Exhibit No.:

Issue(s): First Round Allocations

First Round Payroll; Property Taxes; Audit Costs & Tax Preparation Fees;

AFUDC Rate

Witness: Paul R. Harrison

Sponsoring Party: MoPSC Staff Type of Exhibit: Rebuttal Testimony

Case No.: SR-2016-0202

Date Testimony Prepared: October 13, 2016

# MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION COMMISSION STAFF DIVISION

**AUDITING DEPARTMENT** 

#### **REBUTTAL TESTIMONY**

**OF** 

## PAUL R. HARRISON

# RACCOON CREEK UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY, INC. CASE NO. SR-2016-0202

Jefferson City, Missouri October 2016

1	TABLE OF CONTENTS
2	REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF
3	PAUL R. HARRISON
4	RACCOON CREEK UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY, INC.
5	CASE NO. SR-2016-0202
6	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
7	OVERHEAD ALLOCATION FACTOR
8	PAYROLL COMPENSATION
9	PROPERTY TAX EXPENSE
10	CSWR AND RACCOON CREEK AUDIT COSTS AND TAX PREPERATION FEES
11	ALLOWANCE FOR FUNDS USED DURING CONSTRUCTION ("AFUDC") RATE 14
12	

1		REBUTTAL TESTIMONY
2		OF
3		PAUL R. HARRISON
4	1	RACCOON CREEK UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY, INC.
5		CASE NO.
6		SR-2016-0202
7	Q.	Please state your name and business address.
8	A.	Paul R. Harrison, P. O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.
9	Q.	By whom are you employed and in what capacity?
10	A.	I am a Regulatory Auditor with the Missouri Public Service Commission
11	("PSC" or "C	Commission").
12	Q.	Are you the same Paul R. Harrison who has previously filed direct testimony
13	in this procee	ding?
14	A.	Yes, I am.
15	EXECUTIV	E SUMMARY
16	Q.	What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony for this case?
17	A.	The purpose of my rebuttal testimony in this case is to address The Office of
18	the Public	Counsel ("OPC") witness Keri Roth's direct testimony concerning
19	allocations fa	ctors, and payroll and compensation. In addition, I will address Raccoon Creek
20	Utility Opera	ating Company, Inc. ("Raccoon Creek" or "Company") witness Josiah Cox's
21	direct testimo	ony concerning property taxes, auditing and income tax preparation fees, and the
22	Allowance for	or Funds Used During Construction ("AFUDC") rate.
	11	

#### OVERHEAD ALLOCATION FACTOR

- Q. What allocation factor for overhead costs did Staff develop for Raccoon Creek and how was it developed?
- A. The allocation rate is 17.01%. As discussed in my direct testimony, Staff developed its allocation factor based on a combination of each system's construction improvement costs and the number of customer served by each system.
- Q. What is OPC's position concerning its calculation of the overhead allocation factor for Raccoon Creek?
  - A. On page 4, lines 12 through lines 15, Ms. Roth states:

OPC recommends an allocation factor of 13.46%. As shown on Schedule KNR-3, marked Highly Confidential, this allocation factor was calculated by determining the actual percentage of hours spent working on Raccoon Creek by each employee and averaging the percentages.

- Q. Is this the same methodology that OPC used in the Hillcrest Utility Operating Company, Inc. ("Hillcrest") rate case to develop overhead allocations?
  - A. Yes.
- Q. Is it possible to determine the actual annualized number of hours that an employee works for Raccoon Creek based on their employee timesheets?
- A. No. Neither Mr. Cox, Mr. Chalfant nor Ms. Eaves' timesheets are developed with enough detail to determine the amount of hours that each employee spends on each job function or system to determine their annual payroll; therefore, their timesheets cannot be relied on to develop an allocation factor for Raccoon Creek. For instance, Mr. Cox develops

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> First Round Central States Water Resources LLC's, ("First Round") is an LLC which currently owns three regulated Missouri operating companies (Hillcrest, Raccoon Creek and Indian Hills Utility Operating Company, Inc.) and is currently considering the acquisition of several other Missouri water and sewer utilities. Staff's proposed allocation factor takes into account both the acquired systems and several additional systems being considered for acquisition by First Round.

