Response to Request 5:

With respect to this request, Basin refers Environmental Intervenors to Basin's Optional Integrated Resource Plan, Exhibit A (SPP Load and Capability Forecast), Exhibit B-1 (MISO Zone 1 Resources), and Exhibit B-2 (MISO Zone 3 Resources). These exhibits are prepared by Basin for internal use which mirror the rules of MISO and SPP. Compliance with MISO is handled through the Module E Capacity Tracking Tool located on the MISO Portal. Compliance

with SPP is handled via the spreadsheets developed by SPP and via the Engineering Data Submission Tool (EDST) developed by SPP. MISO and SPP rely on this information to determine the sufficiency of Basin's resources to meet the projected needs of Basin's members.

To the extent that any additional information is requested, Basin objects to the request:

(a) to the extent that this request seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute; (b) to the extent that this request seeks information that is separately reported for Basin's individual distribution cooperative members on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by that statute; (c) to the extent that this request seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission; and (d) because this request is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Without waiving these objections, Basin responds to this request by providing the information contained in Exhibits F and G.

Data Request 1-SCFEMCEA-6

July 16, 2019

Request: Please refer to page 5 of the IRP, referencing a power purchase agreement for 200 MW signed in 2016 for the Burke Wind project and a second power purchase agreement signed in 2017 for Prevailing Wind Park. Please provide the power purchase price of wind in each PPA in \$/MWh. If the price is not available in that format, please provide it in the format in which it is available.

Response to Request No. 6:

For the reasons set forth in the General Response above, Basin objects to this request in its entirety on the grounds that it seeks information that is not relevant and is beyond the statutory scope of this proceeding; the information sought is not relevant because it does not relate to the issues in this proceeding as specified in Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, subd. 2b, which are the "projected demand levels for the next 15 years and generation resources to meet any projected generation deficiencies."

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information that is not aggregate data on the grounds that such information is not consistent with the terms of the Optional-IRP Report Statute or the "streamlined" process established by the Statute.

Basin objects to this request to the extent that it seeks information regarding Basin's operations outside of Minnesota on the grounds that the regulation of such operations exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission. Basin objects to this request because it is unreasonably burdensome because the burden and expense of the proposed production exceeds the likely benefit, considered in light of the limited issues in this proceeding and the needs of the case.

Dated: October 18, 2019	BASIN ELECTRIC POWER
	COOPERATIVE
	By: /s/ B. Andrew Brown
	Michael J. Ahern (Bar No. 0000668)
	B. Andrew Brown (Bar No. 0205357)
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EXHIBITS

- A. Letter from Casey Jacobson, Counsel, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, to Julia Anderson, Attorney, Minnesota Department of Commerce, August 7, 2009
- B. 2012 Legislative Session history:
 - Minnesota House File 2747 as introduced, 2012 Legislative Session
 - Minnesota Senate File 2098 as introduced, 2012 Legislative Session
 - Prepared testimony of Steve Tomac, Senior Government Relations Representative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative
 - Prepared testimony of Kenric Scheevel, Senior Government Relations Representative, Dairyland Power Cooperative
- C. Email from Peter Brickwedde, Assistant Director of Government Affairs, Minnesota Department of Commerce, to Steve Tomac, Senior Legislative Representative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, and Kenric Scheevel, Senior Government Relations Representative, Dairyland Power Cooperative, April 17, 2012
- D. Transcripts:
 - Transcript of Minnesota Senate Floor Session, April 20, 2012
 - Transcript of Minnesota House of Representatives Floor Session, April 27, 2012
- E. Power Supply Requests for Proposal, February 5, 2019
- F. Power Forecast 2019: Williston Basin Oil and Gas Related Electrical Load Growth Forecast, May 2019
- G. 2018 Integrated Resource Plan (2019-2028) Submitted to the Western Area Power Administration, November 2018