



**CARES Advisory Group Meeting Agenda  
April 15, 2026 2:00 – 3:00pm Pacific**

<b>Advisory Group Member</b>	
Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC)	Sylvia Schaefer
Benton-Franklin Community Action Connections (CAC)	Dalia Ochoa
Community Action of Lewis, Mason, & Thurston Counties (CACLMT)	Ester Castro, Stephenie Arnold
Coastal Community Action Program (CCAP)	Debbie Gregg
Chelan-Douglas Community Action Council (CDCAC)	Tom Bonwell, Sarah Brito, Alan Walker
Kitsap Community Resources (KCR)	Kandi Balandran
Lower Columbia Community Action Center (LCCAP)	Kathy Bates
NW Community Action Center (NCAC)	Jose Alvarez
OIC of Washington (OIC)	Heidi Silva, Casandra Ochoa, Candi Jaeger
Opportunity Council (OPPCO)	Marie Stanley, Melissa Gong
Community Action of Skagit County (SCCAA)	Misty Velasquez
Snohomish County Human Services Dept (SCEAP)	Constance Hockett, Traci Baugh
WUTC Staff	Andrew Roberts, Andy Sellards, Corey Cook, Jacque Hawkins-Jones, Keith Quinata
The Energy Project	Shaylee Stokes
Public Counsel	Kai Hiatt
NW Energy Coalition	Charlee Thompson
Department of Commerce	Michelle DeBell
<b>Cascade Natural Gas</b>	
Dan Tillis, Dir Customer Experience	Mike Parvinen, Dir Regulatory Affairs
Teri Sovak, Mgr Customer Service, Credit & Collections	Jennifer Gross, Regulatory Affairs Mgr
Shannon Steed, Consumer Specialist	Noemi Ortiz, Mgr Energy Efficiency & Conservation
	Rodney Fowler, Business Analyst

**Agenda:**

- 1. CARES enrollment update (Dan)**
- 2. WA General Rate Case Overview (Mike)**
- 3. Open Discussion**

**Notes:**

- 1. CARES enrollment update (Dan)**

Dan presented the following information. This table includes updated data from our 2026 Energy Burden Analysis which is currently in development and will be finalized later this year.

Row Labels	WA-T1	WA-T2	WA-T3	WA-T4	WA-T5	Grand Total
March Enrollment Numbers	1,341	1,327	4,869	4,710	8,334	20,581
EBA IQ Count (Estimated)	1,580	2,150	8,267	8,520	41,165	61,682
Low Income Penetration Numbers	84.87%	61.72%	58.90%	55.28%	20.25%	33.37%

It is worth celebrating the high enrollment percentages in tiers one through four. This is impressive for a program that is relatively new. Tier 5 enrollment is notably lower possibly because the discount is low, not worth it to some customers, or those customers need less assistance.

## 2. WA General Rate Case Overview (Mike)

- Cascade expects to file a multi-year rate plan on May 29, 2026. Even though we just implemented year-two rates from our last multi-year rate plan, we are experiencing significant cost pressures requiring that we file again.
- Drivers are investments for safe and reliable delivery of natural gas and inflation.
- Infrastructure will be important with decarbonization planning,
- Request: 2-year rate plan, 2025 test year. Rate effective dates: May 1, 2027, and May 1, 2028. Rate effective dates include provision plant cost review.
- Capital structure: Return on equity of 10.5 percent. Capital structure: ~ 50% equity/50% debt and 7.979% rate of return
- We do not know our proposed rate increase at this time.
- Will talk about our progress on equity, our environmental and GHG reduction strategy, and CARES. We will file to keep CARES customers at the same 3 to 3.5 percent energy burden with proposed rates.
- Also included: fair value of our property; explanations on projects over \$1 million 2025-2027 projects.
- Provisional plant review will be filed each April 30<sup>th</sup> where parties complete review by December of each year (same as current process). This review is when Staff and Parties ensure projects went into service, etc.
- We are required by statute to have an earnings test and continue with PBR reporting. Proposing to keep PBR metrics the same.
- Cost of service study- we will propose to move closer to parity per our COSS.
- Rate Design and Bill Impacts not completed yet.

