

Attachment A – Docket UG-250878

Conditions for 2026-2027 Cascade Gas Conservation

1) Conservation Target – Approval and Conditions

- a) The following conservation targets are approved for Cascade Natural Gas Company (Cascade or company), with conditions pursuant to RCW 80.28.380. This approval is subject to the Conditions described in Paragraphs (2) through (14) below.
 - i) *Two-Year Conservation Target*: 1,042,648 therms.¹
 - ii) *Total Two-Year Utility Conservation Goal*: 1,042,648 therms.²
- b) As part of Cascade’s biennial conservation acquisition efforts, Cascade must continue to invest in regional studies and market transformation, in collaboration with funding from other parties and with other strategic market partners in this biennium that complements Cascade’s energy efficiency programs, planning, services, and measures.

- 2) **Cascade Retains Responsibility.** Nothing in these conditions relieves Cascade of the sole responsibility for complying with RCW 80.28.380. Specifically, the conditions regarding the need for a high degree of transparency, and communication and consultation with external stakeholders, diminish neither Cascade’s operational authority nor its ultimate responsibility.

3) Identifying Conservation Potential

- a) *Ten-year conservation potential.* Every two years, Cascade must project its cumulative ten-year conservation potential in a conservation potential assessment (CPA).
 - i) This projection must consider all conservation resources that are cost-effective and available.
 - ii) Methods for identifying conservation potential
 - (1) In identifying conservation potential Cascade must be consistent with the methodologies used by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPCC) as summarized in this subsection.
 - (a) Technical potential. Determine the amount of conservation that is technically feasible, considering measures and the number of these measures that could physically be installed or implemented, without regard to achievability or cost.
 - (b) Achievable technical potential. Determine the amount of the conservation technical potential that is available within the planning period, considering barriers to market penetration and the rate at which savings could be acquired.

¹ The two-year conservation target includes the Company’s Conservation Potential Assessment, adjustments for expected site-specific conservation opportunities, and consistent with Condition 4(b) below.

² The Total Two-Year Utility Conservation Goal incorporates the Two-Year Conservation Target, the Decoupling Commitment, projected Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) savings (if any), and any additional conservation savings that Cascade expects to achieve above and beyond these targets, such as pilots or other savings.

- (c) Economic achievable potential. Establish the economic achievable potential, which is the conservation potential that is cost-effective, by comparing the total resource cost of conservation measures to the cost of other resources available to meet the expected demand for gas. A utility may use either of the following approaches to identify achievable economic potential:
- (i) Integrated portfolio approach. A utility may analyze, as a part of its integrated resource plan (IRP), the cost-effective potential of conservation resources over a range of potential future outcomes for unknown variables, such as future demand, costs, and resource availability. The achievable economic potential will be based on a resource plan that achieves a long-run lowest reasonable cost gas system considering all costs and quantifiable nonenergy costs and benefits.
 - (ii) Benefit-cost ratio approach. A utility may establish economic achievable potential as those conservation measures or programs that pass a total resource cost test, in which the ratio of total benefits to total costs is one or greater. The benefit-cost calculation must use inputs that incorporate the cost of risks that would otherwise be reflected in an integrated portfolio approach.
- (d) Total resource cost. In determining economic achievable potential as provided in (c) of this subsection, perform a life-cycle cost analysis of measures or programs to determine the net levelized cost, as described in this subsection:
- (i) Conduct a total resource cost analysis that assesses all costs and all benefits of conservation measures regardless of who pays the costs or receives the benefits.
 - (ii) Include the incremental savings and incremental costs of measures and replacement measures where resources or measures have different measure lifetimes.
 - (iii) Calculate the value of the gas saved based on when it is saved. In performing this calculation, use time-differentiated avoided costs to conduct the analysis that determines the financial value of gas saved through conservation.
 - (iv) Include the increase or decrease in annual or periodic operations and maintenance costs due to conservation measures.
 - (v) Include avoided energy costs equal to a forecast of regional market prices plus variable transportation costs (e.g., fuel and variable charges), which represents the cost of the next increment of gas available to the utility for the life of the energy efficiency measures to which it is compared.
 - (vi) Include benefits from deferred infrastructure capacity costs for system capacity resources and distribution capacity resources required in peak load resource planning.
 - (vii) Include the social cost of greenhouse gas emissions from avoided gas consumption.