- his timesheet with columns labeled engineering, due diligence, construction procurement, PSC, DNR, Construction, Hillcrest and Raccoon Creek. Mr. Chalfant and Ms. Eaves' timesheets have descriptions such as administration, holiday, operations, vacation, Hillcrest operations, rate stabilization, PSC auditor's rate stabilization and Raccoon Creek operations. The only hours that can be accurately qualified are the direct hours that are assigned to Hillcrest and Raccoon Creek. Those direct hours are the hours that Ms. Roth used to develop OPC's overhead allocation factor and annualized payroll for Raccoon Creek. However, each employee has hours associated with vacation time, sick leave, holiday time, rate case, operations, and QuickBooks that are not assigned to any of First Round's, operating systems. Therefore, if only the direct hours are used to annualize payroll and develop allocation factors for First Round the number of hours and the allocation factor will be distorted and understated. Attempting to establish an allocation factor or to annualize payroll for Raccoon Creek or any of First Round's other operating systems using the employee timesheets would be a shot in the dark at best.
  - Q. Has Staff made a recommendation in this case for the Company to develop better and more detailed timesheets?
  - A. Yes. In its Audit Staff Recommendation Memorandum filed with the *partial stipulation and agreement* on August 30, 2016 for this case, Staff stated:

Timesheets must be utilized for all employees to record work assignments and the time associated with each work assignment, function, and for each system. Time records assist in tracking the amount of time employees spend working on each water and sewer system, and aids in the development of corporate allocations. Timesheet information should be maintained in sufficient detail to capture the amount of time each employee spends on each system and each regulated utility operation/maintenance activities, as opposed to construction activities. Timesheets should also be used to track time by employee on non-regulated, merger and acquisition related activities.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12 13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

Q. Is this the same overhead allocation issue that was decided by the Commission in the recent Hillcrest rate case, No. WR-2016-0064? A. Yes. Q. What did the Commission decide in its Report and Order for the Hillcrest rate case on this issue? The Commission stated on page 33 of its Report and Order for the Hillcrest A. rate case that: Of the three methods proposed for calculating the corporate cost allocation factor, the Commission finds that Staff's method is the most reliable and reasonable. Hillcrest did not present sufficient evidence of how it determined its allocation factor based on employee time sheets. Public Counsel's proposed allocation factor is unreasonably low because it completely disregarded the work time of Mr. Chalfant and Ms. Eaves and only included a portion of Mr. Cox's work time related to Hillcrest. Has OPC offered any new evidence in this case that would cause Staff to Q. change its position on this issue? A. No. Q. Has Staff's methodology concerning allocations changed since the Hillcrest rate case? A. Yes. In the Hillcrest rate case, Staff used a percentage of customer numbers to develop the allocation factor for Hillcrest. In this rate case, Staff also used the percentage of the cost of the construction improvements in conjunction with the percentage of customer numbers of Raccoon Creek (combined and averaged together) to develop the overhead allocation factor for Raccoon Creek. Q. What is OPC's concern with Staff's approach for calculating the allocation factor for First Round overhead cost?

A. On page 4, lines 1 through 8, OPC make the following statement:

The list of companies that Staff is using to calculate its allocation factor does not take into account all companies First Round plans to acquire in the near future. OPC believes, if Staff were to update its list of companies, their corporate allocation factor would calculate closer to what OPC and the Company have recommended. Schedule KNR-2, marked Highly Confidential, shows an updated list of future acquisitions with customer numbers. If Staff were to calculate their corporate allocation based on customer numbers alone, Staff's allocation factor would be approximately 13.74%.

OPC is incorrect in its assumption that Staff did not consider other potential First Round acquisitions in developing its overhead allocation factor for Raccoon Creek. Staff is aware of other companies that First Round is considering to acquire. However, as stated in my direct testimony in this proceeding, it is Staff's position that if the Company expands and makes additional acquisition; the Company will most likely have to hire more accountants, customer service representatives and administration personnel to continue to operate its business. It is Staff's position that these increases in overhead costs would likely partially or totally offset the impact on the allocation factor of the number of systems acquired. If future expansion occurs, a more detailed analysis will have to be performed using the exact level of overhead costs and the exact number of systems to spread the overhead costs.

