

RTO Insider

YOUR EYES AND EARS ON THE ORGANIZED ELECTRIC MARKETS

CAISO ■ ERCOT ■ ISO-NE ■ MISO ■ NYISO ■ PJM ■ SPP

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CAISO/West

NV Energy Confirms Intent to Join CAISO's EDAM
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 CAISO ■ ERCOT ■ ISO-NE ■ MISO ■ NYISO ■ PJM ■ SPP

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In Memoriam

Merry Eisner, *RTO Insider* Co-founder and COO, Passes Away at 66

RTO Insider co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Meredith (“Merry”) Eisner-Heidorn, whose passion for children, public education and Philadelphia sports left a mark on all who knew her, died in Baltimore on May 28, just two months after learning she had lung cancer. She was 66.

Among Merry’s survivors are her husband and *RTO Insider* co-founder Rich Heidorn Jr., her twin sons, Zach and Ben, 25, and her beloved dog, Daisy.

Rich and Merry got married in their living room in February 2013, a month after Rich got laid off from Bloomberg Government. Merry had been laid off from a job months before. “We figured we’d get the ‘for poorer’ part taken care of upfront,” Rich said.

Merry, who had a background in marketing and database design, and Rich, a former FERC staffer and journalist, published the first issue of what was originally called *PJM Insider* in March 2013. The pair grew the company without any outside funding, expanding from PJM to the six other RTOs and ISOs in the U.S. and adding two new publications, *ERO Insider* in 2019 and *NetZero Insider* in 2021.

Merry never considered herself a salesperson,

but she filled that role for the first three years of the company. “I always said that without her, I’d have only two subscribers — and one of them would be my mother!” Rich said.

Merry “raised two amazing sons, helped create and grow a successful business, and shared a special union with her husband, Rich Heidorn,” said Merry’s younger brother, Randy. “Merry was tenacious and passionate, and her passing leaves a giant void for all those whose lives she touched.”

Early Years

Meredith Baer Goldner was born in Philadelphia on Sept. 9, 1957, learning to walk in Rittenhouse Square. Her father was an architect, and her mother was a homemaker.

Merry had a rebellious streak, the product of a tumultuous home life after her parents divorced.

In 1969, not yet 12, she and a friend conspired to travel from Philadelphia to the Woodstock Music and Art Fair, each telling their mother that she was staying the weekend at the other’s house. She recalled dodging photographers to avoid leaving any evidence of her presence.



Rich and Merry always looked for transmission towers when they vacationed, as on this 2015 trip to Smith Mountain Lake, Va., a two-reservoir hydro project near Roanoke. | © *RTO Insider* LLC

She loved live music and spent many evenings at the famed Main Point in Bryn Mawr, Pa., a small coffeehouse venue where she saw numerous acts who later went on to great fame. One night, she said, singer Jackson Browne tried to pick her up on her way to the restroom.

Career

Merry graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1980 with a degree in nonprofit marketing and moved to Chicago, where she worked with the famed Steppenwolf Theater Co.

Later, she joined the media department of the large Chicago advertising firm now known as D’Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles. She moved later to a small, boutique ad firm in Baltimore, and then on to New York City, where she conducted marketing and media research for outdoor media at TDI Winston.

She devoted the next stage of her career to evangelizing about the most efficient and effective ways to reach customers, developing metrics used to purchase and validate media audiences and advertising.

In 1990, she became senior vice president in the MicroMarket Strategies Division of advertising agency Earle Palmer Brown Co., based in Bethesda, Md. In that role she launched the frequent traveler program for USAir.

From 1992 to 2000, she was a co-owner of Strategic Insights Inc., a marketing consulting company that built relationship marketing pro-



Merry cut her hair short in late April, in preparation for cancer treatment she expected would cause her to lose it all. | © *RTO Insider* LLC

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grams. Its clients included Carnation, Heinz, Mobil Oil and Western Union.

Education Advocacy

After giving birth to Zach and Ben in 1998, Merry was a stay-at-home mom, active in the parent-teacher association at her sons' school in Potomac, Md.

She served as vice president of legislation for the Maryland PTA in 2009-2010, and in 2012 as policy chair of the Montgomery County chapter of *Start School Later Inc.*, an organization dedicated to increasing public awareness about the relationship between sleep and school hours. She also was a member of steering groups dealing with math education in Montgomery County schools.

She provided story tips to *Washington Post* education reporter Donna St. George, who remembered her as "so spirited and funny and caring."

Politics

As her sons grew, she went to work in the Maryland legislature, serving as legislative director to Del. Saqib Ali and later Del. Sam Arora, from 2008 to 2011. She also managed Del. Al Carr's 2012 campaign.

In 2014, she *ran unsuccessfully* for the Montgomery County Board of Education on a campaign to increase the district's transparency and teachers' planning time.



Phillies fans Rich and Merry, center, at a 2011 game with (from left) Molly and Elise Heidorn and Zach and Ben Eisner. | © RTO Insider LLC

"She was a force of nature and someone who left an indelible mark on the lives of everyone who was lucky enough to be in her orbit," said Arora.

Former *Wall Street Journal* personal technology columnist *Walt Mossberg*, Merry's neighbor in Potomac, called her "an extraordinary person — smart, focused, but never too busy to be kind and friendly." He lamented her death, saying, "Who will I call now to know how to vote in

down-ballot races?"

Marriages

In 1983, at age 25, she had what she would later term a "starter" marriage to Hugh M. Jones. She said she knew within a month of the wedding that it was a mistake. They divorced in 1985.

Her marriage to Oren D. Eisner, the father of her sons, also ended in divorce.

She met Rich in Maryland in the fall of 2009, the two bonding as parents of twins and as Philadelphia sports fans commiserating over the Phillies' loss to the Yankees in the World Series. Merry treated Rich's three children as her own, creating the "blended family" she promised at their wedding. She loved introducing herself and her husband with a mnemonic device: "We're Rich and Merry!"

Love of Children

Merry's love for her sons was apparent to all who worked at *RTO Insider*, and she was delighted by her employees' children. With workers scattered around the U.S., *RTO Insider* staffers meet regularly on video calls, bringing employees into each other's homes, where their pets and children often appear in the background.

Deputy Editor Robert Mullin recalled that when Rich and Merry visited his home in Portland, Ore., in 2017, Merry asked if Robert's five-year-old son, Henry, would sit in her lap for a moment "so she could remember what it



During a visit with Deputy Editor Robert Mullin in Portland, Ore. in 2017, Merry asked if Robert's 5-year-old son would sit in her lap for a moment "so she could remember what it was like to hold a little boy." Her own sons had graduated high school the previous year, and Merry was feeling some empty-nest pangs. | © RTO Insider LLC

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was like to hold a little boy.” Her own sons had graduated high school the previous year, and Merry was feeling some empty-nest pangs.

Robert’s wife, Christina, asked Merry for thoughts on raising Henry.

“I remember Merry offering a few pieces of advice, then pausing and saying, ‘Just enjoy him,’” Robert recalled. “Henry’s now an adolescent, and as parents we’ve been navigating the sometimes-tumultuous transition into the middle school period alongside him. During some of the more difficult moments, when I feel myself ready to dig in on my position, I’ve found myself thinking about what Merry said, letting go a little and approaching a situation with a sense of lightness and humor. It has really helped me — and Henry — through some challenges. I know I will always carry that part of her with me.”

Merry was always eager to see the drawings that NERC correspondent Holden Mann’s son, Robin, displayed at *RTO Insider’s* weekly staff meetings.

“My wife loved the sound of Merry’s voice in our meetings, and I know Robin will remember her kindness and interest in him,” Holden said.

Nicole Hopson, a recent addition to the *RTO Insider* marketing team, said her job interview with Merry was what made her say, “I want to work here.” They talked for 45 minutes about having sons, “and you could tell that her life is her kids. She’s so relatable, and I’ve never felt more understood by someone I just met for the first time.”

Merry was both den mother and disciplinarian at *RTO Insider*, telling staffers she expected

strict adherence to deadlines.

Merry “was one of the main reasons I decided to join the company,” said CAISO correspondent Ayla Burnett. “I remember when her and I first spoke, I was struck by how strong, direct and badass she was, and I felt safe.”

“It seems so cliché to say this environment is like our extended family, but in this case, I truly feel like it couldn’t be more appropriate,” said Creative Director Mitchell Parizer. “But because of it, it’s making it that much harder to digest this news” of her death.

“She has taught me much, and has easily been one of the most influential people in my life, as well as put food on my young family’s table. All this without ever meeting in person,” said Dan Ingold, director of sales and customer engagement. “Someone like Merry can’t help but leave a mark far and wide in this world.”

“I’ll also never forget the Yiddish word she taught me the first time we spoke on [video]: ‘bashert,’” he added. “She was describing our meeting and the prospect of my hiring, but the thing that sparked it was my dog, Louie, in the background yapping and sounding just like Daisy. I took it as her way of saying the relationship appears meant to be.”

Jobs for Journalists

In a time of widespread layoffs in the media industry, trade publications like *RTO Insider* have provided jobs that helped journalists preserve their careers. At the beginning, Rich and Merry were the only employees of the company, which would grow to a staff of 26. Even though Rich oversaw the reporters and editors, Merry insisted she interview and approve every hire.

Merry was “hands down the kindest, most generous, best boss I’ve ever had,” said MISO correspondent Amanda Durish Cook. “She is the primary reason I believed a writing career was still in the cards for me. She put all her faith in me from the first day, and I can’t put a price on that. It is an honor, and she is my role model. I can’t overstate this: She is a jewel, and I’ve never, never had a boss like her.”

Michael Brooks, now deputy editor, was one of the first staffers Rich and Merry hired. A University of Maryland College Park journalism graduate, he was then working as a waiter at Dave & Buster’s in North Bethesda, Md. — ironically, the spot where Rich and Merry had their third date to watch an Eagles game.

