

NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS CO  
Form S-3ASR  
January 08, 2008  
Table of Contents

AS FILED WITH THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION ON JANUARY 8, 2008

Registration No. 333-[\_\_\_\_\_]

---

# SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

---

## FORM S-3

### REGISTRATION STATEMENT

Under

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

---

## NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

**OREGON**  
(State or other jurisdiction of  
incorporation or organization)

**93-0256722**  
(I.R.S. Employer  
Identification No.)

One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue

Portland, Oregon 97209

503-226-4211

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code,

of registrant's principal executive offices)

**MARGARET D. KIRKPATRICK**

General Counsel

One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue

Portland, Oregon 97209

503-226-4211

**DAVID H. ANDERSON**

**Senior Vice President**

**and Chief Financial Officer**

**One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue**

**Portland, Oregon 97209**

**503-226-4211**

(Names, addresses, including zip codes, and telephone numbers, including area codes, of agents for service)

**JOHN T. HOOD, Esq.**

**Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP**

**875 Third Avenue**

**New York, New York 10022**

**212-603-2000**

---

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective as determined by market conditions.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.  \_\_\_\_\_

If this form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.  \_\_\_\_\_

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

## CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

<i>Title of each class of securities to be registered</i>	<i>Proposed maximum aggregate offering price (1)</i>	<i>Amount of registration fee (1)</i>
Debt Securities		
Junior Subordinated Debentures		
Preferred Stock		
Common Stock		
Stock Purchase Contracts (2)		
Stock Purchase Units (3)		
Total		\$ 0

- (1) An unspecified aggregate initial offering of the securities of each identified class is being registered as may from time to time be offered by Northwest Natural Gas Company at unspecified prices, along with an indeterminate number of securities that may be issued upon exercise, settlement, exchange or conversion of securities offered hereunder. Separate consideration may or may not be received for securities that are issuable upon exercise, settlement, conversion or exchange of other securities or that are issued in units. Prior to the filing of this registration statement, \$87,800,000 aggregate principal amount of securities remained registered and unsold, pursuant to Registration Statement No. 333-112604 (the Prior Registration Statement) which was initially filed by Northwest Natural Gas Company on February 9, 2004. In accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), the registrant is deferring payment of all of the registration fee, except for \$11,022 that may be offset pursuant to Rule 457(p) for fees paid with respect to \$87,800,000 aggregate initial offering price of securities that were previously registered pursuant to the Prior Registration Statement and not sold thereunder. In connection with the securities offered hereby, except as specified in the previous sentence, the registrant will pay pay as you go registration fees in accordance with Rule 456(b).
- (2) Each Stock Purchase Contract obligates NW Natural to sell, and obligates the holder thereof to purchase, an indeterminate amount of shares of Preferred Stock or Common Stock being registered hereby.
- (3) Each Stock Purchase Unit consists of a combination of a Stock Purchase Contract and Debt Securities or Junior Subordinated Debentures of NW Natural or debt obligations of third parties, including United States Treasury securities.

**Table of Contents**

**PROSPECTUS**

**NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY**

DEBT SECURITIES

JUNIOR SUBORDINATED DEBENTURES

PREFERRED STOCK

COMMON STOCK

STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS

STOCK PURCHASE UNITS

Northwest Natural Gas Company, or NW Natural, may offer any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings from time to time and in amounts authorized from time to time. NW Natural will provide specific terms of its securities, including their offering prices, in supplements to this prospectus. The supplements may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and any supplements carefully before you invest.

NW Natural's common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange and trades under the symbol NWN.

NW Natural may offer these securities directly or through underwriters, agents or dealers. The supplements to this prospectus will describe the terms of any particular plan of distribution, including any underwriting arrangements. The Plan of Distribution section on page 16 of this prospectus also provides more information on this topic.

**See the discussion of risk factors on page 2 of this prospectus and as contained in NW Natural's annual, quarterly and current reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which are incorporated by reference into this prospectus, to read about certain factors you should consider before purchasing any of the securities being offered.**

NW Natural's principal executive offices are located at One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97209, and its telephone number is (503) 226-4211.

**Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.**

January 8, 2008

**Table of Contents**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	1
<u>FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	2
<u>NW NATURAL</u>	2
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	2
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	2
<u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERENCE DIVIDENDS</u>	3
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	3
<u>DESCRIPTION OF THE BONDS</u>	3
<u>DESCRIPTION OF THE UNSECURED DEBT SECURITIES</u>	8
<u>DESCRIPTION OF JUNIOR SUBORDINATED DEBENTURES</u>	12
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK</u>	12
<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK</u>	13
<u>DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND STOCK PURCHASE UNITS</u>	16
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	16
<u>EXPERTS</u>	17
<u>LEGALITY</u>	17

**Table of Contents**

**ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS**

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that NW Natural filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, utilizing a shelf registration, or continuous offering, process. Under this shelf registration process, NW Natural, from time to time, may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. NW Natural may offer any of the following securities: Debt Securities, Junior Subordinated Debentures, Common Stock, Preferred Stock, Stock Purchase Contracts or Stock Purchase Units.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities that NW Natural may offer. Each time NW Natural sells securities, it will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. Material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the offered securities will be discussed in the applicable prospectus supplement if necessary. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

For more detailed information about the securities, you can read the exhibits to the registration statement. Those exhibits have been either filed with the registration statement or incorporated by reference to earlier SEC filings listed in the registration statement.

**WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

NW Natural files annual, quarterly and other reports and other information with the SEC. Reports, proxy statements and other information filed by NW Natural can be read and copied at the public reference room of the SEC, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can obtain additional information about the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330.

In addition, the SEC maintains a Web site (<http://www.sec.gov>) that contains reports, proxy statements and other information filed electronically by NW Natural. NW Natural also maintains a Web site (<http://www.nwnatural.com>). Information contained on NW Natural's Web site does not constitute part of this prospectus.

NW Natural's common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol **NWN**, and information concerning NW Natural can also be inspected at the office of that exchange located at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

The SEC allows NW Natural to incorporate by reference the information that NW Natural files with the SEC, which means that NW Natural may, in this prospectus, disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus. NW Natural is incorporating by reference the documents listed below and any future filings NW Natural makes with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (Exchange Act), until NW Natural sells all of the securities described in this prospectus. Information that NW Natural files in the future with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information.

NW Natural's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006.

NW Natural's Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, June 30 and September 30, 2007.

NW Natural's Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on February 27, April 30, May 29, June 1, July 31, September 21 and October 1, 2007.

## **Table of Contents**

You may request a copy of these documents, at no cost to you, by writing or calling Shareholder Services, Northwest Natural Gas Company, One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97209, telephone 503-226-4211.

You should rely only on the information contained in, or incorporated by reference in, this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. NW Natural has not, and any underwriters, agents or dealers have not, authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. NW Natural is not, and any underwriters, agents or dealers are not, making an offer of these securities or soliciting offers to buy these securities in any state where the offer or solicitation is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of such document or that the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document incorporated by reference.

### **FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This document does, and the documents incorporated herein by reference may, contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (Securities Act), and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. Although NW Natural believes these statements are based on reasonable assumptions, no assurance can be given that actual results will not differ from those in the forward-looking statements contained herein and in the incorporated documents. The forward-looking statements contained herein and in the incorporated documents may be affected by various uncertainties. For a discussion of factors which may affect forward-looking statements contained herein and in the incorporated documents, see NW Natural's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and its most recent Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q.

