

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE MARCELO LINS POIRIER, presiding

Joint Application of Wild Goose Storage,) PREHEARING
LLC (U911G) and Lodi Gas Storage, L.L.C.) CONFERENCE
(U912G) for an Order under Public)
Utilities Code Sections 829 and 853 to)
Exempt from Commission Authorization the)
Encumbrance of the Assets of Wild Goose) Application
Storage, LLC and Lodi Gas Storage,) 24-10-004
L.L.C. and the Issuance of a Corporate)
Guarantee, or in the Alternative, for)
Authorization for the Same Relief under)
Sections 830 and 851.)

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT
Telephonic Proceeding
January 9, 2025
Pages 1 - 13
Volume 1

Reported by: Andrea L. Ross, CSR No. 7896

TELEPHONIC PROCEEDING

JANUARY 9, 2025 - 11:03 A.M.

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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE POIRIER: Let's go on the record, please. This is ALJ Poirier. The Commission will come to order.

This is the prehearing conference for Application 24-10-004, the Joint Application of Wild Goose Storage and Lodi Gas Storage for an Order under Public Utilities Code Sections 829 and 853 to Exempt from Commission Authorization the Encumbrance of Assets of Wild Goose Storage and Lodi Gas Storage and the Issuance of a Corporate Guarantee or, in the Alternative, for Authorization for this Same Relief under Sections 830 and 851.

I am Administrative Law Judge Marcelo Lins Poirier. The assigned commissioner is Darcie Houck. She cannot participate, but her advisor may be on the line at some point during the prehearing conference.

I want to go over the agenda for today's prehearing conference. First, we will go over ground rules and preliminary matters. Next, we will discuss appearances and the service list, the category of this proceeding, the remaining scope of the proceeding, the need for evidentiary hearings, the schedule for the

1 proceeding, and, finally, parties will have an
2 opportunity to raise other matters relevant to the
3 conduct of this proceeding.

4 As a reminder, there will not be any final
5 rulings regarding the scope, need for hearings, or
6 schedule. The assigned commissioner will decide these
7 matters in the scoping memo. That concludes my
8 introduction.

9 We are going to move onto ground rules. These
10 are important to follow so that we have a clear record
11 and so that the court reporters can provide a clear
12 transcription as well, so please adhere to these.

13 First, speak only when addressed to by the
14 administrative law judge;

15 Two, speak slowly and clearly;

16 Three, identify the person speaking every time
17 that person speaks;

18 Four, do not interrupt or speak over one
19 another;

20 And, lastly, please mute the line when you're
21 not talking.

22 I want to let the parties know that the court
23 reporter will be interrupting the speakers when possible
24 to do so without disrupting the proceeding when there
25 are inaudible statements or portions thereof, and, two,

1 the reporter will be inserting the word "inaudible" when
2 there is a dropped, garbled, or otherwise indecipherable
3 audio.

4 Does anyone have any other preliminary matters
5 before we move to appearances and service list matters?

6 (No response.)

7 ALJ POIRIER: Hearing none, we're going to move
8 onto appearances. We will now discuss appearances and
9 the service list for this proceeding. I first want to
10 do a roll call for the current parties. Please, when
11 you introduce yourself, spell your first and last name
12 and indicate who you are representing.

13 Let's go ahead and start with the applicant.

14 MS. SOMOGYI: Thank you, your Honor. This is
15 Megan Somogyi, M-e-g-a-n S-o-m-o-g-y-i, for the joint
16 applicants, Wild Goose Storage and Lodi Gas Storage.

17 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you.

18 Is there anyone else on the line that wishes to
19 seek party status?

20 (No response.)

21 ALJ POIRIER: Hearing none, we'll move ahead.
22 Henceforth, anyone who wants to be added to the service
23 list in an "Information-Only" category may do so by
24 sending an email to the Commission's process office. If
25 anyone wants to be listed as a party, they will need to

1 submit a motion in accordance with Rule 1.4 of the
2 Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

3 Any questions from anyone regarding the service
4 list before we move onto categorization?

5 (No response.)