- (viii) If necessary, include a risk mitigation credit to reflect the additional value of conservation, not otherwise accounted for in other inputs, in reducing the risk associated with costs of avoided nonconservation resources. If this value is negative, use a value of 0 for the risk mitigation credit.
- (ix) Include all nonenergy impacts that a resource or measure may provide that can be reasonably quantified and monetized.
- (x) Include an estimate of program administrative costs.
- (xi) Include the cost of financing measures using the capital costs of the entity that is expected to pay for the measure.
- (xii) Discount future costs and benefits at a discount rate equal to Cascade's weighted average cost of capital;³ and
- (xiii) Include a ten percent bonus to the energy and capacity benefits of conservation measures as defined in 16 U.S.C. § 839a of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act.
- iii) This projection must be either identified through or included as an input into Cascade's most recent IRP. Cascade must document any differences from the projection in the potential assessment and the IRP.
- iv) The CPA must include a list of each measure used in the potential, its unit energy savings value, first-year therm savings, customer incremental cost, life of the measure, any applicable nonenergy impacts, and the source of the values.
- b) Cascade must file a Conservation Potential Assessment (CPA) at the same time as its most recent integrated resource plan, or by June 1, 2027, whichever is sooner, in a new docket. The CPA must be approved by the Commission per RCW 80.28.380.

4) Acquiring All Conservation Resources

- a) Process for acquiring all cost-effective conservation
 - i) *Process.* Cascade's obligation to identify and acquire all conservation measures that are available and cost-effective includes the following process:
 - (1) Identify potential. Identify the cost-effective and available potential of possible technologies and conservation measures in Cascade's service territory.
 - (2) Develop portfolio. Develop a conservation portfolio that includes all available, cost-effective conservation. Cascade must develop programs to acquire available conservation from all the types of conservation identified in (ii) of this subsection. The portfolio must include conservation programs and mechanisms intended to reduce the energy burden of low-income customers, including programs and mechanisms identified in Condition (4)(f) below or other utility planning processes. If no cost-effective conservation is available from one of the types of conservation, Cascade is not obligated to acquire such a resource.
 - (3) Implement programs. Implement conservation programs identified in the portfolio to the extent the portfolio remains cost-effective and available. Implementation

methods shall not unnecessarily limit the acquisition of all available conservation that is cost-effective.

- (4) Adaptively manage. Continuously review and update as appropriate the conservation portfolio to adapt to changing market conditions and developing technologies. Cascade must stay up-to-date on the latest developments in the conservation field and assess the potential of such developments for implementation in its service territory.
- ii) *Types*. Types of conservation include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) End-use efficiency;
 - (2) Behavioral programs; and
 - (3) Market transformation.
- iii) *Pilots*. Cascade must consider, in consultation with the Advisory Group, implementing pilot projects when appropriate and expected to produce cost-effective savings within the current or immediately subsequent biennium if the overall portfolio remains cost-effective.
- b) Biennial conservation target. Beginning January 2022, and every two years thereafter, Cascade must establish a biennial conservation target.
 - i) The biennial conservation target must identify, and quantify in terms, all conservation that is available and cost-effective.
 - ii) The biennial conservation target must be based on the CPA developed under Condition 3 above and include any adjustments for known or expected site-specific projects. Cascade must consult with the Advisory Group in determining how to set its target.
 - iii) *Excess conservation*. No more than twenty-five percent of any biennial target may be met with excess conservation savings allowed by this condition. Excess conservation may only be used to mitigate shortfalls in the immediately subsequent two biennia and may not be used to adjust Cascade's biennial target. The presence of excess conservation does not relieve Cascade of its obligation to pursue the level of conservation in its biennial target.
 - (1) Cost-effective conservation achieved over a biennial conservation target may be used to meet up to twenty percent of each of the immediately subsequent two biennial targets.
 - (2) Cascade may use single large facility conservation savings achieved over its biennial target to meet up to ten percent of each of the immediately subsequent two biennial conservation targets. If Cascade believes it has a project that may constitute a "single large facility", it should work with its Advisory Group to determine how to meet this condition.
- c) Prudence. Cascade retains the responsibility to demonstrate the prudence of all conservation expenditures.
- d) Energy savings. When available, Cascade must use unit energy savings values and standard protocols approved by the regional technical forum. Unit energy savings value or standard protocol should be:

- i) Based on generally accepted methods, impact evaluation data, or other reliable and relevant data that includes verified savings levels;
 - ii) Or based on territory-specific values determined from pre/post billing EM&V activities, and
 - iii) Presented to its advisory group for review. The Commission retains discretion to determine an appropriate value or protocol.
- e) Applicable sectors. Cascade must offer a mix of conservation programs to ensure it is serving each customer sector, including programs targeted to the low-income subset of residential customers.
- f) Low-income conservation.
- i) Cascade must fully fund low-income conservation measures that are determined by the implementing agency to be cost-effective consistent with either the *Weatherization Manual* maintained by the Washington State Department of Commerce or when it is cost-effective to do so using utility-specific avoided costs. For purposes of this subsection, "fully fund" does not prohibit the agency leveraging other funding sources, in combination with utility funds, to fund low-income conservation projects. Measures identified through the priority list in the *Weatherization Manual* are considered cost-effective. In addition, Cascade may fully fund repairs, administrative costs, and health and safety improvements associated with cost-effective low-income conservation measures. Cascade shall maintain a project cost allowance of forty percent (40%) for Administrative/Indirect Rate associated with the delivery of low-income conservation measures.
 - ii) Cascade's biennial conservation plan must include low-income conservation programs. To the extent practicable, Cascade must prioritize energy assistance to low-income households with a higher energy burden.
 - iii) Cascade must exclude low-income conservation from portfolio-level cost-effectiveness calculations. Cascade must account for the costs and benefits, including nonenergy impacts, which accrue over the life of each conservation measure.
 - iv) Cascade must count savings from low-income conservation toward meeting its biennial conservation target. Savings may be those calculated consistent with the procedures in the *Weatherization Manual*.

5) Conservation Planning and Reporting

- a) Biennial conservation plan
 - i) On or before November 15 of every odd-numbered year, Cascade must file with the Commission a biennial conservation plan.
 - ii) The plan must include, but is not limited to:
 - (1) The extent of public participation in the development of the ten-year conservation potential and the biennial conservation target.
 - (2) The ten-year conservation potential, the biennial conservation target, biennial program details, biennial program budgets, and cost-effectiveness calculations.
 - (3) A description of the technologies, data collection, processes, procedures, and assumptions Cascade used to develop the figures in Condition 5(a)(ii)(2).

