

1                                   **COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY**  
2                                   **BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF KENTUCKY**

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4  
5 *In the Matter of:*  
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**AN ELECTRONIC EXAMINATION OF THE                                    )**  
                  **APPLICATION OF THE FUEL ADJUSTMENT                                    )**  
                  **CLAUSE OF BIG RIVERS ELECTRIC    )**           **Case No.**  
                  **CORPORATION FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2022                                )**           **2024-00141**  
                  **THROUGH APRIL 30, 2023    )**

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9                    **MOTION OF BIG RIVERS ELECTRIC CORPORATION FOR**  
10                   **CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT**  
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12            1.        Big Rivers Electric Corporation (“*Big Rivers*”) hereby moves the  
13 Public Service Commission of Kentucky ( the “*Commission*”), pursuant to 807  
14 KAR 5:001 Section 13, KRS 61.878 and KRS 278.160(3) to grant confidential  
15 treatment to certain information contained in Big Rivers’ responses to Items 4,  
16 and 5 of the Commission Staff’s Second Request for Information dated September  
17 10, 2024 (“PSC 2-4” and “PSC 2-5” respectively). The information for which Big  
18 Rivers seeks confidential treatment is hereinafter referred to as the “*Confidential*  
19 *Information.*”

20            2.        The Confidential Information consists of confidential negotiated  
21 terms of special contracts and the identity of individual large industrial retail  
22 customers on the Big Rivers system which, as discussed below, indirectly discloses  
23 private billing and usage data of those customers.

24            3.        Pursuant to the Commission’s Emergency Orders in *In the Matter of:*  
25 *Electronic Emergency Docket Related to the Novel Coronavirus Covid-19*, Case No.

1 2020-00085, one (1) copy of the Confidential Information highlighted in yellow or  
2 otherwise marked “CONFIDENTIAL,” is being filed with this motion via  
3 electronic mail sent to [PSCED@ky.gov](mailto:PSCED@ky.gov). One (1) copy of the documents with the  
4 Confidential Information redacted is also being electronically filed with this  
5 request. 807 KAR 5:001 Section 13(2)(a)(3).

6 4. A copy of this motion with the Confidential Information redacted has  
7 been served on all parties to this proceeding through the use of electronic filing.  
8 807 KAR 5:001 Section 13(2)(b).

9 5. If and to the extent the Confidential Information becomes generally  
10 available to the public, whether through filings required by other agencies or  
11 otherwise, Big Rivers will notify the Commission and have its confidential status  
12 removed. 807 KAR 5:001 Section 13(10)(b).

13 6. The attachment to Big Rivers’ response to Item 13 of the  
14 Commission Staff’s First Request for Information (“PSC 1-13”) provided detailed  
15 billing information of individual large industrial retail customers on the Big  
16 Rivers system, including usage data. Each row of data in the attachment pertains  
17 to a certain customer. To protect the confidential and proprietary information  
18 contained in this attachment, the customers’ names were redacted from the  
19 publicly filed version of Big Rivers’ Response to the Commission Staff’s First  
20 Request for Information. Big Rivers filed the unredacted confidential version of

1 the attachment to PSC 1-13, under a motion for confidential treatment.<sup>1</sup> While  
2 the motion is pending, PSC 1-13 is a request that is routinely part of the Staff's  
3 initial request for information in Fuel Adjustment Clause review proceedings and  
4 the Commission has historically granted confidential treatment to Big Rivers'  
5 attachment provided in response to the prior requests.<sup>2</sup>

6 7. Both PSC 2-4 and PSC 2-5 reference specific rows of data in the  
7 attachment to Big Rivers' response to PSC 1-13. In turn, Big Rivers' response to  
8 PSC 2-4 and PSC 2-5, identify the individual large industrial retail customers  
9 whose billing and usage information is disclosed in those referenced rows. With  
10 this disclosure, the public could easily find the customers' private and confidential  
11 billing information and usage data in the attachment to Big Rivers' response to  
12 PSC 1-13.

13 8. As discussed below, the Confidential Information is entitled to  
14 confidential treatment and is being submitted confidentially under the purview of  
15 KRS 278.160(3), KRS 61.878(1)(a) and KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1). 807 KAR 5:001  
16 Section 13(2)(a)(1).