6 ALJ POIRIER: We'll move onto categorization.
7 The application was preliminarily categorized by the
8 Commission as ratesetting. In their application, the
9 applicant agrees with the categorization of ratesetting.
10 It seems applicable to me at this stage, but I want to
11 allow the applicant to indicate if they still have that
12 position.

13 Please go ahead, Ms. Somogyi.

14 MS. SOMOGYI: Thank you, your Honor. Megan
15 Somogyi for Wild Goose and Lodi. The applicants
16 continue to believe that ratesetting is the appropriate
17 categorization.

18 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you.

19 With that said, in a ratesetting proceeding, I
20 want to remind all parties that the ex parte
21 requirements, as indicated in section 8.2(c) of the
22 Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, apply, so
23 please go ahead and follow those to the extent
24 necessary.

25 Next, we're going to move to need for

1 evidentiary hearings. I think this should be pretty
2 brief as well. The applicants stated in their
3 application that evidentiary hearings are not needed.
4 Given that we don't have any other parties involved,
5 this seems apparent, but I wanted to confirm with the
6 applicant if that's still their position and allow
7 anybody else on the line to weigh in.

8 So, Ms. Somogyi, please go ahead.

9 MS. SOMOGYI: Megan Somogyi for Wild Goose and
10 Lodi. The applicants continue to believe that
11 evidentiary hearings are not necessary.

12 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you.

13 Again, these final determinations will be
14 determined in the scoping memo issued by the assigned
15 commissioner. But, again, these preliminary
16 designations seem to be consistent with what should
17 happen.

18 Next, I want to move onto the scope of the
19 proceeding. I'm going to read off the applicants'
20 proposed issues that were included in the application,
21 and then we'll allow for any discussion or follow-up
22 from the applicant or anyone else who joins the line.
23 With that, I will start with those issues. There are
24 three.

25 First, should the Commission grant Wild Goose

1 and Lodi exemptions from section 830 to permit them to
2 provide a guarantee to secure the debt of their
3 affiliates and the debt of Lodi if it becomes an
4 additional borrower under the PLB Credit Agreement in a
5 refinancing transaction that will provide funding for
6 their respective utility operations?

7 Number two, should the Commission grant Wild
8 Goose and Lodi exemptions from section 851 to permit
9 them to provide a security interest in their physical
10 and financial assets as collateral for a refinancing
11 transaction on behalf of themselves and their affiliates
12 that will provide funding for their respective utility
13 operations?

14 Number three, if the Commission does not grant
15 exemptions from sections 830 and 851, should the
16 proposed refinancing transaction be approved subject to
17 the provisions of those statutes?

18 Those are the issues that were included in the
19 application. I do want to provide an opportunity for
20 the applicant to indicate if there are any additional
21 issues they think should be included or any kind of
22 clarifications or additions to those.

23 So if the applicant can please go ahead and
24 confirm.

25 MS. SOMOGYI: Thank you, your Honor. Megan

1 Somogyi for Wild Goose and Lodi. The applicants
2 continue to believe that the three issues presented in
3 the application appropriately define the scope of the
4 proceeding which sort of broadly boils down to whether
5 the requested relief is reasonable and should be
6 granted.

7 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you.

8 Anyone else on the line that wants to weigh in
9 on this issue?

10 (No response.)

11 ALJ POIRIER: Before we move onto schedule, I
12 will say, Ms. Somogyi, one of the things that might
13 happen is if I have any questions regarding the
14 application, I will probably issue some kind of brief
15 ruling just asking some of those questions for
16 clarification for the record as I work through this to
17 make sure that I understand and I'm handling the issues
18 appropriately.

19 So those would happen after the scoping memo,
20 and I will provide obviously a reasonable amount of time
21 for a response. I'm not sure if that's going to happen,
22 but that would be a vehicle for any questions or
23 clarifications so that we do it through formal filings
24 and it's on the record automatically.

25 Does that sound reasonable to you?

1 MS. SOMOGYI: Megan Somogyi for the applicants.
2 Yes, your Honor, that sounds reasonable. The applicants
3 will be happy to provide any additional information that
4 the Commission requires to evaluate and resolve the
5 application.