Michael took over the layout of the weekly newsletter for Merry, working from Rich and Merry’s home.

“Merry not only paid me for my work but also fed me lovely dinners, gave me a place to sleep during snowstorms and let me take Daisy for walks. I will never forget that,” Michael said.

Shawn McFarland — a production editor who also writes the sometimes snarky, sometimes heartwarming stories that top the daily *RTO Insider* email — was hired in late 2018. He had left a sports writing job in Pennsylvania after eight years to be with his eventual wife in Maryland.

After working for two weekly papers that closed, he was sweeping the floors of a beer distributor at 11 p.m. “It was a pretty low moment in my life,” he said. “Luck finally fell on my side when I got the job. It felt like [it] saved my pride, my sanity — maybe my marriage and family if I’d have continued to struggle financially.”

“I will always be grateful to Merry for giving me my first job,” said Tri Bui, sales coordinator. “Her infectious energy never failed to put a smile on my face.”

“Merry’s indomitable spirit has been the heart and soul of the company and her family. She has been a terrific friend and colleague to everyone,” said Ken Sands, senior vice president for editorial. “Her spirit will live on with all of us.”

“As she helped recruit and onboard me, Merry told me what to expect — basically, ‘You will do your best work to maintain the standards this company is known for, and I will give whatever tools you need to make that happen,’” said John Cropley, *NetZero Insider’s* New York/New England bureau chief. “I think it was her sheer competence, determination and confidence as much as her irrepressible good nature that



Rich and Merry at a lunch in 2022 with (from left) former copy editor Rebecca Santana; D.C. correspondent K Kaufmann; Creative Director Mitchell Parizer; and Deputy Editor Michael Brooks. | © *RTO Insider* LLC

In Memoriam

made us all like, love, respect and appreciate her.”

As news of Merry’s passing spread, tributes rolled in from the industry. “Those of us who follow ISO/RTO goings-on subscribe to *RTO Insider* for Rich and his team’s invaluable insights — but also got to interact with the lovely Merry Eisner-Heidorn, who brought sunshine and light to every chat, no matter how brief,” said attorney Ruta Kalvaitis Skucas, a partner at Crowell & Moring.

A Move, then Illness

Last September, Merry and Rich moved from the Potomac home where she raised her sons to a waterfront townhouse in the Canton section of Baltimore, a walkable neighborhood with a wealth of restaurants. Merry reveled in totaling 10,000 steps daily with her dog.

She began doing strength training at a gym across the street from her house. Expecting to live into her 90s, like her mother and grandmothers, she reasoned she needed to build her core strength, and her tough workouts began to produce evidence of biceps.

Rich and Merry’s real estate search was [recounted](#) in *The New York Times*’ “The Hunt” column.

But in early March, Merry sought medical treatment for a persistent cough and shortness of breath. When the problems continued despite various treatments, she had a chest X-ray on March 26 that identified a nodule in her lung. That was followed by a CT scan that suggested cancer and a PET scan that confirmed the diagnosis. Testing also found that the cancer had spread to her liver, several lymph nodes and at least nine small spots in her brain.

On April 25, she cut her hair short, in preparation for treatment she expected would cause her to lose it all.

Three days later, she was rushed by ambulance to the emergency room of Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore with a blood clot in her lung. Based on what they heard from the ambulance, the ER personnel thought they would have to intubate Merry. But she was stabilized on the ride and came into the hospital on a stretcher cracking jokes with the EMTs.

She would need to be connected to oxygen 24/7 for the rest of her life. But during her 10-day hospitalization, she remained upbeat, querying the nurses about what led to their career choices and collecting restaurant recommendations in her new city.

Almost a week later, she met with her oncologist, who said she had stage IV lung cancer. They agreed on a 12-week treatment plan including chemotherapy, immunotherapy and radiation.

She remained upbeat, continuing to promise her sons she would dance at their weddings and her husband that — even if 2024 sucked — 2025 would be better.

On May 23, however, two days after her first chemo and immunotherapy treatment, she was admitted to Mercy again with severe nausea and increased difficulty breathing. Tests showed that her cancer had spread. Weary from the pain and nausea, she said she no longer wanted to fight. She met with her oncologist the next day and agreed to transition to hospice.

Although she would sleep for most of the following two days, she was able to say goodbye to her children and other family members. The day before her death, she smiled in recognition as her older brother, Harold, told a story from their childhood. Then, she spontaneously began singing the Herman’s Hermits’ hit 1965 version of “*I’m Henry the VIII, I Am*.”

She was also cheered when her children brought Daisy onto her hospital bed, where she would remain until Merry’s death. After not eating for days, Merry devoured two Krispy Kreme donuts.

She awakened for the last time about 11 p.m. on May 27 to tell her sons, “Love you guys.”

She stopped breathing and was pronounced dead shortly before 6 p.m. on May 28. Her corneas were later harvested for transplant.

Reaction

News of Merry’s death prompted an outpouring of tributes from those whose lives she crossed.

“With her boundless energy and a larger-than-life personality, it’s difficult to imagine her passing,” said Ed Tatum, now retired, who represented Old Dominion Electric Cooperative and American Municipal Power at PJM.

“Merry was an amazing force of positivity, incredible kindness and genuine warmth,” said former New York Public Service Commissioner Diane Burman, now assistant counsel in the state comptroller’s office. “She was someone I always looked for when I went to a conference that *RTO Insider* was at.”

“She is such a force of nature, and such a special person, that it is almost impossible

to understand” her steep decline, said Piers Bearne, founder of Collingwood Group, a U.K.-based publishing consultant that has worked with *RTO Insider* to increase its sales.

“She was a gem to work with, and we will miss her kind and friendly disposition,” said PJM spokesman Jeff Shields.

“I don’t really have any words that measure up to the moment,” wrote CAISO CEO Elliot Mainzer. “But I just wanted you to know that you are in our hearts, and I really appreciate your contribution to our industry.”

Journalist Tony Gnoffo, who worked with Rich at *The Philadelphia Inquirer* before moving to the D.C. area, remembered her “generosity.”

“Your advice on pursuing romance in the capital of the free world, and your bribery with homemade baked goods of the nurses at Sibley Memorial Hospital when I broke my hip, went far beyond any reasonable expectation,” he said. “We will always be in awe of what you and Rich built together. It’s really hard to blend two families, but you did it. It’s really hard to build a successful business, but you hit that out of the park. It’s really hard to find and make perfect your dream house, and you did it so well that *The New York Times* had to tell the world about it.”

Survivors

Merry’s father, Steven M. Goldner, died in 2017.

In addition to her husband, she is succeeded by her mother, Roberta (Bobbi) Schimmel, of Haverford; brothers Harold (Shelly) Goldner, Esq., of Bala Cynwyd, Pa., Randy (Wendy) Goldner, of Portland, Ore., and Dr. Dan Goldner, of Philadelphia; sisters Meg Goldner Rabinowitz, of D.C., and Dr. Elizabeth (Eric) Godfrey, of Bala Cynwyd; sons Zachary, of Baltimore, and Benjamin, of Seattle; and step-children Benjamin (Rachel) Heidorn, of Phoenixville, Pa.; Dr. Elise Heidorn, of Reading, Pa., and Molly Heidorn, Esq., of Easton, Pa.

A memorial service will be held in Baltimore on June 29.

Tribute

Before becoming ill, Merry had agreed to be a speaker in early June at the [2024 summit](#) of Renewd, an organization of niche business-to-business and business-to-consumer publications.

Summit Chair David Foster said last week that the gathering will be dedicated to Merry’s memory. ■

FERC/Federal News



White House Launches Grid Modernization Initiative with 21 States

Effort Will Focus on Expanding Capacity, Capabilities on Existing and New Lines

By James Downing

The Biden administration on May 28 launched an effort to work with 21 states to help roll out advanced grid technologies.

The states participating in the Federal-State Modern Grid Deployment Initiative all have Democratic governors, who *have committed* to support the adoption of advanced grid solutions that expand capacity and add new capabilities to existing and new transmission and distribution lines.

The White House also held a summit on modernizing the grid with industry, regulators and other stakeholders focusing on advanced conductors, dynamic line ratings (DLR) and other grid-enhancing technologies (GETs).

“We think this is the lowest-hanging fruit of being able to get additional capacity on the grid and for the least amount of money,” Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said at the White House summit. “So, there’s no reason not to love grid-enhancing technologies.”

The Department of Energy is working to help utilities get comfortable with the technologies by testing advanced reconductoring at Idaho National Laboratory, with the Electric Power Research Institute and at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

The agency also recently released one of its “liftoff” reports on GETs, which said the technologies by themselves could meet the projected demand growth over the next decade, Granholm said. (See [DOE Report Highlights Benefits of Advanced Technologies](#).)

Alongside the announcement, the U.S. Climate Alliance — a group of 24 states that includes the 21 in the initiative — said it would offer policy, technical and analytical assistance to help participating members carry out their commitments.

The states in the initiative agreed to deploy innovative grid technologies to bolster the capacity of the electric grid’s and more effectively meet demand, maximize the benefits of new and existing transmission infrastructure, increase the grid resilience to the growing impacts of climate change, and better protect consumers from volatility in energy prices.

FERC’s recently issued Order 1920 included a requirement that transmission planners evaluate their use in regional plans. In a recent



Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm speaks at the White House on May 28. | *The White House*

interview on the order, Johannes Pfeifenberger, a principal at The Brattle Group, said GETs could be a key part of controlling transmission costs.

“And then you can create another third by sort of upgrading existing lines to higher voltages and things like that,” Pfeifenberger said. “And then the last third of doubling our transmission capability, then you’d have to build new lines. But we cannot afford to ignore the lower cost.”

LineVision CEO Hudson Gilmer said in an interview that dividing the grid buildout into thirds makes sense, though he thinks the monitors his firm sells to enable DLR are so affordable they could be used on new transmission lines to maximize those investments.