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<sup>1</sup> See Motion of Big Rivers Electric Corporation for Confidential Treatment filed August 26, 2024, in the matter.

<sup>2</sup> See eg, *In the Matter of: An Electronic Examination of the Application of the Fuel Adjustment Clause of Big Rivers Electric Corporation from November 1, 2020 Through October 31, 2022*, Case No. 2023-00013, Order (Jan. 29, 2024); *In the Matter of: An Electronic Examination of the Application of the Fuel Adjustment Clause of Big Rivers Electric Corporation from November 1, 2021 Through April 30, 2022*, Case No. 2022-00268, Order (Mar. 1, 2023); *In the Matter of: An Electronic Examination of the Application of the Fuel Adjustment Clause of Big Rivers Electric Corporation from May 1, 2021 Through October 31, 2021*, Case No. 2022-00041, Order (Jan. 10, 2023).

1           **I. The Confidential Information is entitled to confidential**  
2           **treatment based upon KRS 278.160(3)**

3           9.       Certain Confidential Information contained in Big Rivers’ responses  
4 to PSC 2-4 and PSC 2-5 is entitled to confidential protection based upon KRS  
5 278.160(3), which shields from disclosure “a provision of a special contract that  
6 contains rates and conditions of service not filed in a utility’s general schedule if  
7 such provision would otherwise be entitled to be excluded from the application of  
8 KRS 61.870 to 61.884 under the provisions of KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1).”

9           10.     The special contracts terms in question relate to special contracts  
10 between Big Rivers’ Member-Owners and large industrial customers, which Big  
11 Rivers concurred with a letter agreement. The Commission has already found  
12 that confidential terms of similar contracts are entitled to confidential treatment  
13 under KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1).<sup>3</sup>

14           **II. The Confidential Information is also entitled to**  
15           **confidential treatment based upon KRS 61.878(1)(a)**

16           11.     Certain Confidential Information contained in Big Rivers’ response  
17 to PSC 2- 4 and PSC 2-5 is also entitled to confidential treatment based upon KRS  
18 61.878(1)(a), which explicitly protects “[p]ublic records containing information of a  
19 personal nature where the public disclosure thereof would constitute a clearly  
20 unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.”

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

1           12.    As discussed above, Big Rivers’ responses to PSC 2-4 and PSC 2-5  
2 identify certain individual large industrial retail customers referenced in the  
3 confidential attachment to Big Rivers’ response to PSC 1-13, which provides those  
4 customers’ confidential and proprietary billing information and usage data.  
5 Because the individual customers identified in Big Rivers’ response to PSC 2-4  
6 and PSC 2-5 are not parties to this proceeding, publicly revealing such  
7 information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of their privacy.

8           13.    Moreover, the Commission has previously granted confidential  
9 treatment to similar retail information under the purview of KRS 61.878(1)(a).<sup>4</sup>

10          14.    As such, Big Rivers requests confidential treatment for the identity  
11 of these entities in order to protect their private information.

12           **III.    Certain Confidential Information is also entitled to**  
13           **confidential treatment based upon KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1)**

14          15.    Under the Kentucky Open Records Act, the Commission is entitled  
15 to withhold from public disclosure “records confidentially disclosed to an agency  
16 or required by an agency to be disclosed to it, generally recognized as confidential  
17 or proprietary, which if openly disclosed would permit an unfair commercial

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<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., *In the Matter of: Sanctuary Church v. Louisville Gas and Electric Company*, Order, P.S.C. Case No. 2018-00181 (Jan. 8, 2019) (granting confidential treatment pursuant to KRS 61.878(1)(a) for an indefinite period to a retail customer’s account and usage information); *In the Matter of: Application of Kentucky Utilities Company for an Adjustment of its Electric Rates*, Order, P.S.C. Case No. 2012-00221 (July 25, 2013) (holding customer names, account numbers and usage information exempt from disclosure under KRS 61.878(1)(a)); See also *In the Matter of: An Electronic Examination of the Application of the Fuel Adjustment Clause of Big Rivers Electric Corporation From May 1, 2019 Through October 31, 2019*, P.S.C. Case No. 2020-00009, Order (April 13, 2020).

1 advantage to competitors of the entity that disclosed the records.” See KRS  
2 61.878(1)(c)(1). Public disclosure of the Confidential Information would permit  
3 such a result as discussed fully below.