- (4) A description of and support for any changes from the assumptions or methodologies used in Cascade's most recent conservation potential assessment.
- (5) An evaluation, measurement, and verification plan for the biennium including, but not limited to:
 - (a) The evaluation, measurement, and verification framework.
 - (b) The evaluation, measurement, and verification budget; and
 - (c) Identification of programs that will be evaluated during the biennium.
- iii) For this section, the ten-year conservation potential is derived from Condition 3 above.
- iv) Program details must be maintained and updated as necessary in Cascade's conservation tariff throughout the biennium, under Condition 8 below.
- b) Annual conservation report
 - i) On or before June 15 of each year, Cascade must file with the Commission, in the same docket as its current biennial conservation plan, an annual conservation report regarding its progress in meeting its conservation target during the preceding year.
 - ii) The annual conservation report must include, but is not limited to:
 - (1) The biennial conservation target.
 - (2) Planned and claimed gas savings from conservation, including a description of the key sources of variance between the planned and actual savings.
 - (3) Budgeted and actual expenditures made to acquire conservation through the conservation cost recovery adjustment described in Condition 12.
 - (4) The portfolio- and program-level cost-effectiveness of the actual gas savings from conservation.
 - (5) All program evaluations completed in the preceding year.
 - (6) A discussion of the steps taken to adaptively manage conservation programs throughout the preceding year.
- c) Biennial conservation report
 - i) Beginning in 2025, on or before June 15 of each even-numbered year, Cascade must file with the Commission, in the same docket as its current biennial conservation plan, a biennial conservation report regarding its progress in meeting its conservation target during the preceding two years.
 - ii) The biennial conservation report must include:
 - (1) The biennial conservation target.
 - (2) Planned and claimed gas savings from conservation.
 - (3) Budgeted and actual expenditures made to acquire conservation.
 - (4) The portfolio-level cost-effectiveness of the actual gas savings from conservation.
 - (5) An independent third-party evaluation of portfolio-level biennial conservation savings achievement.
 - (6) A summary of the steps taken to adaptively manage conservation programs throughout the preceding two years; and
 - (7) Any other information needed to justify the conservation savings achievement.

- iii) Cascade must provide a summary of the biennial conservation report to its customers by bill insert or other suitable method within ninety days of the Commission's final action on the report.
- iv) Cascade may file the annual conservation report and the biennial conservation report together as one report, provided that the report includes all the information required in subsections (c) and (d) of this condition and states that it serves as both the annual conservation report and the biennial conservation report.
- d) Plan and report review
 - i) Interested persons may file written comments regarding the biennial conservation plan and biennial conservation report within thirty days of Cascade's filing.
 - ii) Upon conclusion of the Commission review of Cascade's biennial report or plan, the Commission will issue a decision accepting or rejecting the calculation of Cascade's conservation target; or determining whether Cascade has acquired enough conservation resources to comply with its conservation target. If Cascade does not meet its biennial conservation target described in Condition 1(a), the Commission will determine the amount in terms by which Cascade was deficient.
 - iii) Biennial plans and reports may be reviewed through the Commission's open meeting process, as described in chapter 480-07 WAC.
- e) *Publication of reports.* Beginning with the 2024-2025 BCP, all conservation plans and reports required by Commission order as well as a summary of planned and actual savings and expenditures reflected in the plans and reports, must be posted and maintained on Cascade's website. Plans and reports must be posted on Cascade's website within thirty days of Commission acknowledgment of the plan or order approving the report. A copy of any such plan, report, or summary must be provided to any person upon request.

6) Advisory Group

- a) Cascade must use its Advisory Group, initially created under Docket UG-060256, to advise Cascade on conservation issues including but not limited to:
 - i) Conservation programs and measures.
 - ii) Updates to Cascade's evaluation, measurement, and verification framework.
 - iii) Modification of existing, or development of new evaluation, measurement, and verification methods.
 - iv) Independent third-party evaluation of portfolio-level biennial conservation achievement.
 - v) Development of conservation potential assessments.
 - vi) The methodology, inputs, and calculations for cost-effectiveness.
 - vii) The data sources and values used to develop and update supply curves.
 - viii) The need for tariff modifications or mid-biennium program corrections.
 - ix) The appropriate level of planning for:
 - (1) Marketing conservation programs.
 - (2) Incentives to customers for measures and services; and
 - (3) Impact, market, and process evaluations.

