***These provisions shall become effective January 1, 2018.***

ERCOT shall use the following process for determining the load level to be used in the starting base cases for the Regional Transmission Plan and in the evaluation of Tier 1 projects:

(a) ERCOT will compare the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast with the summed Steady State Working Group (SSWG) bus-level load forecast for each Weather Zone.

(b) If the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast is higher, ERCOT will use this forecast for the Weather Zone.

(c) If the SSWG load forecast is higher but below the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast plus a boundary threshold as determined in paragraph (f), ERCOT will use the SSWG load forecast for the Weather Zone.

(d) If the SSWG load forecast is higher than the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast plus the boundary threshold, ERCOT will use the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast plus the boundary threshold for the Weather Zone.

(e) If a TSP(s) believes that the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast plus the boundary threshold does not adequately represent the Weather Zone or an area within the Weather Zone, the TSP(s) may present ERCOT with additional information to justify using a higher load forecast, including the SSWG load forecast, for that Weather Zone. ERCOT, in its sole discretion, may choose to use a higher load forecast than indicated in paragraph (d) above if it reasonably determines that the load forecast indicated in paragraph (d) above does not adequately represent the Weather Zone or an area within the Weather Zone. If ERCOT uses a load forecast higher than the ERCOT 90/10 load forecast plus the boundary threshold in the evaluation of a Tier 1 project, ERCOT must fully explain and document the basis for that choice (using aggregated information as needed to shield Protected Information) in its independent review.

(f) The ERCOT Board of Directors (ERCOT Board) shall determine the boundary threshold to be used to implement the requirements of this section. ERCOT shall recommend the initial boundary threshold to the ERCOT Board for endorsement. ERCOT may recommend a change to the boundary threshold to the ERCOT Board for endorsement. Prior to presenting a recommendation for the initial boundary threshold or a change to the boundary threshold to the ERCOT Board, ERCOT shall present its recommendation to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review and comment. Comments from TAC shall be included in the presentation to the ERCOT Board.