### **NW NATURAL**

NW Natural is principally engaged in the distribution of natural gas to customers in western Oregon and southwestern Washington, including the Portland metropolitan area. NW Natural and its predecessors have supplied gas service to the public since 1859. NW Natural's executive offices are located at One Pacific Square, 220 N.W. Second Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97209. Its telephone number is 503-226-4211.

### **RISK FACTORS**

Investing in the securities involves certain risks. You are urged to read and consider the risk factors relating to an investment in the securities described in NW Natural's annual, quarterly and current reports filed with the SEC under the Exchange Act, which are incorporated by reference into this prospectus. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information NW Natural includes or incorporates by reference in this prospectus. The risks and uncertainties NW Natural has described are not the only ones facing NW Natural. The prospectus supplement applicable to each type or series of securities NW Natural offers may contain a discussion of additional risks applicable to an investment in NW Natural and the particular type of securities NW Natural is offering under that prospectus supplement.

### **USE OF PROCEEDS**

The net proceeds to be received by NW Natural from the sale of these securities will be added to the general funds of NW Natural and used for corporate purposes, primarily to fund, in part, NW Natural's ongoing utility construction program.

NW Natural expects its utility construction expenditures in 2008 to aggregate between \$90 million to \$100 million, and in the five-year period, 2008-2012, to aggregate between \$500 million and \$600 million.

It is estimated that between 70% to 100% of the funds required for corporate purposes during the 2008-2012 period will be internally generated and that the balance, as well as substantially all of the funds required for the refinancing of maturing debt, will be raised through the sale of equity and debt securities in such amounts and at such times as NW Natural's cash requirements and market conditions shall determine.

**Table of Contents****RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND****RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERENCE DIVIDENDS**

The ratios of earnings to fixed charges and ratios of earnings to combined fixed charges and preference dividends, calculated according to the rules set forth under the Securities Act, for the following periods were:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Ratio of Earnings to Combined</b>	
	<b>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed</b>	<b>Fixed Charges and Preference</b>
	<b>Charges</b>	<b>Dividends</b>
Nine Months Ended September 30, 2007*	3.35	3.35
Year Ended December 31, 2006	3.40	3.40
Year Ended December 31, 2005	3.32	3.32
Year Ended December 31, 2004	3.02	3.02
Year Ended December 31, 2003	2.84	2.82
Year Ended December 31, 2002	2.85	2.69

Earnings consist of net income to which has been added taxes on income and fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest on all indebtedness, amortization of debt expense and discount or premium, and the estimated interest portion of rentals charged to income. Preference dividends are the amounts of pre-tax earnings that are required to pay dividends on outstanding preference securities (which may include any NW Natural preferred stock outstanding for the period).

\* A significant part of the businesses of NW Natural is seasonal in nature; therefore, the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and the ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preference dividends for the interim period are not necessarily indicative of the results for a full year.

**DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES****General**

The following sections set forth certain general terms and provisions of NW Natural's secured, unsecured and junior subordinated debt securities, consisting of first mortgage bonds and debentures, notes or other debt, that NW Natural may offer by this prospectus. NW Natural will describe the particular terms of the debt securities, and provisions that vary from those described below, in one or more prospectus supplements.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE BONDS****General**

NW Natural will issue its first mortgage bonds, in one or more series, under the Mortgage and Deed of Trust, dated as of July 1, 1946, to Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas (formerly known as Bankers Trust Company) (the Corporate Trustee) and Stanley Burg (successor to R.G. Page and J.C. Kennedy), as trustees (together, Mortgage Trustees), which has been amended and supplemented in the past and which may be supplemented again by one or more supplemental indentures relating to these securities. This Mortgage and Deed of Trust, as amended and supplemented, is referred to in this prospectus as the Mortgage. All first mortgage bonds issued or to be issued under the Mortgage, including the first mortgage bonds offered by this prospectus, are referred to herein as First Mortgage Bonds.



## **Table of Contents**

This section briefly summarizes some of the provisions of the First Mortgage Bonds and some of the provisions of the Mortgage and uses some terms that are not defined in this prospectus but that are defined in the Mortgage. This summary is not complete. The Mortgage is on file with the SEC and is incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You should read the Mortgage for a complete understanding of the provisions that may be important to you and for the definitions of some terms used in this summary.

Each series of First Mortgage Bonds may have different terms. NW Natural will include some or all of the following information about a specific series of First Mortgage Bonds in the prospectus supplement relating to those First Mortgage Bonds:

the designation of the series and the aggregate principal amount of those First Mortgage Bonds,

the interest rate(s) for those First Mortgage Bonds,

the currency or currencies in which payment of the principal of and interest on those First Mortgage Bonds may be made,

the date(s) on which those First Mortgage Bonds will mature,

the dates on which NW Natural will pay the interest on those First Mortgage Bonds and the date from which interest will accrue,

the place(s) where the principal of and interest on those First Mortgage Bonds will be payable,

whether all or any portion of those First Mortgage Bonds will be issued to a designated depository,

the additional place(s) for the payment of principal or interest or for the registration or transfer of those First Mortgage Bonds,

any terms or obligations of NW Natural relating to creation of a sinking fund with respect to those First Mortgage Bonds or permitting conversion of those First Mortgage Bonds into capital stock of NW Natural or another entity,

any terms permitting bondholders to exchange those First Mortgage Bonds for other securities,

any terms pursuant to which NW Natural may redeem any of those First Mortgage Bonds, and

any other terms or provisions relating to those First Mortgage Bonds that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the Mortgage.

## **Form, Exchange and Payment**

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement relating to First Mortgage Bonds, First Mortgage Bonds will be (1) issued in fully registered form in denominations of \$1,000 or any amount in excess thereof that is an integral multiple of \$1,000 and (2) exchangeable at the office of Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas in New York City, without charge other than taxes or other governmental charges incident thereto, and principal, premium, if any, and interest will be payable at such office.

**Security**

First Mortgage Bonds issued or to be issued under the Mortgage are or will be secured by the Mortgage, which constitutes a first mortgage lien on certain gas utility properties owned from time to time by NW Natural (except as stated below), subject to Excepted Encumbrances, including minor defects and irregularities customarily found in properties of similar size and character.

## **Table of Contents**

The following are excepted from the lien of the Mortgage:

- (1) cash and securities,
- (2) certain equipment, apparatus, materials or supplies,
- (3) aircraft, automobiles and other vehicles,
- (4) receivables, contracts, leases and operating agreements,
- (5) timber, minerals, mineral rights and royalties, and
- (6) all Natural Gas and Oil Production Property (See Mortgage, Article I, Section 4).

The Mortgage contains provisions that impose the lien of the Mortgage on property acquired by NW Natural after the date of the Mortgage, other than the excepted property described above and subject to pre-existing liens. However, if NW Natural consolidates, merges or sells substantially all of its assets to another corporation, the lien created by the Mortgage will generally not cover the property of the successor corporation, other than the property it acquires from NW Natural and improvements, extensions, additions, renewals and replacements of that property. (See Mortgage, Article XVI.)

The Mortgage provides that the Mortgage Trustees shall have a lien upon the mortgaged property, prior to that of the First Mortgage Bonds, for the payment of their reasonable compensation and expenses and for indemnity against certain liabilities. This lien takes priority over the lien securing the First Mortgage Bonds. (See Mortgage, Section 96.)

