

PRC accepts comments on PNM rate case

Hannah Grover, hgrover@daily-times.com 6:00 p.m. MT June 22, 2017

Two meetings take place in Farmington; hearing process will continue in August in Santa Fe



The Public Service Company of New Mexico's plans to move away from coal are expected to result in the eventual shuttering of the San Juan Generating Station in Waterflow.

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STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- County residents could be impacted by the rate case due to PNM's ownership in two local power plants.
- The statewide hearings about the rate increases have seen varied turnout.

FARMINGTON – While potential rate increases for Public Service Company of New Mexico customers will not impact San Juan County residents, the Farmington area is at the center of debate as the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission hosts hearings on the hikes at various locations throughout the state.

Commissioner Lynda Lovejoy, who represents northwest New Mexico, presided over two meetings today here.

Lovejoy said the public will also have a chance to comment during a hearing process starting August 7 in Santa Fe. Public comment will be accepted August 7, and the hearing likely will continue until August 18.

Lovejoy said the Santa Fe hearing will analyze PNM's annual revenue, the monthly bills customers will pay, the cost of closing two units at the San Juan Generating Station and the depreciation of assets at both the San Juan Generating Station and the Four Corners Power Plant.

"The rate increase will not affect you because PNM is not your electric provider," Lovejoy told local residents during the hearing this afternoon.

But Lovejoy said San Juan County residents could be impacted by the rate case due to [PNM's ownership in the two power plants](#).

Earlier this year, PNM announced plans to move away from coal, [essentially closing the San Juan Generating Station](#). Only a handful of people attended the first of the two Farmington meetings, and no one chose to provide comments.

The statewide hearings about the rate increases, which began earlier this month, have seen varied turnout. In Los Lunas last week, no one spoke during the afternoon meeting, according to PRC documents. However, several people offered input during the evening meeting.

The main concerns voiced during the hearings have centered on the impacts of raising electricity rates on low-income families and the effects of eliminating coal power.

Carlos Padilla, a spokesman for the PRC, said there have been comments about a loss of jobs due to the closure of the power plant, as well as comments that the closure could improve air quality in San Juan County.

In addition to providing comments at the public hearings, written comments can be mailed to the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission Records Management Bureau at 1120 Paseo de Peralta or P.O. Box 1269 in Santa Fe, 87504. Comments can also be emailed to melanie.sandoval@state.nm.us.

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