- x) Programs for low-income residential customers.
 - xi) Establishment of the biennial conservation target and program achievement results compared to the target.
 - xii) Conservation program budgets and actual expenditures compared to budgets.
 - xiii) Development and implementation of new and pilot programs.
- b) *Advisory group meetings.* Cascade must meet with its conservation advisory group at least four times per year. Conservation advisory group members may request additional meetings. Cascade must provide reasonable advance notice of all conservation advisory group meetings.
 - c) *Advance notification of filings.* Except for the conservation cost recovery adjustment filing required in Condition 12, Cascade must provide its conservation advisory group an electronic copy of all conservation filings that Cascade intends to submit to the Commission at least thirty days in advance of the filing. The filing cover letter must document the amount of advance notice provided to the conservation advisory group.
 - d) *Advance notification of meetings.* Cascade must notify its conservation advisory group of public meetings scheduled to address its conservation programs, its conservation tariffs, or the development of its conservation potential assessment.
 - e) Cascade must notify Advisory Group members of all public meetings scheduled to address Cascade's integrated resource plan. Cascade must also coordinate a meeting with Advisory Group members and the entity conducting the conservation potential assessment (CPA) addressing the scope and design of the CPA. This meeting must be held early enough in the integrated resource plan public process to incorporate the group's advice. Cascade must notify Advisory Group members of IRP advisory group meetings that present the Company's gas price forecasts and resource cost assumptions used in the development of the company's integrated resource plan.
 - f) Cascade must consult with the Advisory Groups starting no later than July 1, 2027, to begin to identify achievable conservation potential for 2028-2038 and to begin to set annual and biennial targets for the 2028-2029 biennium, including necessary revisions to program details.
 - g) Cascade must inform the Advisory Group members when its projected expenditures indicate that Cascade will spend more than 120 percent or less than 80 percent of its annual conservation budget.
 - h) Before filing the Biennial Conservation Plan, Cascade must provide the following information to the Advisory Group: draft ten-year conservation potential and two-year target no later than August 15, 2027; draft program details, no later than September 15, 2027; and draft program tariffs no later than October 16, 2027.
- 7) **Annual Budgets and Energy Savings.** Cascade must provide its proposed budget to the Advisory Group in a detailed format with a summary page indicating the proposed budget and savings levels for each conservation program, and subsequent supporting spreadsheets providing further detail for each program and line item shown in the summary sheet. The proposed budget must also be filed in support of any cost recovery filing, along with any other necessary workpapers. Cascade must allocate a reasonable amount of its program

budget (as determined through consultation with the Advisory Group) towards pilot programs, research, and data collection.

- 8) Program Details.** Cascade must maintain its conservation tariffs, with program descriptions, on file with the Commission. Program details about specific measures, incentives, and eligibility requirements must be filed and updated in this docket. Cascade must consult its Advisory Group per Condition 6 above before making changes to program details. Cascade must notify the Advisory Group when it files updated measures, incentives, or eligibility requirements.
- 9) Approved Strategies for Selecting and Evaluating Energy Conservation Savings**
- a) Cascade has identified several potential conservation measures described in the BCP. The Commission is not obligated to accept savings identified in the BCP for purposes of compliance with the targets detailed in this Order.
 - b) When Cascade proposes a new or significant change to a program, pilot, or tariff schedule, it must present the program to the Advisory Group with program details fully defined, to the extent practicable. The Advisory Group, after consultation, may advise if a revision to the Conservation Plan in this docket is necessary.
 - c) Cascade must spend a reasonable (as determined through consultation with the Advisory Group) amount of its conservation budget on evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V), including a reasonable proportion on independent, third-party EM&V. Cascade must perform EM&V annually on a maximum four-year schedule of selected programs such that, over the EM&V cycle, all major programs are covered. The EM&V function includes impact, process, market, and cost test analyses. The results must verify the level at which claimed energy savings have occurred, evaluate the existing internal review processes, and suggest improvements to the program and ongoing EM&V processes.
 - d) A final report for the current biennium may be implemented in phases and delivered as a final product at an earlier date, as needed, by Cascade.