#### **PAYROLL COMPENSATION**

- Q. What is OPC's position concerning the level of Raccoon Creek's payroll?
- A. On pages 4 through 9 of Ms. Roth's testimony, wherein she addresses the Company's salary levels, Ms. Roth asserts that for purposes of salary determination the job title category of Mr. Cox, the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Company, should be assumed to be "General and Operations Manager" and that the job title category of

- Mr. Jack Chalfant, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Raccoon Creek should be assumed to
- 2 be "Accountants and Auditors." She then recalculated their pay based on the most current
- 3 Missouri Economic Research and Information Center ("MERIC") "mean" rate shown for
- 4 those job title categories.
- 5 Do you agree with OPC that the MERIC job title categories applicable to Q.
- 6 Mr. Cox and Mr. Chalfant should be changed to "General Manager" and "Accountant and
- 7 Auditors," respectively?
- 8 A. No. The corporate structure of First Round was established in order to acquire
- 9 multiple troubled water and sewer entities in Missouri. First Round has already acquired
- 10 three systems and is planning to purchase more troubled systems, so that it can make the
- 11 necessary Missouri Department of Natural Resources ("DNR") improvements to the systems.
- 12 In the near future, CSWR will likely need to hire more employees in order to maintain the
- 13 operations of Raccoon Creek and the other acquired utilities and the current employees' job
- 14 titles would likely be changed to the current titles anyway. Based on Staff's analysis,
- 15 Raccoon Creek should absorb 17.01% of the overhead costs, including payroll, with the other
- 16 82.99% of corporate costs being allocated to the corporate level or to other utilities under
- 17 First Round's management. Given the nature of First Round's current and projected
- 18 operations in the state of Missouri, Staff's position continues to be that the job title categories
- 19 of Mr. Cox should be President and CEO and Mr. Chalfant should be CFO, to analyze the
- 20 proper level of Raccoon Creek's salary expense for First Round employees, as reflected in my
- 21 direct testimony filed in this matter.

- Q. Is this the same payroll issue that was decided by the Commission in the recent
- Hillcrest rate case, No. WR-2016-0064? 23

1	A.	Yes.	
2	Q.	What did the Commission decide in its Report and Order for the Hillcrest rate	
3	case on this issue?		
4	A.	The Commission stated on page 16 of its Report and Order for Hillcrest that:	
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12		The appropriate job titles to use in MERIC to determine labor expense for Mr. Cox and Mr. Chalfant are President and Chief Financial Officer, respectively. These are the titles presently used by Hillcrest to describe those two employees, and Staff's comparison of their job duties to MERIC found that these titles should continue to be used for ratemaking purposes. Since Hillcrest is part of a group of commonly-owned regulated utilities and has plans to acquire additional utilities, it is appropriate to assign employee titles similar to larger utilities rather than single utility companies	
14	Q.	Has OPC offered any new evidence in this case that would cause Staff to	
15	change its pos	sition on this issue?	
16	A.	No.	
17	PROPERTY	TAX EXPENSE	
18	Q.	What is the Company's position on property tax expense?	
19	A.	Company's witness, Mr. Cox, states in his direct testimony on page 26, lines 1	
20	through 3:		
21 22 23		Because property taxes were not paid in 2015, the Staff has not provided for Pettis and Johnson County property taxes in Raccoon Creek's revenue requirement.	
24	Q.	Does Staff agree with Mr. Cox's statement that Staff has not provided for	
25	Pettis and Joh	nson County property taxes paid in calendar year 2015 in Raccoon Creek's cost	
26	of service?		

properties.