The firm has worked on dozens of projects in the U.S. and around the world, with two major domestic efforts being with AES utilities in Ohio and Indiana and National Grid in upstate New York, Gilmer said before the White House event.

LineVision is developing other projects, and Gilmer explained why he sees growth for the industry.

“The biggest thing that gives me optimism is the experience of the utilities [that] have deployed these technologies,” he said. And they’re not one and done. They’re not stopping there. They’re saying, “We’re seeing amazing results here, and we want to roll this out more and more widely.”

Dominion Energy’s Virginia Power utility is on pace to double its demand in the next 15 years, driven in large part by the rapid expansion of data centers in Data Center Alley about 30 miles west of the White House, said Matthew Gardner, the company’s vice president of electric transmission. He said that is just half the challenge because the utility also sees its supply transition along with the most active interconnection queues in PJM.

“In addition to capacity, we look at the promise of GETs to provide ... capability and flexibility as well,” Gardner said. “So that’s where GETs come into play.”

‘Absolutely Essential’

Dominion has run a number DLR pilots over the past decade, some of which have shown

FERC/Federal News



that some of its operational assumptions were too conservative because it found more capacity than expected. But the opposite has occurred in other cases, with some assumptions being too loose and requiring a reduction of flows on lines. In general, Dominion has seen the technology either open up or lower line capacities by 10 to 12%, Gardner said.

“DLRs are key to maximizing grid capabilities, especially those in situations where we’re taking outages for constructing grid upgrades,” Gardner said. “So, I like to think of DLR as being like flex lanes on the interstate that sometimes allow for additional traffic flows.”

GETs are poised to keep growing in Virginia because of recent legislation passed by both Democratic-controlled legislative chambers and signed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R), said state Del. Phil Hernandez (D) at the White House summit.

“So really all this bill does ... it says that anytime that a utility submits an IRP as part of their long-term energy planning, they have to do a comprehensive assessment of the potential

application of grid-enhancing technologies,” Hernandez said. “So that is a first step for us.”

GETs have avoided the politicization accompanying transmission issues, as seen on Capitol Hill or in the dissent and concurrence related to FERC Order 1920, or with a bill passing unanimously out of the Utah Senate, though it ultimately did not clear the lower chamber this past session, said state Sen. Nate Blouin (D). The legislation was similar to what Hernandez helped push through in Virginia.

The conservative “Eagle Forum” usually does not get involved in energy issues, and Blouin said it has opposed many of his proposals in the past.

“One of their representatives got up to speak on my bill,” Blouin said. “And I was just thinking, ‘Oh, shoot, what’s he going to say about this one,’ and actually, it was a really positive comment. They were ... very interested in the potential grid security and resilience-type aspects.”

The tool is resource-agnostic, which is important for states like Utah where the climate

issues are not top of mind, but it still can help meet growing demand and providing resilience against issues like wildfires, he added.

But GETs can help in states with very different policies, such as California, where climate laws require the industry to bring on about 8,000 MW of renewable resources per year on average, but reliably and cost effectively, said CAISO CEO Elliot Mainzer.

GETs are in a place like where storage was just a few years ago — ready to take off, Mainzer added. California has 10 GW of storage now, while GETs are starting to be included in some of its regionally planned transmission projects.

“The way that our grid is operating today is transitioning so quickly,” he said. “Any of you that operate in the West, just the patterns of flows that we’re seeing, the type of generation on the grid — having this sophisticated portfolio of tools that can manage flows and manage this next generation of resources and do it honestly, reliably and as affordably as possible is absolutely essential.” ■



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CAISO/West News

NV Energy Confirms Intent to Join CAISO's EDAM

Nevada Utility Says Notification is Bundled into IRP Filed with PUCN

By Robert Mullin

NV Energy intends to join CAISO's Extended Day-Ahead Market (EDAM), an official with the utility said May 31, notching a major win for the ISO in its competition with SPP's Markets+ day-ahead offering in the West.

The announcement confirms what multiple sources have recently told *RTO Insider*: that the Nevada-based utility had disclosed in private meetings that it had decided on the EDAM and would make that news public upon filing its integrated resource plan with the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN). (See related story [NV Energy to Join CAISO's Extended Day-Ahead Market](#).)

Speaking at a monthly meeting of the Launch Committee of the West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative, Dave Rubin, NV Energy's federal energy policy director, acknowledged the accuracy of the press reports and said the utility submitted its IRP — which includes the request — to the PUCN that same day.

"We will indicate NV Energy's intention to request authorization from our commission later this year to join the EDAM," said Rubin, who also is a member of the Launch Committee.

Rubin said the Nevada process for joining a day-ahead market is different from some other Western states because state law requires a utility to obtain "formal authorization" from the utility commission to move forward with a market decision.

The decision is a key victory for the EDAM because NV Energy's control area occupies a central position in CAISO's Western Energy Imbalance Market (WEIM), providing a key corridor for wheel-throughs of energy between the market's California participants — including the ISO — and PacifiCorp's massive balancing authority area in the inland West.

Brian Turner, a Pathways Launch Committee member who leads Advanced Energy United's regulatory engagement in the West, called NV Energy's decision to join EDAM a "big deal" based on the "critical mass" it brings and the overall "functioning of the grid."

NV Energy's decision moves Nevada from "being on the periphery of a possible Markets+ to being at the center of what will come with EDAM," Turner said in an interview. "So, it's a very big deal that they're joining."



NV Energy headquarters | *Business Wire*

The Brattle Group study released this year that showed NV Energy could earn as much as \$149 million in benefits from participating in EDAM noted that the scale of the utility's benefits is heavily correlated with the shape of the market footprint "due to its large amount of transfer capability and centrality" in the Western Interconnection.

"NVE benefits tend to be higher when it is central to the market and facilitates transfers within the market," the study found in assessing outcomes based on multiple footprints for both EDAM and Markets+. (See [NV Energy to Reap More from EDAM than Markets+, Report Shows](#).)

NV Energy's decision in favor of EDAM also is significant for the work of the Pathways Launch Committee, which voted May 31 to advance step 1 of its CAISO governance proposal to the ISO's stakeholder process. The proposal

calls for CAISO to alter its tariff to elevate the "joint" authority the WEIM's Governing Body currently shares with CAISO's Board of Governors over WEIM matters to "primary" authority.

Under the plan, the ISO would file that change with FERC only after the EDAM secures implementation agreements with a "set of geographically diverse" WEIM participants representing load equal to or greater than 70% of CAISO's annual load in 2022.

So far, only PacifiCorp has fully committed to signing such an agreement, but the EDAM also has solid commitments from Balancing Authority of Northern California, Idaho Power, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and Portland General Electric. NV Energy's commitment would position CAISO to trigger that change. ■

CAISO/West News

Pathways Backers Advance WEIM/EDAM Governance Proposal

Group Outlines Plan for CAISO Stakeholder Process, Future Steps

By Robert Mullin

Backers of the West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative will move quickly on a proposal to alter the governance of CAISO’s Western Energy Imbalance Market (WEIM) and Extended Day-Ahead Market (EDAM) after voting to approve the plan May 31.

The initiative’s Launch Committee unanimously endorsed step 1 of the “stepwise” proposal the group had issued in April. The proposal calls for CAISO to revise the WEIM charter to elevate the oversight position of the market’s Governing Body over WEIM/EDAM matters to “primary” authority, rather than the “joint”

authority it currently shares with the ISO’s Board of Governors. (See *Western RTO Group Floats Independence Plan for EDAM, WEIM.*)

“We’re thrilled to be able to move forward with step 1 and start to engage with ... CAISO in a different way,” committee Co-Chair Kathleen Staks, executive director of Western Freedom, said after the vote.

The Launch Committee will now submit step 1 of the proposal to CAISO Board Chair Jan Schori and WEIM Governing Body Chair Andrew Campbell to kick off a stakeholder process at the ISO this month.

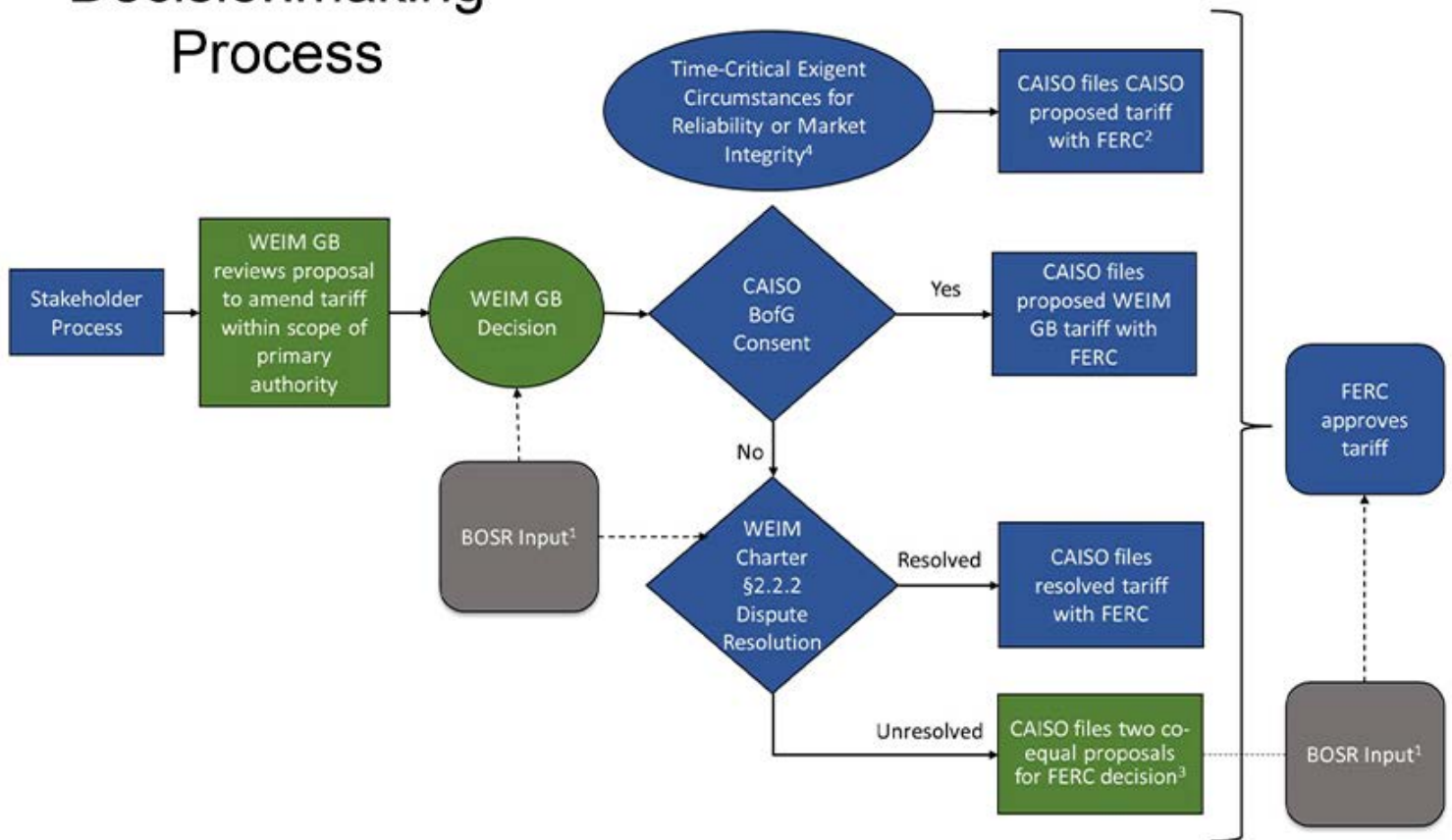
Pathways backers anticipate CAISO will host