### **Issuance of Additional First Mortgage Bonds**

First Mortgage Bonds may be issued from time to time on the basis of:

- (1) 60% of property additions, after adjustments to offset retirements (See Modification of the Mortgage Issuance of Additional First Mortgage Bonds, below),
- (2) the retirement of First Mortgage Bonds or qualified lien bonds, or
- (3) the deposit of cash.

With certain exceptions in the case of (2) above, the issuance of First Mortgage Bonds must meet an earnings test. The adjusted net earnings before income taxes for 12 consecutive months out of the preceding 15 months must be at least twice the annual interest requirements on all First Mortgage Bonds at the time outstanding, including the additional issue, and all indebtedness of prior rank.

Property additions generally include gas, electric, steam or hot water property or gas by-product property acquired after March 31, 1946, but may not include securities, airplanes, automobiles or other vehicles, or natural gas transmission lines or Natural Gas and Oil Production Property. As of September 30, 2007, approximately \$405 million of property additions were available for use as the basis for the issuance of First Mortgage Bonds. As of September 30, 2007, approximately \$193 million of retired First Mortgage Bonds were available for use as the basis for the issuance of First Mortgage Bonds.

## Edgar Filing: NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS CO - Form S-3ASR

The Mortgage contains certain restrictions upon the issuance of First Mortgage Bonds against property subject to liens.

The Bonds will be issued against property additions and/or retired First Mortgage Bonds.

(See Mortgage, Sections 4-7, 20-30 and 46, and Third Supplemental Indenture, Sections 3 and 4.)

## **Table of Contents**

### **Release and Substitution of Property**

Property may be released from the lien of the Mortgage on the basis of:

- (1) the deposit of cash or, to a limited extent, purchase money mortgages,
- (2) property additions, or
- (3) the waiver of the right to issue First Mortgage Bonds on the basis of retired First Mortgage Bonds, in each case without applying any earnings test.

Cash so deposited as the basis for a release and cash deposited as the basis for the issuance of additional First Mortgage Bonds may be withdrawn upon the bases stated in (2) and (3) above without applying an earnings test. When property released is not funded property, property additions used to effect the release may again, in certain cases, become available as credits under the Mortgage, and the waiver of the right to issue First Mortgage Bonds to effect the release may, in certain cases, cease to be effective as such a waiver. Similar provisions are in effect as to cash proceeds of such property. The Mortgage contains special provisions with respect to qualified lien bonds pledged and the disposition of moneys received on pledged prior lien bonds. (See Mortgage, Sections 5, 31, 32, 37, 46 to 50, 59 to 61, 100 and 118.)

### **Satisfaction and Discharge of Mortgage**

The lien of the Mortgage may be canceled and discharged whenever all indebtedness secured by the Mortgage has been paid. First Mortgage Bonds, or any portion of the principal amount thereof, will, prior to the maturity thereof, be deemed to have been paid for purposes of satisfying the lien of the Mortgage and shall not be deemed to be outstanding for any other purpose of the Mortgage if there shall have been deposited with the Corporate Trustee either:

- (1) moneys in the necessary amount, or
- (2)
  - (a) direct obligations of the government of the United States of America, or
  - (b) obligations guaranteed by the government of the United States of America, or
  - (c) securities that are backed by obligations of the government of the United States of America as collateral under an arrangement by which the interest and principal payments on the collateral generally flow immediately through to the holder of the security,

which in any case are not subject to redemption prior to maturity by anyone other than the holders, and the principal of and the interest on which when due, and without any regard to reinvestment thereof, shall be sufficient to pay when due the principal of, premium, if any, and interest due and to become due on said First Mortgage Bonds or portions thereof on the redemption date or maturity date thereof, as the case may be. (See Mortgage, Section 106 and Thirteenth Supplemental Indenture, Section 3.02.)

### **Defaults and Notice Thereof**

Defaults are:

- (1) default in payment of principal,

Edgar Filing: NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS CO - Form S-3ASR

- (2) default for 60 days in payment of interest or of installments of funds for the retirement of First Mortgage Bonds,
- (3) certain defaults with respect to qualified lien bonds,
- (4) certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, and

---

**Table of Contents**

(5) default for 90 days after notice in the case of a breach of certain other covenants.

The Mortgage Trustees may withhold notice of default (except in payment of principal, interest or any fund for the retirement of First Mortgage Bonds) if they think it is in the interest of the bondholders. (See Mortgage, Sections 65 and 66.)

Holders of 25% of the First Mortgage Bonds may declare the principal and the interest due on default, but a majority may annul such declaration if such default has been cured. No holder of First Mortgage Bonds may enforce the lien of the Mortgage without giving the Mortgage Trustees written notice of a default and unless holders of 25% of the First Mortgage Bonds have requested the Mortgage Trustees to act and offered them reasonable opportunity to act and the Mortgage Trustees have failed to act. The Mortgage Trustees are not required to risk their funds or incur personal liability if there is reasonable ground for believing that the repayment is not reasonably assured. Holders of a majority of the First Mortgage Bonds may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceedings for any remedy available to the Mortgage Trustees, or exercising any trust or power conferred upon the Mortgage Trustees, but the Mortgage Trustees are not required to follow such direction if not sufficiently indemnified for expenditures. (See Mortgage, Sections 67, 71, 80 and 94.)

**Evidence to be Furnished to the Mortgage Trustees**

Compliance with Mortgage provisions is evidenced by written statements of NW Natural's officers or persons selected by NW Natural. In certain major matters the accountant, engineer, appraiser or other expert must be independent. Various certificates and other papers, including an annual certificate with reference to compliance with the terms of the Mortgage and absence of defaults, are required to be filed annually and upon the occurrence of certain events. (See Mortgage, Sections 38 and 41-46.)

**Modification of the Mortgage**

The rights of the bondholders may be modified with the consent of holders of 70% of the First Mortgage Bonds and, if less than all series of First Mortgage Bonds are affected, the consent also of holders of 70% of First Mortgage Bonds of each series affected. NW Natural has the right, without any consent or other action by holders of any outstanding series of First Mortgage Bonds, to substitute  $66\frac{2}{3}\%$  for 70%. In general, no modification of the terms of payment of principal and interest, affecting the lien of the Mortgage or reducing the percentage required for modification (except as provided above) will be effective against any bondholder without his consent. (See Mortgage, Article XIX and Ninth Supplemental Indenture, Section 6.)

NW Natural has the right to amend the Mortgage, without any consent or other action by holders of any outstanding series of First Mortgage Bonds in the following respects:

*Release and Substitution of Property*

To permit the release of property at the lesser of its cost or its fair value at the time that such property became funded property, rather than at its fair value at the time of its release; and to facilitate the release of unfunded property. (See Mortgage, Sections 3, 59 and 60 and Eighteenth Supplemental Indenture, Section 2.03.)

*Issuance of Additional First Mortgage Bonds*

To clarify that:

- (1) for purposes of determining annual interest requirements, interest on First Mortgage Bonds or other indebtedness bearing interest at a variable interest rate shall be computed at the average of the interest rates borne by such First Mortgage Bonds or other indebtedness during the period of calculation or, if such First Mortgage Bonds or other indebtedness shall have been issued after such period or shall be the subject of pending applications, interest shall be computed at the initial rate borne upon issuance, and

**Table of Contents**

(2) no extraordinary items shall be included in operating expenses or deducted from revenues or other income in calculating adjusted net earnings (see Mortgage, Section 7); and

(3) to revise the basis for the issuance of additional First Mortgage Bonds from 60% of property additions, after adjustments to offset retirements, to 70%.