1 A. No. Staff received property receipts from Mr. Cox for calendar year 2015 in 2 response to Staff data requests for this case and those amounts were included in the cost of 3 service for Raccoon Creek's three sewer systems. 4 Q. What total amount was included for Raccoon Creek's cost of service? 5 A. The actual amount of \$870 for property taxes that was paid by Raccoon Creek 6 for calendar year 2015. 7 Q. What is the Company's position on property tax expense that Raccoon Creek estimates it will pay in calendar 2016? 8 9 A. The Company has taken the position that such estimated amounts should be recoverable in rates in this proceeding. Company witness Cox states in his direct testimony 10 11 on page 26, lines 5 through 10: 12 Raccoon Creek will pay approximately \$7,905.08 in property taxes to 13 Pettis and Johnson County. The breakdown is \$2,730.38 for WSS and 14 \$2,473.83 for WPC in Pettis County; and \$2,700.87 for the Villages in 15 Johnson County. The assessor's office of each Pettis County has 16 submitted a signed document as to the veracity of the taxes for WSS and WPC. Johnson County will have the final assessed value to 17 Raccoon Creek in October. 18 19 Q. Does Staff agree that the Assessor's Office of Pettis County signed a document 20 to the veracity of the taxes for WSS and WPC? 21 No. Attached to Mr. Cox's testimony as SCHED JC-02 are documents labeled A. 22 "Raccoon Creek Property Tax Estimate on Assessed value of 2015 rate tax". The other 23 documents included in that attachment are the actual property tax receipts for calendar year 24 2015 that Staff has already included in Raccoon Creek's cost of service for these three

Q. Is it appropriate to include a projected expense, such as the estimated 2016 property tax amount that is included in Mr. Cox's SCHED J-C-02, in Raccoon Creek's cost of service for ratemaking purposes?

A. No. Staff believes it is improper to include an estimated level of property tax expenses in a cost of service. The Company's proposal uses estimated amounts of property tax expense for the plant improvements that were assessed as of January 1, 2016. First, if Staff were to include a level of property tax expense in this case for the improvements as Company suggests, Staff would be violating the known and measurable standard. Second, the plant additions and improvements made by Raccoon Creek were not assessed for property tax purposes until January 1, 2016, and will not be paid until December 31, 2016. Third, the Company plant additions after January 1, 2016 would not be included in the December 31, 2016 assessed tax calculation. These additions will not be assessed and paid until December 31, 2016.

If the Company would provide copies of calendar year 2016 tax bills for Raccoon Creek's assets that were in service as of January 1, 2016 from the Pettis and Johnson County Tax Assessors' Office, then Staff would consider including this expense in Raccoon Creek's cost of service for this case.

#### CSWR AND RACCOON CREEK AUDIT COSTS AND TAX PREPERATION FEES

- Q. What actions has Staff taken to get information from Raccoon Creek in order to determine an appropriate amount of accounting costs to include in Raccoon Creek's cost of service?
- A. Staff has been attempting to get source documents from Raccoon Creek throughout this case in order to determine the amount of the expense to include in

	i aui K. Hailist	л
1	Raccoon Creek	x's cost of service. During the month of September, Staff received some source
2	documents from	m the Company for this expense, and sought additional information concerning
3	these costs. W	hat I have outlined below are the most current actions that Staff has taken in an
4	attempt to get i	information from Raccoon Creek concerning this issue.
5	On Se	ptember 15, 2016, Staff received the tax and auditing fee invoices for
6	Raccoon Creek	and First Round; however, there were only four invoices received from the
7	Company. The	e invoice numbers were dated September 15, 2016, and are listed below:
8 9 10		Invoice Number 90864First Round CSWR for the audit of the financial statements for the period ending December 31, 2015 at a cost of \$10,000.
11 12 13		Invoice Number 90865 First Round CSWR for preparation of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Round CSWR, LLC subsidiaries federal and state taxes at a cost of \$2,500.
14 15		Invoice Number 90866Raccoon Creek Holding Company for audit of the consolidated financial statements at a cost of \$10,000.
16 17		Invoice Number 90867Raccoon Creek Holding Company for preparation of the federal and state taxes at a cost of \$2,500.
18	However, whe	n Mr. Cox filed his direct testimony for this case on September 30, 2016, he
19	included six ir	nvoices as Sched JC 03 in his testimony. Four of the invoices were the ones
20	identified above	we and the other two are invoices dated August 22, 2016, and are described
21	below:	
22 23 24		Invoice Number 90398 for audit of the consolidated financial statements of First Round CSWR, LLC and subsidiaries for the year ended December 31, 2015 at a cost of \$4,000.
25 26 27		Invoice Number 90400 for audit of the consolidated financial statements of Raccoon Creek Holding Company and subsidiaries for the year ended December 31, 2015 at a cost of \$4,000.
28	Q.	What additional information has Staff requested from the Company in order to

determine the level of this expense to include in Raccoon Creek's cost of service?