an initial public stakeholder call – with the Launch Committee presenting – in mid-June. That would be followed by a three-week comment period, a committee response period and a public meeting for a joint decision by the board and Governing Body in late July or early August.

“Let me start by really thanking the Launch Committee for taking up the concept that the regulators had put forward last summer, fleshing it out and producing such an astonishing work product,” Oregon Public Utility Commissioner Letha Tawney said.

Tawney was among the group of Western state energy officials that launched the Pathways

Step 1 Decisionmaking Process



Flowchart illustrates how the Western Energy Imbalance Market’s decision-making process would work under the governance proposal by the Pathways Initiative. | West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative

CAISO/West News

Initiative last July to increase the potential for creating a single day-ahead electricity market for the region that expressly includes California and leans on the technical capabilities of CAISO.

Arizona Corporation Commissioner Kevin Thompson, another initial supporter, commended the Launch Committee's progress despite conflicts that arose at a previous private meeting of the committee in Phoenix.

"There was some tension there in the room a little bit here and there," Thompson said, "but to see where the stakeholders have moved the conversation to get us toward independent governance, and giving prior primary authority to the EIM as the governing board, is a step in the right direction that gets us away from the joint authority and starts moving us really closer towards independent governance."

The Pathways Initiative's final proposal included a handful of changes from the original version, including expanding the responsibility of the Governing Body to respect both state and "local" policies in its decisions and highlighting the existing right of the body to institute a governance review process with the ISO board in the event of a mass withdrawal of EDAM entities from the market.

The proposal also clarified the workings of the dual filing – or "jump ball" – process that would occur in the event the CAISO board disagrees with a tariff filing approved by the Governing Body and decides to submit a parallel filing with FERC.

Next Steps and Phases

The Launch Committee also voted to continue developing step 2 of the proposal, which will seek to transfer governance of the WEIM – and its associated future EDAM – to an independent "regional organization" (RO) that the Pathways group expects to establish next year.

Step 2 poses greater challenges than the first step because it requires convincing the California legislature to pass a bill authorizing CAISO to transfer its authority over a large part of its market to the RO. While the Launch Committee itself will not be participating in those efforts, many of its members will be in their capacities as individual organizations with interests in the change.

Launch Committee member Spencer Gray, executive director of the Northwest & Intermountain Power Producers Coalition, said step 2 must also address the "core tension" between the two options being considered for the structure of the RO, which relates to "the degree of institutional independence of the regional organization and the financial liability and responsibility that comes along with institutional independence."

Gray pointed to the series of "work streams" the Launch Committee has identified for its Phase II work plan, which focuses largely on issues embedded in step 2. The committee has appointed two leads to deal with each stream, which include:

- exploring the stakeholder process for the RO, including examining sector-based ap-

proaches and how to frame policies;

- dealing with CAISO-related issues;
- analyzing the existing CAISO tariff, which could entail identifying the functions of a balancing authority under a new market arrangement;
- addressing public interest issues, including considering the evolution of the WEIM's Body of State Regulators; and
- addressing RO formation and governance, which would range from incorporation to board nomination to securing funding sources.

Committee member Lisa Tormoen Hickey, a senior regulatory attorney with Interwest Energy Alliance, told meeting participants that the Pathways Initiative will need to secure about \$450,000 in funding for its Phase II activities through the end of the year. Those activities will include additional legal review for RO options, proposing an RO stakeholder process, making a final step 2 recommendation, and gathering and publishing stakeholder feedback on the recommendation.

She said the committee estimates an additional \$636,000 will be needed to complete Phase III activities, which will include establishing an RO "formation" committee, developing tariff amendments and bylaws, retaining a placement firm for selecting a board and management team, and monitoring California legislative and CAISO actions. ■

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CAISO/West News

CAISO, WEIM Boards Approve Proposal to Raise Offer Cap

ISO Moving for FERC Approval Ahead of Period of Riskiest Summer Operations

By Robert Mullin

The CAISO Board of Governors and Western Energy Imbalance Market (WEIM) Governing Body voted unanimously May 22 to approve an expedited proposal to increase the ISO's soft offer cap from \$1,000/MWh to \$2,000.

CAISO staff and stakeholders participating in the ISO's Price Formation Enhancements (PFE) Working Group quickly crafted the plan as part of a strategy to improve the bidding prospects of energy-limited resources — such as battery storage and hydroelectric resources — ahead of late summer.

The ISO hopes to win FERC approval for the proposal by Aug. 1, the date that typically marks the start of the most challenging period for grid operations in the West because of declining hydro availability and the onset of what are usually the warmest conditions of the year in California's load centers.

Grid operators across the region are preparing for the prospect of tight supplies this summer based on low water conditions in the North-western U.S. and the Canadian province of British Columbia.

"I see these changes as urgent, given the difficult hydro conditions in the Pacific Northwest. The market will benefit if more hydro resources are fully in the market as much as they can be," Governing Body Chair Andrew Campbell said during the body's joint session with the ISO's board. "There's urgency for batteries too. There's so many batteries online this summer, and I support relying more on the market to manage charge and discharge rather than market operator directives."

The two-part *proposal* is designed to allow energy-limited resources with "intraday opportunity costs" — specifically batteries and hydro — to factor those costs into their default energy bids (DEBs), but the new rules will apply to gas-fired generation as well. The ISO has emphasized that all resources will still need to justify the costs behind their bids. (See [CAISO Moves for Expedited Change to Soft Offer Cap](#).)

Those opportunity costs arise on stressed days for the grid when supplies become tight, usually from extreme weather. In those circumstances, an energy-limited resource committed to the market at the \$1,000/MWh soft offer cap can find itself dispatched at high prices occurring relatively early in the day,

leaving it unable to provide energy later when prices are even higher.

To address the issue, the proposal seeks to revise CAISO's rules related to FERC Order 831, the 2016 directive that required RTOs and ISOs to limit the market bids of energy resources to the higher of either a soft offer cap of \$1,000/MWh or a cost-based offer already verified by the market operator, up to a hard cap of \$2,000 MWh.

'Loud and Clear'

The proposal had solid backing from many industry stakeholders, including hydro-heavy WEIM participants Bonneville Power Administration and Seattle City Light, and was endorsed by CAISO's Market Surveillance Committee (MSC) during its May 15 meeting.

Some stakeholders, such as BPA and the Western Power Trading Forum, expressed concern about a last-minute change to the proposal that limits storage resources to bidding above the \$1,000/MWh cap only in the real-time market — and not in the day-ahead market — made in response to the MSC's opinion that the ISO's integrated forward market process already solves the opportunity cost issue for storage in the day-ahead.

Opponents included the California Public Utilities Commission and its Public Advocates Office, which both raised concerns about the

potential costs to ratepayers from increasing the cap and the speed with which the plan moved through CAISO's stakeholder process.

Supporters among both stakeholders and the CAISO and WEIM oversight bodies emphasized that the measures should only be considered a temporary remedy. Some said the PFE Working Group should come up with a more complete solution before summer 2025, one that would more completely address the bidding requirements for storage and take up the needs of hybrid and demand response resources as well.

After expressing gratitude for the quick efforts by CAISO staff and stakeholders on the proposal, ISO Board Chair Jan Schori acknowledged how much more needs to be done on the matter.

"I am hearing loud and clear, from all the comments that we've received, that we simply have to do a lot more work on batteries and storage, and particularly fixing the [bid-cost recovery] rules," Schori said. "But [batteries] are unique; they are different; and we need to probably come up with a set of rules that really works to match that resource and enable us to both have it be a long-term resource for the industry and for customers, but also to make sure it's deployed at the time that we need it available to us to address the reliability issues that we may be confronting." ■



Terra-Gen's Valley Center energy storage facility in San Diego County, Calif. | Terra-Gen

CAISO/West News

Calif. Officials ‘Cautiously Optimistic’ on Summer Reliability

Planners Highlight Above-average Snowpack in Calif., Low Water in NW, Potential Heat in SW

By Ayla Burnett

California energy officials are “cautiously optimistic” about maintaining grid reliability this summer, with the state benefiting from above-normal snowpack and precipitation coupled with expectations for cooler temperatures in coastal regions.