(See Mortgage, Sections 25, 26, 59 and 61 and Eighteenth Supplemental Indenture, Sections 2.01 and 2.02.)

**The Corporate Trustee**

Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas also serves as the Indenture Trustee under the Indenture under which the Indenture Securities, as defined below, are issued.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE UNSECURED DEBT SECURITIES**

**General**

NW Natural will issue its unsecured debt securities, in one or more series, under an Indenture, dated as of June 1, 1991, between NW Natural and Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas, as trustee (Indenture Trustee). This Indenture, as it may be amended and supplemented from time to time, is referred to in this prospectus as the Indenture. These unsecured debt securities offered by this prospectus are referred to in this prospectus as the Unsecured Debt Securities.

The Indenture provides for the issuance of debentures, notes or other debt by NW Natural in an unlimited amount from time to time. The Unsecured Debt Securities and all other debentures, notes or other debt of NW Natural issued or to be issued under the Indenture are collectively referred to in this prospectus as the Indenture Securities.

The Indenture does not limit the amount of debt, secured or unsecured, which may be issued by NW Natural.

Indenture Securities will rank equally with all other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness of NW Natural. Substantially all of the gas plants, distribution systems and certain other materially important physical properties of NW Natural are subject to the lien of the Mortgage securing the First Mortgage Bonds. (See Description of the Bonds Security and Issuance of Additional First Mortgage Bonds, above.)

This section briefly summarizes some of the provisions of the Unsecured Debt Securities and some of the provisions of the Indenture and uses some terms that are not defined in this prospectus but that are defined in the Indenture. This summary is not complete. The Indenture is on file with the SEC and is incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You should read the Indenture for a complete understanding of the provisions that may be important to you and for the definitions of some terms used in this summary.

Each series of Unsecured Debt Securities may have different terms. NW Natural will include some or all of the following information about a specific series of Unsecured Debt Securities in the prospectus supplement(s) relating to those Unsecured Debt Securities:

the title of those Unsecured Debt Securities,

any limit upon the aggregate principal amount of those Unsecured Debt Securities,

whether those Unsecured Debt Securities will be offered on a periodic basis, with the specific terms of such Unsecured Debt Securities to be determined upon their issuance.



**Table of Contents**

the date(s) on which, and the manner in which, NW Natural will pay the principal of those Unsecured Debt Securities,

the rate(s) of interest on those Unsecured Debt Securities, or how the rate(s) of interest will be determined, the date(s) from which interest will accrue, the dates on which NW Natural will pay interest, the record date for any interest payable on any interest payment date, the manner in which such interest shall be payable, and the basis of computation of interest,

the place(s) at which or methods by which the registered owners of those Unsecured Debt Securities may transfer or exchange those Unsecured Debt Securities and serve notices and demands to or upon NW Natural,

any date(s) on which, the price(s) at which and the terms and conditions upon which those Unsecured Debt Securities may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at the option of NW Natural,

any obligation of NW Natural, and the terms and conditions thereof, to redeem or repurchase those Unsecured Debt Securities, pursuant to any sinking fund or other provisions that would obligate NW Natural to repurchase or redeem those Unsecured Debt Securities,

the denominations in which NW Natural may issue those Unsecured Debt Securities, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple of \$1,000,

whether the amount of payments of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on those Unsecured Debt Securities, may be determined with reference to an index, and, if so the manner in which such amounts shall be determined,

the portion of the principal amount of those Unsecured Debt Securities that NW Natural will pay upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity of those Unsecured Debt Securities, if other than the entire principal amount of those Unsecured Debt Securities,

any events of default with respect to those Unsecured Debt Securities and any covenants of NW Natural for the benefit of the registered owners of those Unsecured Debt Securities, other than those specified in this prospectus,

the terms, if any, pursuant to which those Unsecured Debt Securities may be converted into or exchanged for shares of capital stock or other securities of NW Natural or any other entity,

the person to whom NW Natural will pay interest on those Unsecured Debt Securities on any interest payment date, if other than the person in whose name those Unsecured Debt Securities are registered at the close of business on the record date for that interest payment,

the amount and terms of a service charge, if any, for the registration of transfer or exchange of those Unsecured Debt Securities,

any exceptions to the definition of Legal Holiday or variation in the definition of Business Day under the Indenture with respect to those Unsecured Debt Securities,

the terms, if any, required to permit those Unsecured Debt Securities to be registered pursuant to a non-certificated system of registration, and

any other terms of those Unsecured Debt Securities that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the Indenture.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Form, Exchange and Payment**

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement relating to the Unsecured Debt Securities, the Unsecured Debt Securities will be (1) issued in fully registered form in denominations of \$1,000 or any amount in excess thereof that is an integral multiple of \$1,000 and (2) exchangeable at the office of Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas in New York City, without charge other than taxes or other governmental charges incident thereto, and principal, premium, if any, and interest will be payable at such office.

### **Defeasance**

The principal amount of the Unsecured Debt Securities of any series issued under the Indenture will be deemed to have been paid for purposes of the Indenture and the entire indebtedness of NW Natural in respect thereof will be deemed to have been satisfied and discharged, if there shall have been irrevocably deposited with the Indenture Trustee, in trust:

- (1) money in an amount which will be sufficient, or
- (2) in the case of a deposit made prior to the maturity of those Unsecured Debt Securities, Government Obligations (as defined below), which do not contain provisions permitting the redemption or other prepayment thereof at the option of the issuer thereof, the principal of and the interest on which when due, without any regard to reinvestment thereof, will provide moneys which, together with the money, if any, deposited with or held by the Indenture Trustee, will be sufficient, or
- (3) a combination of (1) and (2) which will be sufficient,

to pay when due the principal of and premium, if any, and interest, if any, due and to become due on the Unsecured Debt Securities of that series that are outstanding. For this purpose, Government Obligations include direct obligations of, or obligations unconditionally guaranteed by, the United States of America entitled to the benefit of the full faith and credit thereof and certificates, depositary receipts or other instruments which evidence a direct ownership interest in such obligations or in any specific interest or principal payments due in respect thereof. (See Indenture, Sections 101, 701.)

If NW Natural deposits any money and/or Government Obligations with respect to the Unsecured Debt Securities of any series, or any portion of the principal amount thereof, prior to the maturity or redemption of such Unsecured Debt Securities or such portion of the principal amount thereof, for the satisfaction or discharge of the indebtedness of NW Natural in respect to such Unsecured Debt Securities or such portion thereof as described in Section 701 of the Indenture, NW Natural shall deliver to the Indenture Trustee either:

- (1) an instrument wherein NW Natural, notwithstanding such satisfaction and discharge, shall assume the obligation to irrevocably deposit with the Indenture Trustee such additional sums of money, if any, or additional Government Obligations, if any, or any combination thereof, at such time or times, as shall be necessary, together with the money and/or Government Obligations previously deposited, to pay when due the principal of and premium, if any, and interest due and to become due on such Unsecured Debt Securities or such portions thereof, all in accordance with and subject to the provisions of said Section 701; provided, however, that such instrument may state that the obligation of NW Natural to make additional deposits as described above shall be subject to the delivery to NW Natural by the Indenture Trustee of a notice asserting the amount of such deficiency accompanied by an opinion of an independent public accountant of nationally recognized standing, selected by the Indenture Trustee, showing the calculation thereof, or
- (2) an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of such Unsecured Debt Securities, or such portions of the principal amount thereof, will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of such satisfaction and discharge and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts, at the same times and in the same manner as if such satisfaction and discharge had not been effected.