1 A. On September 16, 2016, Staff Counsel submitted the below e-mail request of 2 the Company concerning the invoices above: Thank you for providing the tax and auditing fee invoices yesterday. If 3 4 you could please provide copies of the tax returns and audited 5 financial statements (report of the results) that are referenced as of 6 September 15, 2016 in the invoices it would be appreciated. 7 Additionally, if you could please provide a copy of the bank statement 8 showing that the tax and auditing fees were paid, as the date of the 9 invoices shows completion on yesterday's date, that would be 10 appreciated as well. 11 Again on September 27, 2016, Staff Counsel submitted an e-mail request to the 12 Company in an attempt to get the information requested above: 13 If Staff could have the requested tax return, audited financial 14 statement/report and bank statement reflecting payment of the fees, 15 that would help immensely in preparing direct. 16 Finally, on September 30, 2016, the Company provided copies of the First Round and 17 Raccoon Creek tax return and a copy of the bank statement showing payment; however, Staff 18 has not received the audited financial statements for First Round and Raccoon Creek that it 19 needs to reconcile the calendar year 2015 (test year) external audit to the Company's general 20 ledger. 21 Q. What is the Company's position concerning First Round and Raccoon Creek 22 audit costs and tax preparation fees (i.e., accounting costs) for this case? 23 A. Company witness, Mr. Cox, states in his direct testimony on page 27, lines 16 24 through lines 19 that Raccoon Creek's annual share of the accounting costs is: 25 \$16,125, which consists of \$4,000 for Raccoon Creek's tax preparation, \$10,000 for Raccoon Creek's Audit fees, a 17% allocation 26 27 of Central States tax preparation fees, and a 17% allocation of Central 28 States Audit Fees.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

- Q. Has Mr. Cox incorrectly stated the amount of tax preparation costs in his direct testimony?
- A. Yes. According to the invoices provided to Staff and the invoices attached to Mr. Cox's testimony, Raccoon Creek was billed \$2,500 for tax preparation not \$4,000 as stated by Mr. Cox.
- Q. How does Company's calculation of tax preparation and auditing fees compare to Staff's calculation of these costs?
- A. The following table compares the Company's calculation of the fees to Staff's calculation of the fees:

	Company's Calculation	Staff's Calculation
Tax Preparation for First Round	\$425	\$425
Auditing Fees for First Round	\$1,700	\$0
Tax Preparation for Raccoon Creek	\$4,000*	\$2,500
Auditing Fees for Raccoon Creek	\$10,000	\$0
Total Tax and Auditing Fees	\$16,125	\$2,925

\*Incorrect number should be \$2,500

- Q. Does Staff agree that \$16,125 should be included in Raccoon Creek's cost of service for accounting costs?
- A. No. Since the Company only provided the tax returns for Raccoon Creek and First Round, and not the audited financial statements, Staff will recommend that the tax preparation fees for Raccoon Creek and 17.01% of the tax preparation fees for First Round should be included in Raccoon Creek's cost of service.