That was the assessment of multiple presenters speaking during a summer reliability workshop hosted by the California Energy Commission on May 29.

But climate change is making it increasingly difficult to ensure reliable grid conditions, and planners must remain vigilant to avoid outages such as those in 2020, CEC Vice Chair Siva Gunda said during the workshop. “In 2020, we had two [rolling] outages on Aug. 14 and Aug. 15 — something we hadn’t seen at that point in 20 years — and it has been a primary focus in California to ensure electric reliability as we move forward.”

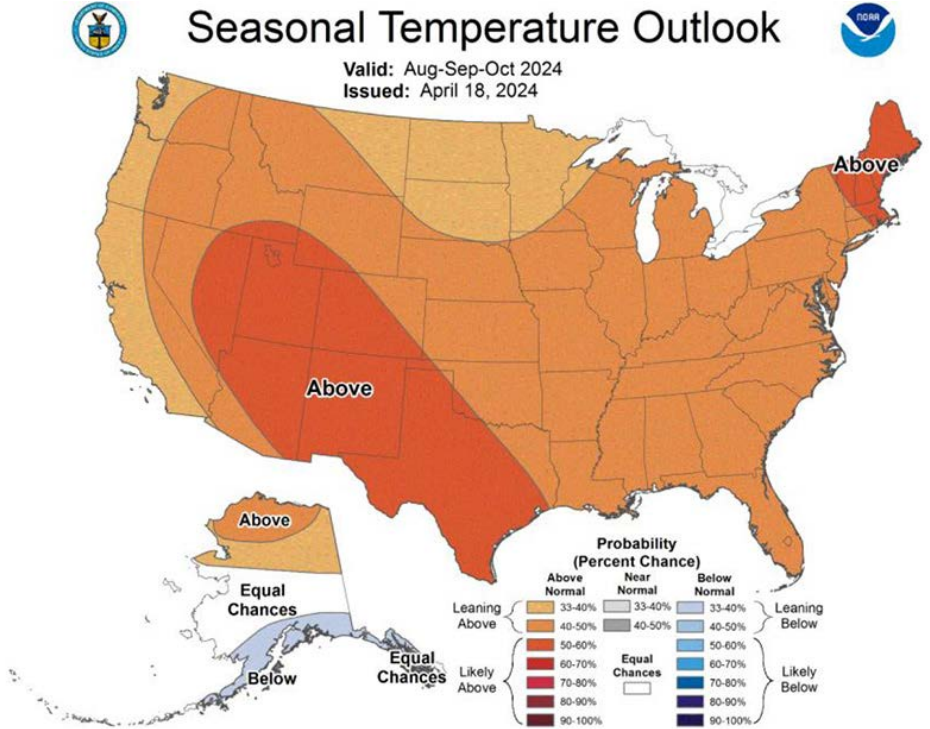
Maintaining reliability requires a host of responses to keep up with decarbonization efforts and a warming climate, including having flexible and dispatchable resources, especially during the critical sunset hours when solar rolls off the system, said David Erne, CEC deputy director of resource planning, reliability and emergency response. But this summer is looking better than last, he said.

Weather Patterns

Zeroing in on weather conditions, Amber Motley, director of short-term forecasting at CAISO, highlighted that the central Sierra Nevada had above-normal snow water equivalent this winter, although California was at 67% of its snowpack average as of May 20, said Jeff Fuentes, deputy chief of fire intelligence at Cal Fire.

But the Pacific Northwest “did not have as good of a snow year,” Motley said, resulting in abnormally dry to moderate drought conditions in many portions of Oregon and Washington.

This summer also should mark a transition away from El Niño, which is associated with warmer sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean and hotter, dryer conditions in the northern U.S., to La Niña, marked by colder sea temperatures, drought and warmer conditions in the South and heavy rains in the Pacific



Forecasters are expecting cooler temperatures in June and July and above normal conditions in August, specifically in the Desert Southwest region, which could impact grid conditions. | NOAA

Northwest.

“For the Desert Southwest, this is really critical,” Motley said. “Because of the position of ... where the heat is focused to be, it’s expected they don’t get as much monsoon moisture, which leads to less precipitation, but also leads to less cooling for them in the evening hours. The key piece as we head into summer is really watching the position of that [heat] ridge.”

Another factor to watch, Motley said, is above-normal sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic, leading to forecasts that hurricane season will be more extreme — which impacts conditions in the West.

“That’s going to be critical to watch because if you have big hurricanes, when we get into the August and July time period, they will move up into the gulf, and they kind of act like a traffic jam to the atmosphere. So, that could allow a ridge to stay parked over the West and not move for a number of days.”

Taking all these pieces into account, forecasters anticipate above-average temperatures in the Desert Southwest, interior California and Rockies regions and a low probability of above-normal temperatures in California’s

coastal regions.

California fire risk is low to normal, Fuentes said, but “normal” typically means one to two large fires in each of the state’s service areas in June, three in July and six in August. Additionally, the Pacific Northwest will see normal risk of significant fires until July, when areas of Central and Southeast Oregon may shift to above-average potential for wildfire.

Reliability

Changing weather patterns aren’t the only significant challenge to ensuring reliability. Expedited resource builds coupled with delays and resource retirements also are having an impact, said Branden Sudduth, WECC vice president of reliability planning and performance analysis.

“Over the last two-year cycle when we developed our reports, we saw about 5,000 MW worth of generation retirements being delayed,” Sudduth said. “A lot of states in the West are focused on making sure they have adequate energy, adequate resources over the next couple of years. But we just want to make sure that people are alert and aware that

CAISO/West News

those retirements are still going to happen in the future, and we just need to keep our foot on the gas pedal when it comes to making sure that we get new resources developed, built and online.”

Sudduth provided an overview of NERC’s 2024 *Summer Reliability Assessment*, which evaluates June through September. This year’s assessment showed that while all areas of North America have adequate resources for normal summer demand, British Columbia, California, Mexico and the Southwestern U.S. have an elevated risk of insufficient operating reserves and loss of load under “extreme conditions,” defined as demand meeting or exceeding the 90th percentile threshold of the region’s demand curve. (See *NERC Summer Assessment Sees Some Risk in Extreme Heat Waves.*)

The “good news,” Sudduth noted, is that no regions were identified as “high risk,” indicated as having insufficient operating reserves under expected conditions, for the upcoming summer.

Focusing on the elevated risk identified for California and Mexico, the highest chance for load loss was the period ending at 7 p.m., though that totaled less than one hour. In the

Southwest, the concern lay in the potential for a heat wave to increase the region’s probability of being unable to meet its operating reserve requirements.

A broader reliability concern identified by WECC is the industry’s ability to keep up with the pace of development.

“From January 2023 to June 2023, the Western Interconnection added around 14 GW of new generation capacity. Currently, we’re planned to add just over 17 GW” by summer, Sudduth said. “As we look at things such as supply chain delays and ... we know there are workforce shortage issues, that’s really one of the challenges we face is can we build enough generation quick enough to meet our plans, and I assume that will continue to be one of our challenges in future years as the pace of generation builds [continues] to increase.”

Christine Root, integrated resource planning and compliance supervisor at the California Public Utilities Commission, emphasized the rapid pace of resource development, with 18,500 MW of clean energy nameplate capacity coming online from 2020 to 2024, 5,700 MW of that last year — “the highest amount of clean energy on record for a given year thus

far.”

Ensuring reliability is dependent on long-term forward planning and procuring the volume of resources needed to support the evolving grid, Root added. The CPUC adopted a preferred system plan in February 2024, which estimates 55 GW coming online by 2035, 32 GW of which is expected to be solar.

Though grid planners and forecasters presented a generally positive outlook for summer 2024, they continued to emphasize the importance of being cautious and vigilant.

“Maintaining reliability is paramount and underscored by what we’re all collectively facing with the climate crisis,” said Christine Hironaka, senior adviser for energy for the office of Gov. Gavin Newsom.

She noted that extreme heat events like the one in September 2022 are likely “to increase in frequency and intensity as time goes on.”

“I think the good news is, last year ... the grid did not have any major emergencies and I think the topline for me is we remain cautiously optimistic for this summer’s outlook,” she said. ■

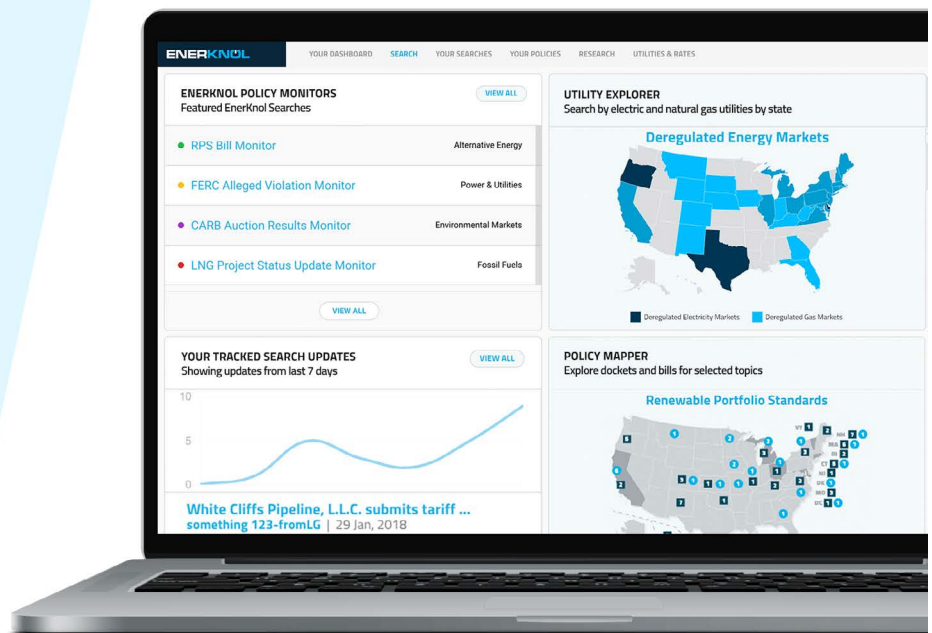
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ERCOT News



Vistra Joins Rush for Dispatchable Generation Loans

More than 145 Entities Have Applied for Texas Energy Fund

By Tom Kleckner

Vistra, Texas' largest generator, said May 30 it plans to add nearly 2 GW of gas-fired capacity to the ERCOT grid over the next year by investing in existing power plants to increase their output.