4         16. Therefore, the Confidential Information is entitled to confidential  
5 protection based upon KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1). In support for this ground of granting  
6 confidential protection, Subsection A *infra* describes how Big Rivers operates in  
7 competitive environments; Subsection B *infra* explains that the Confidential  
8 Information is generally recognized as confidential or proprietary; and Subsection  
9 C *infra* demonstrates that public disclosure of the Confidential Information would  
10 permit an unfair commercial advantage to Big Rivers’ competitors.

11                                   **A. Big Rivers Faces Actual Competition**

12         17. Big Rivers must successfully compete in the wholesale power market  
13 in order to sell excess energy to meet its members’ needs, including competition  
14 in: term bilateral energy markets, day-ahead and real-time energy and ancillary  
15 services markets, the annual capacity market, and forward bilateral long-term  
16 wholesale agreements with utilities and industrial customers. Big Rivers’ ability  
17 to successfully compete in these wholesale power markets is dependent upon an  
18 effective combination of a) obtaining the maximum price for the power it sells and  
19 the best contract terms, and b) keeping its cost of production as low as possible.  
20 Fundamentally, if Big Rivers’ cost of producing a kilowatt hour or its business  
21 risk increases, its ability to sell that kilowatt hour in competition with other  
22 utilities is adversely affected.

1           18.     Big Rivers also competes for reasonably-priced credit in the credit  
2 markets, and its ability to compete is directly impacted by its financial results.  
3 Lower revenues and any events that adversely affect Big Rivers' margins will  
4 adversely affect its financial results and potentially impact the price it pays for  
5 credit. A competitor armed with Big Rivers' proprietary and confidential  
6 information will be able to increase Big Rivers' costs or decrease Big Rivers'  
7 revenues, which could in turn affect Big Rivers' apparent creditworthiness. A  
8 utility the size of Big Rivers that operates generation and transmission facilities  
9 will always have periodic cash and borrowing requirements for both anticipated  
10 and unanticipated needs. Big Rivers expects to be in the credit markets on a  
11 regular basis in the future, and it is imperative that Big Rivers improve and  
12 maintain its credit profile.

13           19.     Accordingly, Big Rivers faces competition in the wholesale power and  
14 capital markets, and the Confidential Information should be afforded confidential  
15 treatment to prevent the imposition of an unfair competitive advantage to those  
16 competitors.

17                   ***B. The Confidential Information is Generally Recognized as***  
18   ***Confidential or Proprietary***

19           20.     The Confidential Information for which Big Rivers seeks confidential  
20 treatment under KRS 61.878 is generally recognized as confidential or  
21 proprietary under Kentucky law.

1           21.    As noted above, the Confidential Information protected under KRS  
2 61.878(1)(c)(1) consists of or reveals information about confidential terms of  
3 special contracts and private usage data of individual retail customers. The  
4 Confidential Information is precisely the sort of information meant to be protected  
5 by KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1).

6           22.    Public disclosure of the Confidential Information would cause  
7 competitive harm to Big Rivers, giving Big Rivers’ suppliers, buyers and  
8 competitors insight into prices and other terms at which it is willing to sell and  
9 buy power. Kentucky courts have held that information about a company’s  
10 detailed inner workings is generally recognized as confidential or proprietary. In  
11 *Hoy v. Kentucky Industrial Revitalization Authority*, the Kentucky Supreme Court  
12 held that financial information submitted by General Electric Company with its  
13 application for investment tax credits was not subject to disclosure simply  
14 because it had been filed with a state agency. 907 S.W.2d 766, 4 (Ky. 1995). The  
15 Court applied the plain meaning rule to KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1), and reasoned: “[i]t  
16 does not take a degree in finance to recognize that such information concerning  
17 the inner workings of a corporation is ‘generally recognized as confidential or  
18 proprietary.’” *Id.* at 768. Similarly, in *Marina Management Services, Inc. v.*  
19 *Commonwealth Cabinet for Tourism*, the Court held: “[t]hese are records of  
20 privately owned marina operators, disclosure of which would unfairly advantage  
21 competing operators. The most obvious disadvantage may be the ability to  
22 ascertain the economic status of the entities without the hurdles systematically



1 associated with acquisition of such information about privately owned  
2 organizations.” 906 S.W.2d 318, 319 (Ky. 1995).