## **Table of Contents**

In the event that NW Natural shall elect to deliver to the Indenture Trustee an instrument as described in clause (1) of the preceding paragraph in connection with any such deposit of money and/or Government Obligations with the Indenture Trustee, under current applicable United States federal income tax regulations, the holders of such Unsecured Debt Securities, or such portions thereof, will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of such satisfaction and discharge and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts, at the same times and in the same manner as if such deposit had not been effected. There can be no assurance that such United States federal income tax regulations will not change such that, as a result of such deposit and delivery by NW Natural of such instrument, holders of Unsecured Debt Securities may recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes and may not be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts, at the same times and in the same manner as if such deposit had not been made.

## **Events of Default and Notice Thereof**

Events of default are:

- (1) default for three business days in payment of principal,
- (2) default for 60 days in payment of interest,
- (3) certain events in bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization,
- (4) default for 90 days after notice in the case of a breach of any other covenant, and
- (5) any other event of default specified with respect to the Indenture Securities of a particular series.

No event of default with respect to a series of Indenture Securities necessarily constitutes an event of default with respect to the Indenture Securities of any other series.

The Indenture Trustee may withhold notice of default (except in payment of principal, interest or any funds for the retirement of Indenture Securities) if it, in good faith, determines that withholding of such notice is in the interest of the holders of the Indenture Securities. (See Indenture, Sections 801 and 903.)

Either the Indenture Trustee or the holders of not less than 33% in principal amount (or such lesser amount as may be provided in the case of discount Indenture Securities) of the outstanding Indenture Securities of all defaulted series, considered as one class, may declare the principal and interest on such series due on default, but NW Natural may annul such default by effecting its cure and paying overdue interest and principal. No holder of Indenture Securities may enforce the Indenture without having given the Indenture Trustee written notice of default, and unless the holders of a majority of the Indenture Securities of all defaulted series, considered as one class, shall have requested the Indenture Trustee to act and offered reasonable indemnity, and for 60 days the Indenture Trustee shall have failed to act. But, each holder has an absolute right to receive payment of principal and interest when due and to institute suit for the enforcement of such payment. The Indenture Trustee is not required to risk its funds or incur any financial liability if it has reasonable grounds to believe that repayment is not reasonably assured.

The holders of a majority of the Indenture Securities of all defaulted series, considered as one class, may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceedings for any remedy available to the Indenture Trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the Indenture Trustee, with respect to the Indenture Securities of such series, but the Indenture Trustee is not required to follow such direction if not sufficiently indemnified and the Indenture Trustee may take any other action it deems proper which is not inconsistent with such direction. (See Indenture, Sections 802, 807, 808, 812 and 902.)

## **Table of Contents**

### **Evidence to be Furnished to the Indenture Trustee**

Compliance with Indenture provisions will be evidenced by written statements of NW Natural's officers. An annual certificate with reference to compliance with the covenants and conditions of the Indenture and the absence of defaults is required to be filed with the Indenture Trustee. (See Indenture, Section 1004.)

### **Modification of the Indenture**

The rights of the holders of the Indenture Securities may be modified with the consent of the holders of a majority of the Indenture Securities of all series or Tranches, as defined below, affected, considered as one class. However, certain specified rights of the holders of Indenture Securities may be modified without the consent of the holders if such modification would not be deemed to adversely affect their interests in any material respect.

In general, no modification of the terms of payment of principal and interest, no reduction of the percentage in principal amount of the Indenture Securities outstanding under such series required to consent to any supplemental indenture or waiver under the Indenture, no reduction of such percentage necessary for quorum and voting, and no modification of certain of the provisions in the Indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waivers of certain covenants and waivers of past defaults is effective against any holder of Indenture Securities without the consent of such holder. Tranche means a group of Indenture Securities which are of the same series and have identical terms except as to principal amount and/or date of issuance. (See Indenture, Article Twelve.)

### **The Indenture Trustee**

Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas also serves as the Corporate Trustee under the Mortgage under which the First Mortgage Bonds are issued.

## **DESCRIPTION OF JUNIOR SUBORDINATED DEBENTURES**

NW Natural may issue junior subordinated debentures, in one or more series, under an indenture, between NW Natural and the trustee specified therein. The terms of any junior subordinated debentures will be described in a prospectus supplement.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK**

The following is a summary of certain rights and privileges of NW Natural's preferred stock. This summary description does not purport to be complete. Reference is made to NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation, its Bylaws and any articles of amendment to the Restated Articles of Incorporation establishing a particular series of preferred stock, which are filed as exhibits to this registration statement, or in the case of any articles of amendment relating to a future series of preferred stock, will be filed with the SEC prior to the issuance of such series, and incorporated herein by reference. The following statements are qualified in their entirety by such references.

The Board of Directors is authorized under NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation to provide for the issuance from time to time of preferred stock in one or more series, and as to each series to fix and determine the relative rights and preferences, serial designation, dividend rate, redemption prices, voluntary and involuntary liquidation prices, sinking fund provisions for the redemption or purchase of shares, if any, and conversion provisions, if any, applicable to shares of such series. NW Natural will include some or all of this information about a specific series of preferred stock being offered in the prospectus supplement(s) relating to such series. As used herein, the term preferred stock includes all series.

### **Dividends**

Each series of the preferred stock is entitled in preference to the common stock to dividends cumulative from the date of issue, at the rate fixed by the Board of Directors, payable quarterly on February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15 in each year or on such other date or dates as the Board of Directors shall determine.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Voting Rights**

Generally, only NW Natural's common stock has voting rights. The common stock has cumulative voting rights with respect to the election of directors. The preferred stock shall have no right to vote in the election of directors or for any other purpose, except as may be otherwise provided by law or by resolutions establishing any series of preferred stock in accordance with NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation.

Certain terms relating to NW Natural's preferred stock in respect of dividends, liquidation rights, limitations on payment of dividends and voting are discussed below in "Description of Common Stock," "Dividends and Liquidation Rights," and "Dividend Limitations."

## **DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK**

### **General**

The following is a summary of certain rights and privileges of NW Natural's common stock. This summary description does not purport to be complete. Reference is made to NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation, amended as of May 31, 2006, and Bylaws, as amended through May 24, 2007, which are incorporated herein by reference. The following statements are qualified in their entirety by such references.

Under NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation, NW Natural is authorized to issue 60,000,000 shares of common stock and 3,500,000 shares of preferred stock. At December 31, 2007, 26,407,348 shares of common stock were outstanding and no shares of preferred stock were outstanding.

The Board of Directors is authorized under NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation to provide for the issuance from time to time of preferred stock in one or more series, and as to each series to fix and determine the relative rights and preferences, serial designation, dividend rate, redemption prices, voluntary and involuntary liquidation prices, sinking fund provisions for the redemption or purchase of shares, if any, and conversion provisions, if any, applicable to shares of such series.