The capacity additions will help meet ERCOT's and the Public Utility Commission's desire for more dispatchable (i.e., thermal) generation necessary to meet the state's growing demand.

"Texas is in the enviable position of experiencing sustained economic growth, which includes rapidly increasing power demand as a result of population growth and electrification activities in a number of areas, including transportation, data centers, manufacturing and industrial activities," Vistra CEO Jim Burke said in a [news release](#).

Vistra said it was filing a notice of intent to seek disbursements from the \$5 billion [Texas Energy Fund \(TEF\)](#)'s Generation Loan Program. The program is designed to drive more dispatchable energy to the ERCOT system.

The PUC said June 1 it had received 125 notices of intent totaling \$38.9 billion in financing for 55.9 GW of proposed dispatchable projects, fulfilling the [hopes of some participants](#) that the TEF would be oversubscribed (56455).

Formal applications now can be submitted by entities that submitted a notice of intent. Completed loan applications must be filed by July 27. The first disbursements, financing up



Vistra wants to convert its coal-fired Coletto Creek Power Station to gas-fueled. | Vistra

to 60% of a loan, should be issued by Dec. 31, 2025.

The commission established the TEF in March because of [state legislation](#) passed last year. Qualifying projects must add at least 100 MW of dispatchable capacity to the grid. The PUC says the program can support up to 10 GW of new or upgraded generation capacity in ERCOT. (See [Texas PUC Establishes \\$5B Energy Fund](#).)

Through Luminant, its generation subsidiary, Vistra plans to:

- Build up to 860 MW of advanced, simple-cycle peaker plants in West Texas, supporting the increased power demands of the state's oil and gas industry.
- Repower its coal-fired Coletto Creek Power Plant as a gas-fired unit and use the existing infrastructure to provide up to 600 MW of

capacity when the coal plant retires in 2027 to comply with EPA rules.

- Complete several upgrade projects at its existing gas plants, adding more than 500 MW of summer capacity and 100 MW of winter capacity.

Vistra said its quick-start gas units would help back up the grid when renewable resources are not available and battery storage resources have reached their limits. Nearly half of the capacity would come online this summer and the remainder next summer.

All three projects are based on market reforms passed during the 2023 legislative session that include new ancillary services, the performance credit mechanism and an effective reliability standard. The company said implementation could offer the regulatory framework needed to incentivize long-term investments in the grid.

"Since the market opened to competition, over \$100 billion has been invested by a wide range of investors in a variety of power generation technologies to meet the growing needs of Texans," Burke said. "The ERCOT market has a history of attracting generation owners who put their capital at risk when there are investment signals."

The projects are contingent upon other factors, including state and federal environmental regulations and long-term wholesale trends that continue to support gas generation, Vistra said. ■

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ERCOT News



SPP Monitor Collins Joins ERCOT as VP of Market Ops

ERCOT said May 29 that it has hired Keith Collins, SPP vice president of market monitoring, as its new vice president of market operations, effective June 17.

Collins will replace Kenan Ögelman, who retired as vice president of commercial operations in April. He will be responsible for ERCOT’s market analysis, performance and design, reporting to COO Woody Rickerson. (See “Ögelman Extends ERCOT Service,” *ERCOT Technical Advisory Committee Briefs: March 27, 2024*.)

Collins brings more than two decades of experience in market operations and 25 years of experience in the electric power industry. He joined SPP in June 2017, serving under MMU Executive Director Alan McQueen during a brief transition period before taking over. Previously, he was CAISO’s manager of monitoring and reporting and a branch chief for FERC. Collins also worked with NYISO on market performance.

“I look forward to the challenges and opportunities of working with stakeholders, regulators, legislators and [ERCOT’s Independent Market Monitor] to continue to develop and improve on one of the premier electricity markets,” Collins told *RTO Insider*. “I am confident that my background and experiences have prepared me for success in this role.”

“With the Texas energy market rapidly evolving, ERCOT is focused on continuing to make improvements to market performance,” ERCOT CEO Pablo Vegas said in a *news release*. “A key component will be to review the current



Keith Collins shares MMU's perspective on a tariff change during an SPP board meeting. | © RTO Insider LLC

market design and behavior to drive positive market outcomes.”

Collins has a master’s in public policy from George Mason University and a bachelor’s in economics and government studies from Bow-

doin College. He also attended the Advanced Management Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School of Management. ■

— Tom Kleckner

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ISO-NE News

Panel Provides Update on Energy Storage in Mass.

By Jon Lamson

Battery storage remains largely reliant on state programs and subsidies to be viable in Massachusetts but could increasingly stand on its own as renewable resources proliferate, a panel of energy storage experts said during a webinar May 30.

“As we further decarbonize our grid, these products become ever more important,” said Tom Ferguson, energy storage programs manager at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Ferguson noted that battery storage’s ability to balance the grid will only become more valuable with more intermittent resources on the system. He emphasized that long-duration storage pairs particularly well with offshore wind, which could help drive the business case for long-duration technologies.

While credits associated with Massachusetts’ [Clean Peak Energy Standard](#) (CPS) make up a major portion of the revenue for new storage resources today, “over time, the hope is that

the need for incentives will decrease,” Ferguson said.

He cited a December 2023 [report](#) commissioned by the state that found that storage will likely be “a cost-effective element of mid- and long-term resource portfolios” but needs increased state support in the near term to scale up quickly enough to meet the state’s goals.

“Additional state programs will be required, as will dedicated efforts to reduce existing financial, technological, supply chain and operational barriers to deployment,” the report found.

Responding to a question about Massachusetts’ progress toward its goal of deploying 1,000 MW of storage by the end of 2025, Ferguson said the state currently has “a little over 500 MW. ... We’re hoping we’ll hit that target.”

Chris Sherman, senior vice president at Cogentrix Energy, discussed the company’s ongoing efforts to replace the West Springfield Station, which retired in 2022, with battery storage.

The first phase of the project consists of a 45-MW battery facility with a projected in-service

date of mid-2025, while the company is “in the process of designing phase 2, which will likely be an additional 105 MW,” Sherman said.

“The clean peak standard is the basis for the project,” Sherman said, noting that it accounts for about 40% of the project’s projected revenue.

Looming changes to how ISO-NE accredits resources in its Forward Capacity Market will likely further reduce the revenues available to battery storage from the wholesale markets, Sherman added.

An ISO-NE analysis from early May indicated that the in-development accreditation changes could result in a \$58 million reduction in total capacity market revenues for storage resources. (See [ISO-NE: RCA Changes to Increase Capacity Market Revenues by 11%](#).)

The changes are intended to better align capacity procurements with actual reliability benefits. Sherman said they amount to “a fairly significant derate,” adding that “we would need to have that [capacity market revenue] made up somewhere ... [but] it was probably the least amount of our revenue; it was never a great revenue source.”

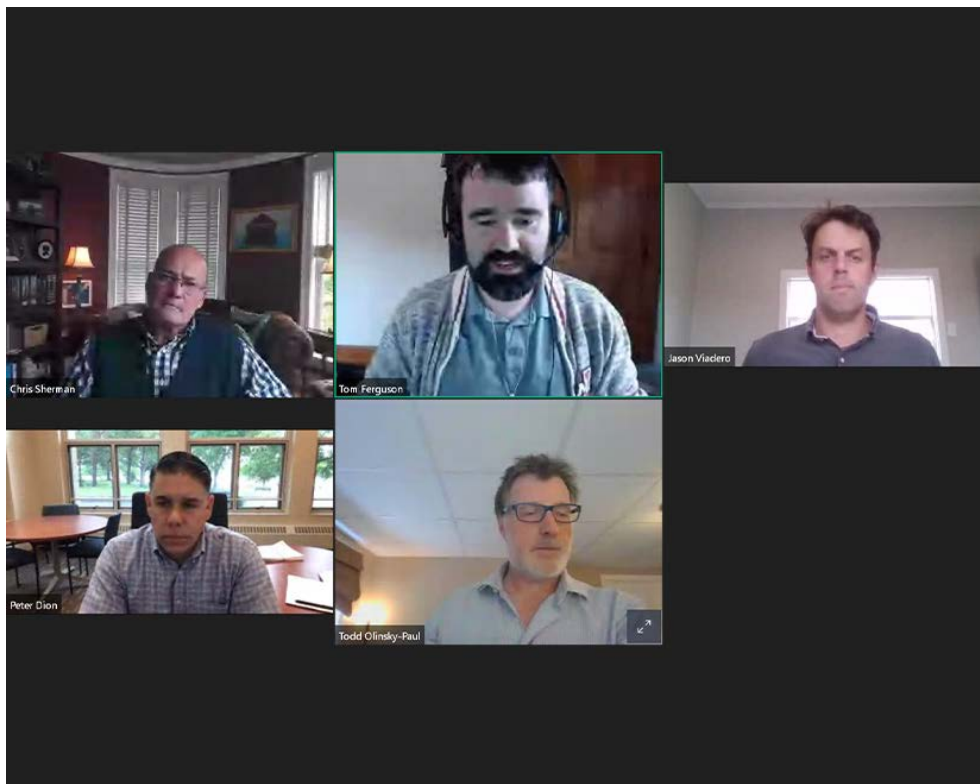
Todd Olinsky-Paul, senior project director at the Clean Energy States Alliance, said the new accreditation framework will likely “push battery storage towards longer-duration resources.”

