



MEMORANDUM

TO: ERCOT

FROM: Bruce Tsuchida, Alex Rudkevich, Tabors Caramanis & Associates

SUBJECT: Fuel Price Forecast for the ERCOT Region

DATE: April 19, 2004

This memo documents the ERCOT Cost-Benefit study fuel price forecast. The forecast includes prices for natural gas, distillate (#2) and residual (#6) fuel oil. All price figures used in this memo are as of April 14, 2004 and are meant for illustration purposes. The fuel forecast will be updated using the most recent available data once the methodology is agreed upon.

Geographical Markets

The forecast covers the entire ERCOT region.

Basis Forecasts

The key underlying forecasts are projected prices for crude oil (Light Sweet Crude) and for natural gas (Henry Hub and other regional hubs). All other forecasts are derived from these two basic forecasts using projected and/or historical basis differentials as explained later in this memo.

Note that all prices are in real 2003 US dollars.

Figure 1 presents TCA's proposed forecast of crude oil prices, together with historical prices, NYMEX futures prices for the light sweet crude oil (as of April 14, 2004), and a long-term forecast for crude oil prices from EIA's *Annual Energy Outlook 2004*. As one can see in the figure, the proposed forecast is a composition of futures prices in the near term (2003–2010) and EIA's forecast in the long term (2011–2020). Similarly, Figure 2 presents TCA's proposed forecast of the spot price of natural gas at Henry Hub, together with average NYMEX futures prices (as of April 14, 2004) and a long-term forecast from EIA's *Annual Energy Outlook 2004*.¹ The proposed forecast is a composition of futures prices in the near term (2003–2008), and EIA's long-term forecast in the long term (2011–2020). The forecast prices for the interim years (2009–2010) are interpolated.

Figure 3 presents a regional comparison of the natural gas prices along with the prices for #2 and #6 fuel oil.

¹ AEO-2004 does not forecast Henry Hub price, instead it predicts prices at the wellhead. A historical multiplication factor of 1.129 is used to derive the Henry Hub price forecast. .



Fuel oil prices – methodology

TCA assumes that fuel oil prices do not vary by region within Texas. To derive fuel oil prices for electric generation, TCA employs an in-house linear regression model, which links crude oil prices with #6 and #2 fuel oil in the Northeastern United States (New York Harbor). For petroleum prices in Texas, TCA used state-specific basis differentials derived from the EIA Form 423 data for 1997–2000 and historical spot prices for #2 and #6 fuel oil at New York Harbor. Table 1 shows these basis differentials. TCA assumes a modest seasonal pattern for #2 fuel oil prices. Prices for #6 fuel oil are assumed to be flat.

Table 1: Fuel Oil Basis Differential

	Basis Differentials (\$/MMBtu)	
FO2	\$	0.37
FO6	\$	0.81

Natural gas prices – methodology

TCA forecasts natural gas prices for the following trading points in Texas:

- Agua Dulce
- Carthage
- El Paso Permian
- Houston Pipeline
- Houston Ship Channel
- Katy
- Lone Star
- MID 1–6
- NGPL, South Texas
- WAHA
- NGPL, Mid Continental

Generators are mapped to these trading points based on the county in which the gas-fired generating unit is located. A county could be mapped to one or two trading points. In the former case, the gas delivered into that county is priced at the corresponding trading point price. In the latter case, the gas price for that county is assumed to be the average of the two trading point prices.

The generator-to-county mapping is based on the ERCOT 2003 Capacity Demand and Reserve Annual Report May 2003. Table 2 shows the mapping of counties to trading points.

The location-specific gas prices are generated based on several components.

1. The burner-tip price for natural gas is a sum of two components: the regional price at one of the above trading points and local delivery price. The regional price is the sum of the



forecast price at Henry Hub and the basis differential from the Henry Hub to the trading point.

For new gas-fired plants, the local component is assumed to be \$0.07/MMBtu to reflect pipeline lateral charges. For older plants, a local delivery charge of \$0.03/MMBtu is further added to this local component. Thus the estimated deliverability burner-tip component for the older plants would be \$0.10/MMBtu (\$0.07/MMBtu pipeline lateral charge + \$0.03/MMBtu local delivery charge).