## Questions

Charlee, NWECC:

- PBR= performance metrics
- What does it mean to move towards parity? Rates being charged cover the costs to pay for the service for that rate class.
- Earnings Test overview: we plan to stay consistent with what is built into law. We use our annual Commission Basis Report, remove things that are disallowed for recovery and if this amount is over our authorized rate of return then we return money to customers. This is earnings sharing- if we over earn.
- Is Cascade proposing PIMs? No, per the policy statement, we are in the phase of building baseline data on the metrics and we do not want to get out ahead of the Commission on this.

Shaylee, TEP

- Cost drivers, projects- Are they new projects? Mike explained they are replacements or re-enforcements needed per our Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). Asked where are you seeing expansion? Mike answered, Kennewick, WA, and Bellingham, WA.
- Questioned the 3 to 3.5% energy burden threshold for CARES (Cascade will file to keep customers in the 3-3.5% energy burden threshold with its proposed multi-year rate plan rates.) Jennifer explained this range is what we have used since program inception; it comes from CETA; and is in our Schedule 302 Tariff at TEP's request.

CNGC will share the slides with the group. Cascade will share rates and bill impacts later when they are available.

## 3. Open Discussion

- Hassan is working on EBA. Expected to share this in July or August.
- Melissa Gong seeing more folks using categorical eligibility for PEV. Hired outreach staff person, increasing outreach in Whatcom and Island counties.

# Cascade Natural Gas Corporation

Multiyear Rate Plan  
Proposed Filing May 29, 2026



# Request

- Second Multiyear rate plan
- Significant progress in incorporating an equity lens
- Drivers continue to be the investments made to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of natural gas to customers as well as inflationary pressures
- Even though the amount and nature of the energy delivered may change over time, the infrastructure will be important in a rational decarbonization
- Cascade is in the process of reviewing decarbonization options that may provide best-cost alternatives to allowance purchases over time
  - How to Recover RNG and TENs investments through CCA recovery mechanism.

# Request

- 2-year rate plan
  - 2025 test year
  - May 1, 2027 (Rate Year 1)
    - 2025 test year + 2026 Provisional
  - May 1, 2028 (Rate Year 2)
    - 2027 Provisional
- One Capital Structure and ROE for the multiyear period
  - ROE – 10.5%
  - Capital Structure - 50.582% Equity
  - Rate of Return – 7.978%

# RCW 80.28.425 Items Addressed

- Equity
  - Progress through 2025
  - Look forward
- Environmental and greenhouse gas emission reduction strategy
- Low-income bill assistance and energy burden
  - Review bill-discount rates during the case to maintain 3 to 3.5% energy burden target
  - Schedule 302 maintains a discount to keep energy burden on target

# RCW 80.28.425 Items Addressed

- Fair value of property
  - Explanations for projects > \$1.0M placed in service from during 2025 but not included in last rate case provisional plant review
  - Explanations for each proposed project in 2026 and 2027
    - > \$1.0M in testimony and < \$1.0 M in exhibits
  - Includes offsetting factors
- Proposed Provisional Review Process
  - File by April 30<sup>th</sup> each year
  - Parties review completed by December 31<sup>st</sup> each year
  - Outlines what the reports will contain and the procedural process

# RCW 80.28.425 Items Addressed

- Earnings Test
  - Continue to use the test outlined in statute
- Performance Measures
  - Propose the measure list included in our last order
  - Adopt the performance measures outlined in U-210590 when complete

# Cost of Service & Rate Design

- Cost of Service study showed under-parity from
  - Residential 503
  - Interruptible 570
  - Transport 663
- Recommending a move toward parity in the first year
- Increases to basic service charges and demand charge in 2 steps