### **Dividends and Liquidation Rights**

Except as hereinafter stated, the common stock is entitled to receive such dividends as are declared by the Board of Directors and to receive ratably on liquidation any assets which remain after payment of liabilities. NW Natural has an authorized class of senior capital stock, referred to as preferred stock, none of which is currently outstanding. NW Natural's preferred stock is entitled in preference to the common stock (1) to cumulative dividends at the annual rate fixed for each series by the Board of Directors, and (2) in voluntary and involuntary liquidation, to the amounts fixed for each series by the Board of Directors, plus in each case, unpaid accumulated dividends.

### **Dividend Limitations**

Should dividends on the preferred stock be in arrears, no dividends on the common stock may be paid or declared. Future series of the preferred stock could contain sinking fund, purchase or redemption obligations under which no dividends on the common stock may be paid or declared while such obligations are in default. Common stock dividends also may be restricted by the provisions of future instruments pursuant to which NW Natural may issue long-term debt.

### **Voting Rights**

Except as provided by law or as described below, only the common stock has voting rights. Cumulative voting is permitted by the Restated Articles of Incorporation to holders of common stock at elections of directors.

### **Classification of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors of NW Natural may consist of not less than 9 nor more than 13 persons, as determined by the Board, divided into three classes as nearly equal in number as possible. The current number is 12. One class is elected for a three-year term at each annual meeting of shareholders. Vacancies, including those

## **Table of Contents**

resulting from an increase in the size of the Board, may be filled by a majority vote of the directors then in office, to serve until the next annual meeting of shareholders. One or more of the directors may be removed, with or without cause, by the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote thereon; provided, however, that if fewer than all of the directors should be candidates for removal, no one of them shall be removed if the votes cast against such director's removal would be sufficient to elect such director if then cumulatively voted at an election of the class of directors of which such director shall be a part. Except for those persons nominated by the Board, no person shall be eligible for election as a director unless a request from a shareholder entitled to vote in the election of directors that such person be nominated and such person's consent thereto shall be delivered to the Secretary of NW Natural within the time period specified in advance of the meeting at which such election shall be held. The foregoing provisions may not be amended or repealed except by the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote at an election of directors.

## **Transactions with Related Persons**

NW Natural shall not enter into any business transaction with a related person or in which a related person shall have an interest (except proportionately as a shareholder of NW Natural) without first obtaining both (1) the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the outstanding shares of the capital stock of NW Natural not held by such related person, and (2) the determination of a majority of the continuing directors that the cash or fair market value of the property, securities or other consideration to be received per share by the holders, other than such related person, of the shares of each class or series of the capital stock of NW Natural in such business transaction shall not be less than the highest purchase price paid by such related person in acquiring any of its holdings of shares of the same class or series, unless the continuing directors by a majority vote shall either (a) have expressly approved the acquisition of the shares of the capital stock of NW Natural that caused such related person to become a related person, or (b) have expressly approved such business transaction. As used in this paragraph: a business transaction includes a merger, consolidation, reorganization or recapitalization, a purchase, sale, lease, exchange, transfer, mortgage or other disposition of all or a substantial part (10% or more) of the property and assets of NW Natural or a related person, an issuance, sale, exchange or other disposition of securities of NW Natural and a liquidation, spin-off or dissolution; a related person includes a person, organization or group thereof owning 10% or more of the capital stock of NW Natural; continuing directors are those whose nominations for directorship shall have been approved by a majority of the directors in office on April 9, 1984 or by a majority of the then continuing directors. The foregoing provisions may not be amended or repealed except by the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the shares of the capital stock of NW Natural (other than shares held by related persons).

## **Preemptive Rights**

The holders of the common stock have no preemptive rights.

## **Other Provisions**

The issued and outstanding shares of NW Natural's common stock are, and the common stock offered hereby will be, fully paid and nonassessable.

## **Certain Anti-Takeover Matters**

NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws include a number of provisions that may have the effect of discouraging persons from acquiring large blocks of its stock or delaying or preventing a change in its control. The material provisions that may have such an effect include:

establishment of a classified Board of Directors, whereby only one-third of the board stands for election each year;

limitations on certain business transactions (including mergers, consolidations, plans of exchange) with any person or entity and any persons or entities related thereto who beneficially own 10 percent or more of the capital stock of NW Natural;



**Table of Contents**

authorization for NW Natural's Board of Directors (subject to any applicable law) to issue preferred stock in series and to fix rights and preferences of the series;

advance notice procedures with respect to nominations of directors or proposals other than those adopted or recommended by NW Natural's Board of Directors;

requirement that holders of not less than two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote are required to remove directors or to amend certain provisions of NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation; and

requirement that Bylaws may only be amended or repealed by resolution of a majority of the Board of Directors, subject to repeal or change by action of the shareholders.

NW Natural is subject to the provisions of sections 60.825 to 60.845 of the Oregon Business Corporation Act ( OBCA ) which generally provide that in the event a person or entity acquires 15% or more of NW Natural's voting stock ( interested shareholder ), NW Natural and such interested shareholder and any affiliate, may not engage in the following business combinations for a period of three years following the date that person became an interested shareholder:

a merger or plan of share exchange;

any sale, lease, mortgage or other disposition of the assets of the corporation where the assets have an aggregate market value equal to 10% or more of the aggregate market value of NW Natural's assets or outstanding capital stock; and

transactions that result in the issuance of capital stock to the shareholder that acquired 15% or more of the voting stock. These restrictions do not apply if:

the Board of Directors approved the share acquisition or business combination that resulted in the person becoming an interested shareholder before the time such person became an interested shareholder;

as a result of the share acquisition, the person became an interested shareholder and 85% owner of the voting stock, excluding shares owned by persons who are directors and also officers and shares owned by certain employee benefit plans; or

the business combination transaction is approved by the Board of Directors and authorized by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock not owned by the interested shareholder.

NW Natural is also subject to the provisions of Sections 60.801 to 60.816 of the Oregon Control Share Act ( OCSA ), which generally provide that a person who acquires voting stock in a transaction which results in such person holding more than 20%, 33-1/3% or 50% of the total voting power cannot vote the shares it acquires in the acquisition unless voting rights are accorded to such control shares by the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting shares, excluding the control shares held by such person and shares held by officers and inside directors, and by the holders of a majority of the outstanding voting shares, including shares held by officers and inside directors. This vote would be required at the time an acquiring person's holdings exceed 20% of the total voting power, and again at the time the acquiring person's holdings exceed 33-1/3% and 50%, respectively. The acquiring person may, but is not required to, submit an acquiring person statement setting forth certain information about the acquiring person and its plans with respect to NW Natural. The acquiring person statement may also request that NW Natural call a special meeting of shareholders to determine whether the control shares will be allowed to retain voting rights. If the acquiring person does not request a special meeting of shareholders, the issue of voting rights of control shares will be considered at the next annual meeting or special meeting of shareholders that is held more than 60 days after the date of the acquisition of control shares. Shares are not deemed to be acquired in

## Edgar Filing: NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS CO - Form S-3ASR

a control share acquisition if, among other things, they are acquired from the issuing corporation, or are issued pursuant to a plan of merger or exchange effected in compliance with the OBCA and the issuing corporation is a party to the merger or exchange agreement.