Jason Viadero, director of engineering and generation assets at Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Co. (MMWEC), said the company has been able to deploy storage to minimize its peak and save customers money without substantial support from state programs. Massachusetts’ municipal utilities are not subject to the CPS.

“This is one specific use case that completely stands on its own economically,” Viadero said. “These systems are able to pay for themselves throughout the life of the system.”

Growing electricity demand will make peak shaving increasingly important, Viadero said, highlighting the significant differences in ISO-NE’s [cost projections](#) for a 57-GW peak load system and 51 GW. (See [ISO-NE Prices Transmission Upgrades Needed by 2050: up to \\$26B](#).)

Viadero said MMWEC is working to deploy “upwards of 50 MW” of energy storage in 2024 and 2025, with a greater focus on longer-duration storage going forward. ■



Clockwise from top left: Chris Sherman, Cogentrix Energy; Tom Ferguson, Massachusetts EEA; Jason Viadero, MMWEC; Peter Dion, Wakefield Municipal Light Department; Todd Olinsky-Paul, Clean Energy States Alliance | [Clean Energy States Alliance](#)

ISO-NE News

ISO-NE Expects to Have Sufficient Resources for the Summer

By Jon Lamson

ISO-NE expects to have adequate resources to meet its projected 24,553-MW peak load this summer, the RTO announced as part of its *summer outlook*, released June 3.

The ultimate outcome will be highly dependent on weather, ISO-NE said, estimating there is a 10% chance the peak load exceeds 26,383 MW. The RTO anticipates having about 30,000 MW of capacity available.

“While the ISO expects the region to have adequate supplies of electricity this summer, abnormal conditions could force system operators to take action to maintain system reliability,” ISO-NE wrote in a *press release*. “Climate change has caused weather to become more volatile and less predictable, increasing the potential for system operators to resort to these actions.”

Weather is the region’s “largest driver of energy use,” ISO-NE noted, adding that hot and humid conditions coupled with unexpected generator outages would be especially difficult

Northeast Average Temperature



Average summer temperatures in the Northeast, 1993-2023 | NOAA

to manage.

ISO-NE’s demand forecasts are based on weather data from the prior 30 years, but they do not consider climate forecasts or more granular climate trends.

Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration indicate average and maximum summer temperatures have been

trending up in the Northeast over the past 30 years. Average temperatures for summer months have increased by about 0.4 degrees per decade since 1993, while maximum temperatures have increased by about 0.3 degrees per decade.

“Just a 1-degree change in temperature can impact the load and demand in New England significantly — by half a gigawatt or more,” Mike Fontaine, supervisor of operations forecasting for ISO-NE, said in a video released in May.

ISO-NE has indicated it plans to incorporate climate modeling into demand projections starting in 2025. (See *ISO-NE Decreases Its 10-year Peak Load Forecast*.)

The RTO also highlighted the role behind-the-meter (BTM) solar has played in reducing peak demand, noting that it is responsible for approximately a 1,000-MW reduction in the summer peak. The roughly 7,000 MW of BTM solar capacity in the region has pushed the timing of the peak from midafternoon to early evening, ISO-NE added.

The forecast also includes just over 2,000 MW of energy efficiency, ISO-NE said, while dispatchable active demand response is counted as a supply-side capacity resource.

This summer will be the first following the retirement of the Mystic Generating Station, which was once New England’s largest fossil power plant. ISO-NE said it is “not projecting any capacity issues during the summer based on this retirement.”

The 24,553-MW peak projection would be an increase over the 2023 peak load of 24,043 MW, which occurred Sept. 7. ■



EDP Renewables

MISO News

MISO IMM Knocks LRTP Benefit Calculations; RTO Poised to Add More Projects

By Amanda Durish Cook

MISO's Independent Market Monitor continues to cast doubt on the theoretical benefits estimates of the second long-range transmission projects as the RTO intends to add more projects to the already \$17 billion to \$23 billion portfolio.

During a May 29 stakeholder workshop, IMM David Patton said MISO risks "substantially overstating" the benefits of its proposed, second long-range transmission plan (LRTP) portfolio.

"We think transmission investment is extremely important, but it's also expensive. So, it's important that the transmission investment be economic. ... Overinvesting in transmission has adverse effects on the market," Patton told stakeholders at the workshop.

MISO has not yet finalized the benefits it will use in the business case for the second LRTP portfolio, but it has signaled it will value decarbonization, reduced risks from extreme weather and the avoided costs of otherwise-necessary new capacity in addition to other, more traditional benefits. (See [MISO to Present Final, \\$20B 2nd LRTP Portfolio in September](#).)

Patton said MISO is on track to confer outsized benefits on its second LRTP portfolio because it doesn't consider how the market would influence generation additions without the LRTP projects. He said it's "not valid" for MISO to presume it will need more capacity in aggregate if it doesn't build the second portfolio.

Patton recommended MISO "eliminate altogether or fundamentally change" its proposed LRTP benefit derived from the avoided costs of adding capacity that otherwise would be necessary without the lines.

"There is little basis to assume that transmission will affect MISO's capacity requirements," he said.

Patton said absent major transmission, markets will facilitate the construction of generation to meet reserve requirements in areas where it's more easily deliverable to load. He also said MISO isn't optimizing its hypothetical generation siting in its transmission planning and that MISO's zonal capacity needs would shift depending on whether LRTP lines are built. He said it's worth MISO's time to explore an alternative siting of future resources and simulate market responses without a second



David Patton | © RTO Insider LLC

LRTP portfolio.

"We can't ignore those changes," he said.

For instance, Patton said MISO should factor in plans to *restart* Michigan's Palisades Nuclear Plant in its modeling.

"I just can't see us not adjusting in the benefits analysis for those sorts of known" developments, Patton said.

Patton also said MISO underestimates how additions of storage assets can mitigate some transmission congestion and chip away at the perceived congestion savings of LRTP lines.

"Storage is really, really good at alleviating congestion due to transitory peaks," he said.

He also said MISO shouldn't consider placing its own value on decarbonization because it's already "baked into" the government's production tax credits.

"I really don't think it's MISO's place to speculate on what the value of carbon is," he said.

Patton also said it's not appropriate to calculate potential voltage problems without LRTP lines using the cost of load shed. He said no RTO resorts to load shedding when faced with voltage issues. MISO would be better served by calculating the cost of equipment to correct

voltage issues, he said.

Finally, Patton took issue with MISO attempting to quantify transmission's role in reducing extreme weather risks to the grid, calling it "one of the most uncertain and speculative benefits." He said MISO should use a lower, more realistic probability of extreme weather events occurring in the footprint.

Sustainable FERC Project Attorney Lauren Azar countered that unlike transmission built on 10- to 15-year timelines, markets stimulate only near-term investments.

Azar said if MISO followed Patton's recommendations, it would be ignoring FERC's recent Order 1920 to engage in long-term, scenario-based transmission planning.

"I challenge your fundamental assumption that markets are the best driver of new lines," Azar said. "I would caution MISO to follow your advice."

Azar said avoiding congestion is just one benefit of new transmission infrastructure, not the primary aim.

Patton insisted he isn't advocating for anything beyond appropriate customer costs for trans-

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MISO News

Smaller Projects Expected from Maiden MISO-PJM Joint Tx Study

By Amanda Durish Cook

CARMEL, Ind. — MISO has told stakeholders not to expect sweeping, greenfield projects as a result of its new transfer capability study with PJM.

Speaking at a May 29 Planning Advisory Committee meeting, MISO Director of Expansion Planning Jeanna Furnish said MISO and PJM anticipate sharing more details around possible projects in the first half of 2025. However, the projects probably won't be staggering in scale.

MISO Director of Economic and Policy Planning Christina Drake said MISO and PJM's transfer capability study first must entail an engineering analysis before the RTOs begin future work on a new project type or adding a new cost allocation method to the MISO-PJM joint operating agreement.

After prodding from state regulators and consumer groups, MISO and PJM in early May announced they would embark on a new type of interregional planning study. (See [MISO, PJM Agree to Perform New Type of Joint Transmission Study](#).)



The MISO-PJM seam | *Grid Strategies*

Drake said MISO and PJM might create a new project type to expand interregional transfer capabilities.

But she said MISO and PJM first need to “explore the edges” of their joint modeling. She said the first study will center on near-term construction, not the more complex, interregional projects that require greenfield development. The first study probably will aid

“future work on project type and cost allocation,” Drake said.

Drake said it's likely MISO and PJM will identify project needs even though the study was described as “informational” by the RTOs.

“Informational does not imply that we're just going to post results and not bring anything forward,” Drake said.

Invenergy's Arash Ghodsian asked whether MISO and PJM's study also will focus on interconnection upgrade needs on the seam that have been showing up for years in the RTOs' interconnection queues.

Drake said the focus of the study is strictly interregional transfers, not enabling more generator hookups, as is the case with MISO and SPP's Joint Targeted Interconnection Queue study. Drake also said it's unlikely MISO and PJM will develop a major, multivalue style project stemming from the initial study.

Nevertheless, Ghodsian said the study is “long due” and Invenergy looks forward to the effort.

Drake said MISO is meeting with PJM regularly on the nascent study. ■

MISO IMM Knocks LRTP Benefit Calculations; RTO Poised to Add More Projects

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mission expansion.

Patton for months also has criticized MISO's second transmission planning future as unrealistic. (See [MISO Shelves IMM's Transmission Planning Recommendation in State of the Market Report](#).) The second LRTP portfolio is based on that 20-year scenario, which predicts that by 2042, MISO will manage 466 GW of installed capacity, have a 145-GW peak load that occurs in January rather than July and have overseen 103 GW in generation retirements. It also expects its fleet will emit 96% less carbon pollution than it did in 2005.

MISO Undeterred, Plans More LRTP Projects

Meanwhile, MISO likely will fill in its second LRTP portfolio with more projects than it originally proposed in its draft plan.