1	Q.	What is the level of this expense that Staff is willing to include in
2	Raccoon Cree	k's cost of service based on the documents that it has received to date?
3	A	Staff will update its cost of service for this case to include the \$2,500 for
4	Raccoon Cree	k's tax preparation fees and \$425 for First Round's tax preparation fees for a
5	total accounting	ng costs expense of \$2,925, as shown in the above table.
6	Q.	Will Staff be updating its cost of service to include the audit of the financial
7	statements for	Raccoon Creek and First Round?
8	A	Staff has requested copies of the 2015 Audited Financial Statements from the
9	Company and	we will make a determination of the appropriate amounts to include in rates
10	once we receive	ve those documents from the Company.
11	Q.	What is OPC's position concerning this issue?
12	A.	On page 7, lines 7 through 15, of Ms. Roth's direct testimony, she states:
13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		To include invoices outside of the test year and update period in this case would violate the matching principle, which requires all elements of the revenue requirement to be included in the Company's cost of service at the same general point in time. The test year period in this case is twelve months ending December 31, 2015 with the update period at March 31, 2016. The auditing and income tax preparation invoices were not received until September 15, 2016, or six months after the update period. OPC will review auditing and income tax preparation expenses again in the Company's next general rate case.
22	Q.	Do you agree with OPC that the date that these invoices were paid falls outside
23	of the test year	r and update period and prevents them from being included in this rate case?
24	A.	No. The Company did not incur any tax preparation or auditing costs during
25	the test year, l	out will incur these costs in the future. It is reasonable to include a known and
26	measurable an	nount in rates for these costs.

27

#### Paul R. Harrison ALLOWANCE FOR FUNDS USED DURING CONSTRUCTION ("AFUDC") RATE 1 2 Q. What is AFUDC? 3 A. AFUDC represents the carrying cost incurred to finance capital projects during 4 their construction period. 5 Q. What is the Company's position concerning the AFUDC rate for this case? 6 A. Mr. Cox states in his direct testimony on page 35, lines 12 through page 36, 7 lines 2, that: 8 AFUDC should be calculated based on the actual loan terms associated 9 with the AFUDC money borrowed by the Company. 10 The loan Raccoon Creek obtained and utilized to build the 11 improvements is the only loan available to it, provides the interest 12 Raccoon Creek is required to pay, reflects the loan submitted as part of the financing case, and is thus the rate at which AFUDC should be 13 14 determined. Anything less ignores the reality of what is required to 15 provide safe and adequate service. 16 Do you agree with Mr. Cox that AFUDC should be calculated based on the Q. 17 "actual loan terms associated with the AFUDC money borrowed" by the Company? 18 A. It depends specifically on what Mr. Cox means by "actual loan terms 19 associated with the AFUDC money". If he is recommending capitalizing the full interest 20 costs on debt from the time the loan is funded until the construction projects are placed in 21 service, then Staff would disagree. Staff's position is that the AFUDC carrying costs in this 22 case should be based on the dollars associated with construction work in progress each month 23 of the construction period summed together and then multiplied by the long term debt rate. 24 Q. What is the AFUDC rate used by Staff in this case? 25 Staff used 14% for the AFUDC rate in the current case. A. All of

Raccoon Creek's construction projects were financed through debt; therefore, Staff made a

policy decision to use the embedded cost of long term debt interest that the Commission

- 1 recently concluded was the appropriate allowed debt rate to apply in Case No. WR-2016-
- 2 | 0064, In the Matter of the Water and Sewer Rate Request of Hillcrest Utility Operating
- 3 | Company, Inc., a case with similar financing and investment attributes as the current case.
  - Q. Is this AFUDC rate subject to change in this case?
- 5 A. Yes. The weighted cost of debt is one of the issues that is being litigated in
- 6 this case. If the Commission orders a different rate be used than the rate recommended by
- 7 Staff in this proceeding, then the Commission-ordered debt rate should be used in the
- 8 calculation of the AFUDC carrying costs in this case.
  - Q. Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?
- 10 A. Yes.

9

# BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

### **OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Application of a Rate ) Increase for Raccoon Creek Utility Operating ) Case No. SR-2016-0202 Company Inc.
AFFIDAVIT OF PAUL R. HARRISON
STATE OF MISSOURI ) ) ss. COUNTY OF COLE )
COMES NOW PAUL R. HARRISON and on his oath declares that he is of sound mind and lawful age; that he contributed to the foregoing Rebuttal Testimony and that the same is true and correct according to his best knowledge and belief.
Further the Affiant sayeth not.  PAUL R. HARRISON
JURAT
Subscribed and sworn before me, a duly constituted and authorized Notary Public, in and for
the County of Cole, State of Missouri, at my office in Jefferson City, on this 12th day of
October, 2016.
DIANNA L. VAUGHT Notary Public - Notary Seal State of Missouri Commissioned for Cole County My Commission Expires: June 28, 2019 Commission Number: 15207377