3       23. In Big Rivers’ case, Big Rivers is currently in negotiations with  
4 potential counterparties and expects to continue to engage in negotiations with  
5 counterparties for power sales agreements. If confidential treatment of the  
6 Confidential Information is denied, potential counterparties would know that the  
7 confidential terms of their contracts, agreements, and their private usage  
8 information could be publicly disclosed, which could reveal information to their  
9 competitors about their competitiveness. Because many companies would be  
10 reluctant to have such information disclosed, public disclosure of the Confidential  
11 Information would likely reduce the pool of counterparties willing to negotiate  
12 with Big Rivers, reducing Big Rivers’ ability to sell power and impairing its ability  
13 to compete in the wholesale power and credit markets.

14       24. In sum, the Confidential Information is not publicly available, is not  
15 disseminated within Big Rivers except to those employees and professionals with  
16 a legitimate business need to know and act upon the information, and is not  
17 disseminated to others without a legitimate need to know and act upon the  
18 information. As such, the Confidential Information details the “inner workings”  
19 of Big Rivers’ and is generally recognized as confidential and proprietary.

1           ***C. Disclosure of the Confidential Information Would Permit***  
2           ***an Unfair Commercial Advantage to Big Rivers' Competitors***

3           25.     Disclosure of the Confidential Information that is protected under  
4 KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1) would permit an unfair commercial advantage to Big Rivers'  
5 competitors. As discussed above, Big Rivers faces actual competition in the  
6 wholesale power market and in the credit markets, and it is likely that Big Rivers  
7 would suffer competitive injury if the Confidential Information were publicly  
8 disclosed.

9           26.     Given the nature of the Confidential Information, its disclosure  
10 would provide other market participants, suppliers, buyers and competitors  
11 insight into the prices and terms at which Big Rivers is willing to buy and sell  
12 power. In turn, the Confidential Information could be used to manipulate the  
13 bidding process, leading to higher costs and/or lower revenues for Big Rivers,  
14 thereby impairing its ability to compete in the wholesale power markets.  
15 Furthermore, any competitive pressure that adversely affects Big Rivers' revenue  
16 and/or margins could make Big Rivers appear less creditworthy and impair its  
17 ability to compete in the credit markets.

18          27.     Accordingly, public disclosure of the information that Big Rivers  
19 seeks to protect pursuant to KRS 61.878(1)(c)(1) would provide Big Rivers'  
20 competitors with an unfair commercial advantage.

1           **IV.    Time Period**

2           28.    Big Rivers requests that the Confidential Information remain  
3 confidential indefinitely for the reasons stated above. 807 KAR 5:001 Section  
4 13(2)(a)(2).

5           **V.    Conclusion**

6           29.    Based on the foregoing, the Confidential Information is entitled to  
7 confidential treatment, pursuant to KRS 278.160(3); 807 KAR 5:001 Section 13;  
8 and KRS 61.878. If the Commission disagrees that Big Rivers' Confidential  
9 Information is entitled to confidential treatment, due process requires the  
10 Commission to hold an evidentiary hearing. *See Utility Regulatory Comm'n v.*  
11 *Kentucky Water Serv. Co., Inc.*, 642 S.W.2d 591 (Ky. App. 1982).

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13           WHEREFORE, Big Rivers respectfully requests that the Commission  
14 classify and protect as confidential the Confidential Information.

1 On this the 23rd day of September, 2024.

2 Respectfully submitted,

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4 /s/ *Senthia Santana*

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6 Senthia Santana  
7 Tyson Kamuf  
8 Whitney Kegley  
9 Big Rivers Electric Corporation  
10 710 W. Second Street  
11 Owensboro, Ky 42301  
12 Phone: (270) 827-2561  
13 Facsimile: (270) 844-6417  
14 [senthia.santana@bigrivers.com](mailto:senthia.santana@bigrivers.com)  
15 [tyson.kamuf@bigrivers.com](mailto:tyson.kamuf@bigrivers.com)  
16 [whitney.kegley@bigrivers.com](mailto:whitney.kegley@bigrivers.com)

17  
18 Counsel for Big Rivers Electric  
19 Corporation