## **Table of Contents**

The OCSA and the OBCA have anti-takeover effects because they will encourage any potential acquirer to negotiate with NW Natural's Board of Directors and will also discourage potential acquirers unwilling to comply with the provisions of these laws. An Oregon corporation may provide in its articles of incorporation or bylaws that the laws described above do not apply to its shares. NW Natural has not adopted such a provision.

### **DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND STOCK PURCHASE UNITS**

NW Natural may issue stock purchase contracts, including contracts obligating you to purchase from NW Natural, and NW Natural to sell to you, a specific number of shares of preferred stock or common stock at a future date or dates. The price per share of preferred stock or common stock may be fixed at the time the stock purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula described in the stock purchase contracts. NW Natural may issue stock purchase contracts separately or as a part of units each consisting of a stock purchase contract and debt securities or debt obligations of third parties, including United States Treasury securities, securing your obligations to purchase the preferred stock or the common stock under the stock purchase contract. The stock purchase contracts may require NW Natural to make periodic payments to you or vice versa and the payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The stock purchase contracts may require you to secure your obligations in a specified manner. NW Natural will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the terms of any stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units.

### **PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

NW Natural may sell the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus and one or more prospectus supplements (Offered Securities) in one or more series in any of three ways: (1) through underwriters or dealers; (2) through agents; or (3) directly to a limited number of purchasers or to a single purchaser.

#### **Through Underwriters or Dealers**

If underwriters are used in the sale, the Offered Securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at the initial public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of the sale. The Offered Securities may be offered to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more managing underwriters. The underwriter or underwriters with respect to the Offered Securities will be named in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering and, if an underwriting syndicate is used, the managing underwriter or underwriters will be set forth on the cover page of such prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise set forth in such prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the Offered Securities offered by such prospectus supplement will be subject to certain conditions precedent, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such Offered Securities if any are purchased.

#### **Through Agents**

The Offered Securities may be sold through agents designated by NW Natural from time to time. A prospectus supplement will set forth the name of any agent involved in the offer or sale of the Offered Securities in respect of which such prospectus supplement is delivered as well as any commissions payable by NW Natural to such agent. Unless otherwise indicated in such prospectus supplement, any such agent will be acting on a reasonable best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

#### **Directly to One or More Purchasers**

NW Natural may sell the Offered Securities directly to one or more purchasers. In this case, no underwriters or agents would be involved.

#### **General Information**

The prospectus supplement with respect to the Offered Securities will set forth the terms of the offering of such Offered Securities, including:

the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents;

**Table of Contents**

the purchase price of such Offered Securities and the proceeds to NW Natural from such sale;

any underwriting discounts, agents' commissions and other items constituting underwriting compensation;

any initial public offering price; and

any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

Any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time.

If so indicated in the prospectus supplement with respect to the Offered Securities, NW Natural may authorize agents, underwriters or dealers to solicit offers by certain specified institutions to purchase the Offered Securities from NW Natural at the initial public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. Such contracts will be subject to those conditions set forth in such prospectus supplement, and such prospectus supplement will set forth the commission payable for solicitation of such contracts.

Agents, underwriters and dealers may be entitled under agreements entered into with NW Natural to indemnification by NW Natural against certain civil liabilities, including certain liabilities under the Securities Act or to contribution by NW Natural with respect to payments which such agents, underwriters and dealers may be required to make in respect thereof.

**EXPERTS**

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this Prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

**LEGALITY**

The legality of the securities will be passed upon for NW Natural by Margaret D. Kirkpatrick, Esquire, General Counsel of NW Natural, and by Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP, New York, New York. Ms. Kirkpatrick may rely upon the opinion of Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP as to certain legal matters arising under New York law. Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP may rely upon the opinion of Ms. Kirkpatrick as to certain legal matters arising under Oregon law.

**Table of Contents**

**PART II**

**INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS**

**Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.**

Filing Fee-Securities and Exchange Commission *	
Fees of Trustees, including counsel and authentication fees **	
Legal fees **	
Accounting fees and expenses **	
Rating Agencies fees **	
Printing and engraving **	
Listing fees ***	
Miscellaneous expense **	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

- \* Under Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, the SEC registration fee will be paid at the time of any particular offering of securities under this registration statement, and is therefore not currently determinable.
- \*\* Because an indeterminate amount of securities is covered by this registration statement, the expenses in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities are therefore not currently determinable.
- \*\*\* The listing fee is based upon the principal amount of securities listed, if any, and is therefore not currently determinable.

**Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.**

The Oregon Business Corporation Act (the Act) provides, in general, that a director or officer of a corporation who has been or is threatened to be made a defendant in a legal proceeding because that person is or was a director or officer of the corporation:

- (1) shall be indemnified by the corporation for all expenses of such litigation when the director or officer is wholly successful on the merits or otherwise;
- (2) may be indemnified by the corporation for the expenses, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement of such litigation (other than a derivative lawsuit) if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in, or at least not opposed to, the best interests of the corporation (and, in the case of a criminal proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the conduct was unlawful); and
- (3) may be indemnified by the corporation for expenses of a derivative lawsuit (a suit by a shareholder alleging a breach by a director or officer of a duty owed to the corporation) if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in, or at least not opposed to, the best interests of the corporation, provided the director or officer is not adjudged liable to the corporation.

The Act also authorizes the advancement of litigation expenses to a director or officer upon receipt of a written affirmation of the director's or officer's good faith belief that the standard of conduct in Section (2) or (3) above has been met and an undertaking by such director or officer to repay such expenses if it is ultimately determined that he or she did not meet that standard and, therefore, is not entitled to be indemnified. The Act also provides that the indemnification provided thereunder shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement, vote of shareholders or disinterested directors or otherwise.

## **Table of Contents**

NW Natural's Bylaws provide that NW Natural shall indemnify directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted under the Act, thus making mandatory the discretionary indemnification authorized by the Act.

NW Natural's Restated Articles of Incorporation provide that NW Natural shall indemnify its officers and directors to the fullest extent permitted by law, which may be broader than the indemnification authorized by the Act.

NW Natural's shareholders have approved and NW Natural has entered into indemnity agreements with its directors and officers which provide for indemnity to the fullest extent permitted by law and also alter or clarify the statutory indemnity in the following respects:

- (1) prompt advancement of litigation expenses is provided if the director or officer makes the required affirmation and undertaking;
- (2) the director or officer is permitted to enforce the indemnity obligation in court and the burden is on NW Natural to prove that the director or officer is not entitled to indemnification;
- (3) indemnity is explicitly provided for judgments and settlements in derivative actions;
- (4) prompt indemnification is provided unless a determination is made that the director or officer is not entitled to indemnification; and
- (5) partial indemnification is permitted if the director or officer is not entitled to full indemnification.

NW Natural maintains in effect a policy of insurance providing for reimbursement to NW Natural of payments made to directors and officers as indemnity for damages, judgments, settlements, costs and expenses incurred by them which NW Natural may be required or permitted to make according to applicable law, common or statutory, or under provisions of its Restated Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws or agreements effective under such laws.

### **Item 16. List of Exhibits.**

Reference is made to the Exhibit Index on page II-7 hereof.

### **Item 17. Undertakings.**

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

- (1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:
  - (i) to include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;
  - (ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement; and
  - (iii) to include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement,

*provided, however*, that subsections (i), (ii) and (iii) above do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those subsections is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the SEC by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.