10) Program Design Principles

- a) Modifications to the programs must be filed with the Commission as revisions to tariffs or as revisions to Cascade's current Conservation Plan, as determined in consultation with the Advisory Group.
- b) Incentives and Conservation Program Implementation — Programs, program services, and incentives may be directed to consumers, retailers, manufacturers, trade allies, or other relevant market actors as appropriate for measures or activities that lead to gas energy savings. Cascade must work with the Advisory Group to establish a balanced portfolio of measures that provides savings from a variety of savings types and meets the needs of a broad spectrum of Cascade customers.
- c) Conservation Efforts without Approved EM&V Protocol — Cascade may spend up to ten percent of its conservation budget on pilots whose savings impact has not yet been measured, if the overall portfolio of conservation passes the primary cost-effectiveness test used by the Commission. Cascade may ask the Commission to modify this spending

limit, following the Advisory Group consultation.

11) Cost-Effectiveness Tests

- a) The cost-effectiveness analysis required by RCW 80.28.380 must include the costs of greenhouse gas emissions established in RCW 80.28.395.
- b) For the 2026-2027 biennium, Cascade must use the modified Utility Cost Test (UCT), as its primary cost-effectiveness test. Cascade's portfolio must pass the modified UCT. All cost-effectiveness calculations will assume a Net-to-Gross ratio of 1.0, consistent with the Council's methodology.
 - i) In 2026-2027, Cascade must participate in any stakeholder process where the appropriate cost-effectiveness test and discount rate to be used for gas conservation is debated.
 - ii) Beginning with the 2026-2027 biennium, Cascade must either:
 - (1) Employ the cost-effectiveness test developed through the stakeholder process described in Condition 11(b)(i);
 - (2) Employ a properly-balanced TRC, as described in the Commission's 2013 natural gas conservation policy statement;⁴ or
 - (3) Employ a different cost-effectiveness test as determined in conjunction with the Advisory Group.
- c) Cascade must also provide calculations of the modified Total Resource Cost test (TRC). The modified TRC includes all quantifiable nonenergy impacts, a risk adder, and a 10 percent preference adder.
- d) Cascade must provide calculations of both the TRC and UCT in its plans and reports.
- e) Conservation-related administrative costs must be included in portfolio-level analysis.

12) Gas Conservation Cost Recovery

- a) Utilities must file with the Commission for recovery of all expected conservation cost changes and amortization of deferred balances. Cascade must include its conservation cost recovery procedures in its tariff.
- b) Scope of Expenditures — Funds collected must be used on approved conservation programs and their administrative costs.
- c) Recovery for Each Customer Class — Cascade shall retain existing cost recovery mechanisms, subject to the Commission's Order in Docket UG-152286.⁵
- d) Cascade must file revisions to its cost recovery tariff (Schedule 596) by September 15 each year, with a requested effective date of November 1 of that same year.
- e) Cascade may accrue interest on deferred conservation cost balances. Cascade must base conservation recovery rates only on actual program costs of the prior year. Utilities must also include the effects of variations in actual sales on the recovery of conservation costs in the prior year.

⁴ See Docket UG-121207, "Policy Statement on the Evaluation of the Cost-Effectiveness of Natural Gas Conservation Programs," at ¶ 35.

⁵ See Joint Settlement Agreement Filed May 13, 2016, at ¶ 23.

13) Low-Income Programs

Cascade must demonstrate progress toward sustained energy burden reductions during the 2026-2027 biennium by, at a minimum, funding all eligible low-income conservation measures as described in Condition 4(f).

- a) Cascade's biennial report must include the contribution from low-income conservation programs toward sustained energy burden reductions. The report must include the number of participants and any other information that demonstrates progress as described above. The utility should include a discussion of barriers to success, options for overcoming these barriers, and potential uses for increased low-income conservation funding.
- b) Energy savings from low-income conservation measures will be counted toward conservation goals.
- c) Cascade may, after consultation with advisory groups, fully fund repairs, administrative costs, and health and safety improvements associated with cost-effective low-income conservation measures. These costs are excluded from portfolio cost-effectiveness calculations.
- d) Cascade must report the results of its WIP Pilot established in Docket UG-250058 to its Conservation Advisory Group and Equity Advisory Group.
- e) Should Cascade wish to continue the pilot or make the program permanent Cascade must consult the Advisory Groups listed in 13(d).