6 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you. That would be
7 helpful. I will be working with staff, but just to the
8 extent -- rather than having to call some kind of
9 hearing, I think this will be the best way to do it.

10 On that note, let's move onto the schedule.
11 Again, this is pretty simple. The applicants' proposed
12 schedule from now moving forward would be a scoping memo
13 issued in February 2025, a proposed decision in
14 April 2025, with a final Commission decision in
15 May 2025.

16 The scoping memo will definitely be issued by
17 February. That should be issued maybe by the end of
18 this month, so that is not a problem. I will take back
19 the dates of the proposed decision to the commissioner
20 and we'll see. It is a few months, but obviously things
21 move fast here so I don't want to guarantee any final
22 dates on these decisions. But given that there are no
23 protestants, hopefully it will move forward relatively
24 quickly.

25 With that said, does the applicant have any

1 additional comments on the schedule or additions?

2 MS. SOMOGYI: Megan Somogyi for the applicants.

3 No, I don't think that we have any sort of additional
4 substantive thoughts on the proposed schedule. We of
5 course understand that the proposed schedules that
6 appear in applications are always somewhere between
7 theoretical and aspirational, so there was an
8 expectation that the proposed dates might not be the
9 actual dates.

10 But the applicants would still appreciate a
11 proposed decision as early as the Commission is able to
12 issue it. Unlike in some past refinancing transactions,
13 we don't, in this case, have sort of a looming
14 expiration date of the current financing agreements
15 that, you know, I don't believe it falls within 2025, so
16 we don't have that sort of schedule pressure.

17 But just for the certainty of the lenders and
18 the applicants, we would certainly appreciate as
19 expedited a schedule as is possible.

20 ALJ POIRIER: Understood. You answered what
21 was going to be my next question, if there was any
22 contingent activities that were based on the schedule of
23 this application.

24 Again, given the composition that there are no
25 protestants and that it looks like we're not going to

1 have to have hearings and other additional matters, that
2 makes it a lot more possible for these dates to happen.
3 I will certainly endeavor to try to have decisions out
4 relatively quickly. I'm sure the commissioner, as
5 always, would want to have that result too.

6 So we will work on that, and obviously that
7 depends on other issues. But at this point, we will try
8 to have some sort of schedule in that realm that has
9 been proposed by the applicants. Thank you. That was
10 helpful.

11 Does the applicant have any further comments on
12 the schedule before I move onto asking if any other
13 parties or folks on the line?

14 MS. SOMOGYI: Megan Somogyi for the applicants.
15 No, your Honor.

16 ALJ POIRIER: Thank you. Anyone else on the
17 line that wants to weigh in on the schedule?

18 (No response.)

19 ALJ POIRIER: Hearing none, I want to move onto
20 the conclusion. That concludes the issues and the
21 topics that I wanted to address at today's prehearing
22 conference.

23 I want to remind the parties that the scope of
24 the proceeding, categorization, need for hearings, and
25 the schedule will be decided by the assigned

1 commissioner in the scoping memo. I expect that scoping
2 memo to come out relatively quickly, my hope is in the
3 next couple weeks.

4 I do want to allow for an opportunity for
5 anyone on the line to raise any issues that might be
6 pertinent to this proceeding, so if anyone on the line
7 wants to raise those issues, please do so now.

8 (No response.)

9 ALJ POIRIER: Hearing none, we have no further
10 matters today and this prehearing conference is
11 concluded. Thank you, everyone. We'll be off the
12 record.

13 (At the hour of 11:20 a.m., this matter
14 having concluded, the Commission then
15 adjourned.)

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING
I, ANDREA L. ROSS, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NO. 7896, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DO
HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE PAGES OF THIS TRANSCRIPT
PREPARED BY ME COMPRISE A FULL, TRUE, AND CORRECT
TRANSCRIPT OF THE TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS HELD IN
THIS MATTER ON JANUARY 9, 2025.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE
EVENTS OF THE MATTER OR THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCEEDING.
EXECUTED THIS JANUARY 09, 2025.



ANDREA L. ROSS
CSR NO. 7896

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