

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DG 06-098

ORDER OF NOTICE

On June 30, 2006, Northern Utilities, Inc. (Northern) filed with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (Commission) its Long Range Integrated Forecast and System Gas Supply Resource Plan (IRP) for its Maine and New Hampshire divisions. The IRP, which covers 2006 through 2012, provides details of Northern's resource planning process and strategies based on its current forecast of requirements and present market conditions. The filing contains a petition to the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) and the Commission to convene a joint proceeding in order to evaluate the IRP, as well a motion for confidential treatment of the analysis used in resource evaluation.

The filing of the IRP satisfies one of the terms contained in the Stipulation and Settlement (Settlement) approved by the Commission in Docket No. DG 05-080, Order 24,627 (June 1, 2006). The Settlement also provides for a capacity reserve equal to 30 percent of Northern's total capacity-exempt transportation load in its Maine and New Hampshire Divisions, which under the Settlement may be reconsidered as part of the IRP review process. The Settlement requires marketers on Northern's system to be notified of the filing of the IRP.

On July 10, 2006, the Commission suspended the procedural schedule in Docket No. DG 06-033, Northern's Capacity Reserve Charge Rate Adjustment, pending an initial review of Northern's IRP and the submission of a proposed revised procedural schedule which will

allow the Commission to render a decision on the Capacity Reserve Charge prior to its proposed effective date of November 1, 2006.

On July 18, 2006, the MPUC issued an order in its Docket No. 2006-390 initiating an investigation regarding the IRP, the reconfiguration of the capacity reserve and whether there are stranded portfolio costs that shareholders must absorb pursuant to Maine law. The order scheduled an initial case conference and technical conference for August 2, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of ruling on petitions to intervene, to discuss the scope of the proceeding, and to devise a procedural schedule, as well as to conduct discovery and discuss with Northern the details of its filing. Given the New Hampshire interest in the Maine proceeding, Commission Staff will attend the initial case conference and technical conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire on August 2.

In its order, the MPUC noted that “somewhat different laws and regulatory practices exist in each jurisdiction” and therefore determined that “any formal hearings regarding the IRP that may be necessary before either the Maine or New Hampshire Commissions could be conducted most efficiently separately in each forum, while coordinating our decisions in a manner that achieved the necessary consistency for Northern.” Rather than scheduling joint hearings, the MPUC expressed a preference for proceeding with technical conferences in the same manner as the MPUC companion dockets to Docket No. DG 05-080, for purposes of developing a record that both jurisdictions could use in their respective proceedings.

Northern’s filing in New Hampshire raises, inter alia, issues related to the appropriateness of Northern’s planning process, demand forecasts, the level and structure of the capacity reserve, gas supply and demand resource assessments and the integration of supply and demand resources.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that a Prehearing Conference, pursuant to N.H. Admin. Rules Puc 203.15, be held before the Commission located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire on August 15, 2006 at 11:00 a.m., at which each party will provide a preliminary statement of its position with regard to the petition and any of the issues set forth in N.H. Admin. Rule Puc 203.15(c) shall be considered; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Northern shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by (i) publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than July 29, 2006, in a newspaper with general circulation in those portions of the state in which operations are conducted and (ii) forwarding electronically and by U.S. mail no later than August 1, 2006 a copy of this Order of Notice to the MPUC, the Office of Consumer Advocate, any other parties listed on the service lists in Docket No.s DG 05-080 and DG 06-033, and the marketers on Northern's system, such actions to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before August 15, 2006; and it is

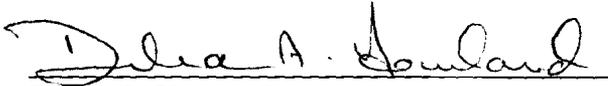
FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. Rules Puc 203.17, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall submit to the Commission seven copies of a Petition to Intervene with copies sent to Northern and the Office of the Consumer Advocate on or before August 11, 2006, such Petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interest may be affected by the proceeding, as required by N.H. Admin. Rule Puc 203.17 and RSA 541-A:32,I(b); and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a Petition to Intervene make said Objection on or before August 15, 2006; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12

(a)(5), each party has the right to have an attorney represent them at their own expense.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-sixth day of July, 2006.



Debra A. Howland
Executive Director & Secretary

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability, should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.