**Table of Contents**

- (2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
- (3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.
- (4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:
- (i) each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and
- (ii) each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii) or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof,
- provided, however,* that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.
- (5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:
- (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
- (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
- (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
- (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.
- (6) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's Annual Report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered herein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.



**Table of Contents**

- (7) To file, if applicable, an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the trustee to act under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the SEC under Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the provisions described under Item 15 of this registration statement, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by any registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of such registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

**Table of Contents**

**POWER OF ATTORNEY**

Each director and/or officer of the registrant whose signature appears hereinafter hereby appoints Mark S. Dodson, David H. Anderson, Margaret D. Kirkpatrick and John T. Hood, the Agents for Service named in this registration statement, and each of them severally, as his attorney-in-fact to sign in his name and behalf, in any and all capacities stated below, and to file with the Securities and Exchange Commission any and all amendments, including post-effective amendments, to this registration statement, and the registrant hereby also appoints each such Agent for Service as its attorney-in-fact with like authority to sign and file any such amendments in its name and behalf.

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Portland, and State of Oregon, on the 8th day of January, 2008.

NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY

By: /s/ Mark S. Dodson  
 Mark S. Dodson  
 Chief Executive Officer

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed below by the following persons in the capacities and on the date indicated.

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ Mark S. Dodson		
Mark S. Dodson,	Principal Executive Officer and Director	January 8, 2008
Chief Executive Officer		
/s/ David H. Anderson		
David H. Anderson	Principal Financial Officer	January 8, 2008
Senior Vice President		
and Chief Financial Officer		
/s/ Stephen P. Feltz		
Stephen P. Feltz,	Principal Accounting Officer	January 8, 2008
Treasurer and Controller		
/s/ Timothy P. Boyle		
Timothy P. Boyle	Director	) January 8, 2008
		)
		)



**Table of Contents**

/s/ Randall C. Papé

Randall C. Papé	Director	)	January 8, 2008
		)	
		)	

/s/ Jane L. Peverett

Jane L. Peverett	Director	)	January 8, 2008
		)	
		)	

George J. Puentes

Director	)
	)
	)

/s/ Richard G. Reiten

Richard G. Reiten	Director	)	January 8, 2008
		)	
		)	

/s/ Kenneth Thrasher

Kenneth Thrasher	Director	)	January 8, 2008
		)	
		)	

/s/ Russell F. Tromley

Russell F. Tromley	Director	)	January 8, 2008
		)	
		)	

**Table of Contents****INDEX TO EXHIBITS**

<b>Exhibit No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
+1(a)	Form of Underwriting Agreement relating to the debt securities.
+1(b)	Form of Underwriting Agreement relating to the common stock.
+1(c)	Form of Underwriting Agreement relating to the preferred stock.
+1(d)	Form of Underwriting Agreement relating to the stock purchase contracts and stock purchase units.
+1(e)	Form of Distribution Agreement.
*4(a)	Restated Articles of Incorporation, as filed and effective May 31, 2006 and amended May 31, 2006 (filed as Exhibit 3a. to Form 10-K for 2006).
*4(b)	Bylaws as amended through May 24, 2007 (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to Form 8-K filed with the SEC on May 29, 2007, File No. 1-15973).
+4(c)	Form of Articles of Amendment to Restated Articles of Incorporation establishing a series of Preferred Stock.
*4(d)	Copy of Mortgage and Deed of Trust, dated as of July 1, 1946, to Bankers Trust Company (now Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas) and R.G. Page (to whom Stanley Burg is now successor), Trustees (filed as Exhibit 7(j) in File No. 2-6494), together with Indentures supplemental thereto Nos. 1 through 14, dated, respectively, as of June 1, 1949, March 1, 1954, April 1, 1956, February 1, 1959, July 1, 1961, January 1, 1964, March 1, 1966, December 1, 1969, April 1, 1971, January 1, 1975, December 1, 1975, July 1, 1981, June 1, 1985, and November 1, 1985 (filed as Exhibit 4(d) in File No. 33-1929); No. 15, dated as of July 1, 1986 (filed as Exhibit (4)(c) in File No. 33-24168); Nos. 16, 17 and 18, dated, respectively, as of November 1, 1988, October 1, 1989 and July 1, 1990 (filed as Exhibit (4)(c) in File No. 33-40482); No. 19, dated as of June 1, 1991 (filed as Exhibit 4(c) in File No. 33-64014; and No. 20, dated as of June 1, 1993 (filed as Exhibit 4(c) in File No. 33-53795).
*4(e)	Form of Supplemental Indenture relating to First Mortgage Bonds (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4(f) to Form S-3 filed with the SEC on February 9, 2004, File No. 333-112604).
*4(f)	Form of First Mortgage Bond (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4(g) to Form S-3 filed with the SEC on February 9, 2004, File No. 333-112604).
*4(g)	Copy of Indenture, dated as of June 1, 1991, to Bankers Trust Company (now Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas), Trustee, relating to the Unsecured Debt Securities (filed as Exhibit 4(e) in File No. 33-64014).
*4(h)	Copy of Officers Certificate, dated as of June 18, 1993, establishing series of unsecured medium term notes and Form of Instructions for both secured and unsecured medium term notes (filed as Exhibit 4(f) to Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 1993).
*4(i)	Copy of Officers Certificate, dated as of January 17, 2003, supplemental to the Officers Certificate, dated as of June 18, 1993 (filed as Exhibit 4(f)(1) to Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2002).
4(j)	Copy of Officers Certificate, dated as of September 28, 2004, supplemental to the Officers Certificate, dated as of June 18, 1993.
*4(k)	Form of Officers Certificate, together with form of fixed rate unsecured note, establishing the issuance of one or more series of Unsecured Debt Securities (including the form of Unsecured Debt Security) (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4(j) to Form S-3 filed with the SEC on February 9, 2004, File No. 333-112604).
4(l)	Form of Indenture relating to junior subordinated debentures.

---

**Table of Contents**

<b>Exhibit No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
4(m)	Form of Officers Certificate, together with form of junior subordinated debentures.
4(n)	Form of Purchase Contract Agreement.
+4(o)	Form of Pledge Agreement relating to the stock purchase contracts and stock purchase units.
5(a)	Opinion of Margaret D. Kirkpatrick, Esquire, regarding the validity of the securities.
5(b)	Opinion of Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP, regarding the validity of the securities.
12	Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preference Dividends.
23(a)	Consent of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.
23(b)	The consents of Margaret D. Kirkpatrick, Esquire, and of Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner LLP are included in their opinions filed, respectively, as Exhibits 5(a) and 5(b).
24	Power of attorney (see page II-5).
25(a)	Statement of Eligibility of the Corporate Trustee on Form T-1 related to the first mortgage bonds.
25(b)	Statement of Eligibility of Stanley Burg on Form T-2.
25(c)	Statement of Eligibility of the Indenture Trustee on Form T-1 related to the unsecured debt securities.
++25(d)	Statement of Eligibility of the Indenture Trustee on Form T-1 related to the junior subordinated debentures.
++25(e)	Statement of Eligibility of the Indenture Trustee on Form T-1 related to the stock purchase contracts and stock purchase units.

---

\* Incorporated by reference herein as indicated.

+ To be filed by amendment or pursuant to a report to be filed pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 if applicable.

++ To be filed by amendment or pursuant to Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 if applicable.