2. For selected trading points, forward basis differentials are available directly from NYMEX ClearPort (NYMEX Hubs). For example, Houston Ship Channel forecasts are obtained by applying the Houston Ship Channel Swap clearing of the NYMEX ClearPort to the Henry Hub futures. Thus, Houston Ship Channel is NYMEX Hub. For future years where no clearing exists for the NYMEX Hub, TCA scales the last available year's data by the Henry Hub gas price. For example, if the 2008 forecast is needed for the Houston Ship Channel while the basis differential is only available to 2005 from the NYMEX ClearPort Swaps, then TCA will scale the 2005 basis differential by the Henry Hub price ratio between 2008 and 2005.
3. For other trading points that are not NYMEX Hubs, TCA selects those NYMEX Hubs that are best correlated with these trading points. To forecast prices for such trading points, TCA uses an in-house regression model, which correlates historical regional prices to prices at NYMEX Hubs. For example, Katy pricing point, while reported by Gas Daily, is not a NYMEX Hub. TETCO South Texas trading point, however, is both reported by Gas Daily and is a NYMEX Hub. TCA regresses historical basis differentials between Katy and TETCO South Texas to prices at TETCO South Texas. Then the regression results are applied to the TETCO South Texas forward prices, which are calculated from the NYMEX ClearPort Swap clearings and Henry Hub futures prices as described above, to forecast the basis differential from the TETCO South Texas to Katy. Finally, this derived basis differential is added to the TETCO South Texas hub forward price to calculate the forward price for Katy. For each trading point, TCA uses two regression models, one for summer months (April through October) and one for winter months (November through March). Table 3 shows the mapping of Texas trading points to NYMEX ClearPort Hubs.



Table 2: Mapping of Counties to Trading Points

County	Trading Points	County	Trading Points
Atascosa	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Kaufman	Houston Ship & Carthage
Bastrop	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Lamar	Houston Ship & Carthage
Bexar	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Limestone	Houston Ship & Carthage
Bosque	Houston Ship & Carthage	Llano	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX
Brazoria	NGPL, STX	Matagorda	NGPL, STX
Brazos	Houston Ship & Carthage	Maverick	MID 1-6
Burnet	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	McLennan	Houston Ship & Carthage
Calhoun	NGPL, STX	Mitchell	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian
Cameron	Houston Pipeline	Nolan	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian
Chambers	Houston Ship	Nueces	Agua Dulce
Cherokee	Lone Star	Palo Pinto	MidCon
Coke	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian	Parker	MidCon
Coleman	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian	Pecos	MID 1-6
Collin	Houston Ship & Carthage	Presidio	MID 1-6 & WAHA
Comal	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Red River	Houston Ship & Carthage
Crockett	MID 1-6	Robertson	Houston Ship & Carthage
Dallas	Houston Ship & Carthage	Rusk	Lone Star & Carthage
Denton	MidCon & Carthage	San Patricio	Agua Dulce
Ector	MID 1-6	Somervell	Houston Ship & Carthage
Ellis	Houston Ship & Carthage	Starr	Houston Pipeline
Fannin	Houston Ship & Carthage	Tarrant	MidCon
Fayette	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Taylor	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian
Fort Bend	NGPL, STX	Titus	Houston Ship & Carthage
Freestone	Houston Ship & Carthage	Tom Green	MID 1-6
Frio	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Travis	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX
Galveston	Houston Ship	Val Verde	MID 1-6
Goliad	NGPL, STX	Victoria	NGPL, STX
Gonzales	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Ward	MID 1-6
Grayson	Houston Ship & Carthage	Webb	Houston Pipeline
Grimes	Houston Ship & Carthage	Wilbarger	MidCon
Guadalupe	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Young	MidCon
Hardeman	MidCon	Liberty	Katy
Harris	Katy	Nacogdoches	Carthage
Haskell	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian	Howard	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian
Hays	Houston Ship & NGPL, STX	Culberson	MID 1-6 & WAHA
Henderson	Lone Star	Jeff Davis	MID 1-6 & WAHA
Hidalgo	Houston Pipeline	Upton	MID 1-6
Hood	Houston Ship & Carthage	Jack	MidCon & Carthage
Hunt	Houston Ship & Carthage	Wise	Houston Ship & Carthage
Johnson	Houston Ship & Carthage	Winkler	MID 1-6
Jones	MID 1-6 & El Paso Permian		



Table 3: Mapping of Trading Points to NYMEX ClearPort Hubs

No.	Trading Point:	NYMEX Hub used for Trading Point Regression	
		Summer	Winter
1	Agua Dulce	TETCO South Texas	Houston Ship Channel
2	Carthage	MidCon	MidCon & Houston Ship Channel
3	El Paso Permian	Direct from NYMEX ClearPort	
4	Houston PipeLine	Houston Ship Channel	
5	Houston Ship Channel	Direct from NYMEX ClearPort	
6	Katy	TETCO South Texas	
7	Lone Star	MidCon	Houston Ship Channel
8	MID 1-6	Permian	
9	NGPL, STX	TETCO South Texas	Houston Ship Channel
10	WAHA	Direct from NYMEX ClearPort	
11	MidCon	Direct from NYMEX ClearPort	

4. Seasonal patterns are developed as follows:

For both the NYMEX ClearPort swap and Henry Hub futures, TCA estimates the seasonal pattern based on the last year swap/futures pattern for which swap/futures prices were used. For other pricing points, regression models are applied monthly, resulting in monthly prices for these pricing points.