MISO's Jeanna Furnish said MISO has been evaluating alternatives and additional projects to its indicative map of transmission solutions under the second LRTP portfolio. She said MISO is poised to make seven *additions* of 765- or 345-kV projects in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa and replace an original 765-kV project in Missouri and Iowa with segments of 345-kV line in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Furnish said MISO tested 47 of nearly 100 project alternatives suggested by stakeholders. MISO turned to stakeholders for more ideas after it revealed its draft plan in March.

“The feedback we got is that we need to take a bigger step,” Executive Director of Transmission Planning Laura Rauch said. “It's that guidance that helped us look at a bigger Tranche 2 portfolio than we originally envisioned.”

American Transmission Co.'s Tom Dagenais

thanked MISO for taking suggestions and being open to expanding the portfolio.

Furnish said while “initial ideas were good,” MISO sought to improve the reliability and economic performance of the second LRTP portfolio. MISO said its lone replacement proposal for lower-voltage projects in St. Louis would provide congestion relief while increasing interstate transfers. It also said it could revisit the possibility of a continuous 765-kV line spanning Missouri and Iowa in the future.

MISO planners didn't address Patton's critiques during the workshop.

Later, in an emailed statement to *RTO Insider*, MISO said it “appreciates Dr. Patton's report and will continue working on LRTP solutions through our stakeholder process.” The RTO did not say whether it plans to address Patton's recommendation to axe certain benefit metrics. ■

MISO News



MISO Pursuing More Dynamic Regulation Reserves

By Amanda Durish Cook

CARMEL, Ind. — MISO said a riskier operating environment means it needs a more nuanced approach to its regulation reserve requirements.

At its May 30 meeting, MISO’s Reliability Subcommittee agreed to take up a *project* to make regulation reserves more dynamic. MISO plans to design a process with stakeholders to quantify operating uncertainty and prescribe the requirement depending on anticipated risks.

Manager of Operations Risk Assessment Congcong Wang said historically, MISO’s regulating reserve relies on a static requirement “that may not be effective in managing the increasing and varying uncertainty in the 4-second to 5-minute time frame” given MISO’s changing resource portfolio. She said MISO needs a more calibrated approach that involves a requirement that varies by hour and season in either high, medium or low amounts. MISO currently carries about 400 MW of regulation reserves.

“Appropriately setting its requirement is critical for the product to work effectively,” Wang said.

MISO’s ancillary service market provides regulating reserves, which are designed to maintain frequency regulation up to 5 minutes at a time.

Wang said MISO expects to begin work in earnest on the initiative in the third quarter. She said the shift shouldn’t require completely new software or a filing with FERC to edit the MISO tariff.



Congcong Wang, MISO | © RTO Insider LLC

The regulation reserve project likely will spawn a sister task: MISO said it also *plans* to update the uncertainty component of its ramping product to be more dynamic. Wang said while MISO’s ramp capability requirement’s variation component is dynamic, its uncertainty component is “hard coded as a static parameter” and has been updated only once in 2021 since the product’s inception in 2016. MISO would like to come up with a method to quantify uncertainty over the next 10 to 30 minutes

and use that in its anticipated ramp-up needs. Wang said the move would have MISO’s software more accurately predicting when it needs ramp-up capability and sending out scarcity pricing to incentivize resources. She said the goal is to have MISO more clearly signaling beforehand when it could use flexibility. MISO last year essentially disabled its down-ramp product in an acknowledgement that it virtually never requires it. ■

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MISO News

MISO to Cut Conductor-only Work from Competitive Bidding

By Amanda Durish Cook

CARMEL, Ind. — MISO said after its experience with its first long-range transmission portfolio, it no longer wants to open simple, conductor-only projects to its competitive bidding process.

MISO competitive transmission lead Alex Monn said the amount of time and effort that went into opening some straightforward, long-range transmission plan (LRTP) lines to competition wasn't worth the outcome.

"Applying the competitive transmission process to projects that solely entail installing new conductor is costly and inefficient," Monn said during a May 29 Planning Advisory

Committee meeting.

MISO evaluated five competitive transmission projects from the first cycle of its \$10 billion long-range transmission plan. It said two rounds of competitive bidding were composed solely of installing new conductor on replaced transmission structures. For those, Monn said MISO developed requests for proposals and formally selected developers when only the incumbent transmission owners applied to string the lines in both cases. (See [MISO Selects Ameren, Dairyland to Build 3rd and 4th LRTP Competitive Projects](#).) Neither project exceeded \$25 million.

MISO plans to make a FERC filing in July to designate the installations of conductor on already replaced transmission structures as upgrades, not projects eligible for bids.

Currently, the applicability of MISO's competitive process varies based on structure design. MISO already considers work a mere upgrade when circuit needs to be strung on existing transmission structures that have spare positions available. However, it allows competitive bidding on the conductor portion of the job when transmission structures don't have spare positions and need to be replaced to make space for new capacity.

Monn said extending MISO's upgrade definition to both scenarios and eliminating bidding would simplify MISO's competitive transmission process.

MISO hopes to implement the change in September. It's collecting stakeholder reactions on its plan through mid-June. ■



| Dairyland Power Cooperative

MISO News

Appeals Court Overturns Wis. Ban on DR Aggregation in MISO

By Amanda Durish Cook

An appeals court has toppled Wisconsin's longstanding ban on aggregators of demand response participating in wholesale markets.

The District IV Court of Appeals for Wisconsin agreed with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) that the Wisconsin Public Service Commission's circa-2009, temporary order prohibiting customers and aggregators from selling demand response in MISO was procedurally improper (2021CV41).

The court said in a May 31 ruling that the original order in fact meets the definition of a rule according to Wisconsin law and the Wisconsin PSC should have proposed and adopted it using different procedures. Judges called the order "invalid and unenforceable" and reversed a circuit court's decision to dismiss a challenge to it.

"There is no dispute that, in issuing the order, the commission did not comply with the pertinent rulemaking procedures set forth" in Wisconsin statute, the appeals court said.

The 15-year-old order — which bars retail customers of Wisconsin's largest utilities, as well as third-party aggregators, from selling load reductions in wholesale markets — was considered temporary when commissioners approved it. It was to remain in effect until regulators rescinded it through another order, which to date hasn't happened.

At the time, commissioners reasoned they needed time to analyze the financial implications of demand response aggregations on ratepayers and investigate how such aggregations would affect utility-sponsored demand response programs and resource planning.

MREA first challenged the order with the Portage County Circuit Court in 2021.

The Wisconsin PSC asked the appeals court to sustain the dismissal. It said MREA failed to



A Wisconsin PSC meeting around the time of Midwest Renewable Energy Association's complaint on the temporary DR order | Wisconsin Public Service Commission

challenge the order within 30 days of issuance and didn't exhaust all administrative remedies first because it didn't ask regulators to reopen the docket to rescind or alter the order. The commission also argued it has main jurisdiction over the issue.

But the court said the order isn't an administrative decision according to Wisconsin law and isn't subject to the 30-day limit. It noted Wisconsin law allows plaintiffs to petition courts "for declaratory relief without first asking the agency to rule" on claims and dismissed the commission's contention that the PSC was exclusively equipped to handle the matter.

"[MREA's] argument that the order is an invalid, unpromulgated rule involves only issues of

law that fall squarely within the circuit court's expertise," the court said. It remanded the case to the circuit court with instructions for the court to deem the temporary order invalid.

The court similarly wasn't persuaded by the Wisconsin PSC's argument that the order didn't amount to the "general application" of a rule. Wisconsin considers rules generally applicable when the class of constituents is "described in general terms and new members can be added to the class."

The court agreed with MREA that since the order applied to all existing and future retail customers of Wisconsin's four largest utilities and all existing and future third-party aggregators, it met the definition of a rule. ■

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NYISO News

NYPA Unveils Expanded Grid Simulation Lab

Digital Modeling Intended to Improve Performance of Renewables, Optimize Transmission

By John Cropley

ALBANY, N.Y. — The New York Power Authority has expanded its transmission laboratory with extensive new digital twin capabilities, allowing it to model and test the impact of new technologies on the grid.

The Advanced Grid Innovation Laboratory for Energy (AGILE) is expected to be an important tool for the public and private sectors alike as New York decarbonizes its grid, identifying the demands that will be placed on existing infrastructure and ways to minimize that impact.

How best to use these new technologies and match them to the grid are critical details of the energy transition. Stakeholders can base their planning on data provided by AGILE, NYPA said at a ceremony unveiling the facility May 29.

NYPA founded AGILE in 2017 at its downstate headquarters and has gradually expanded its capabilities since.

Albany was chosen as the site for the physical expansion of the lab because of the concentration of key stakeholders: The headquarters of NYISO, the Department of Public Service and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority are all near, as are multiple colleges. The new lab space itself is within NY CREATES, a \$15 billion high-tech research hub.

“AGILE is more than just a technical facility; it’s a hub that is designed for collaboration of national and global stakeholders to evaluate and solve grid-related challenges,” NYPA President Justin Driscoll said before a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

NYSERDA President Doreen Harris said AGILE and its ability to model real-time, real-world results will help the state work toward the statutory goals in its clean energy transition.

“Where we sit today, so many of the models we use are static,” she said.



New York Power Authority President Justin Driscoll | © RTO Insider LLC

As one of the lead agencies in the state’s energy transition, NYSERDA has a direct stake in expanding this modeling capacity. It will provide \$9 million for advanced technology research facilitated by data from AGILE.

Jessica Waldorf, chief of staff and policy implementation for the DPS, said AGILE will be a key part of the department’s efforts to expand and improve transmission, including through the Coordinated Grid Planning Process implemented in 2023.

“AGILE will help confront the challenges of balancing system reliability with clean energy development and cutting-edge technologies,” NYISO President Richard Dewey said in a statement. “NYISO is excited to work with NYPA in this regard, and having a grid ‘digital twin’ in our backyard will only make our collaboration that much closer.”

Learning Process

The new space is a 10,000-square-foot office and control room powered by a data center drawing 400 kW of power and cooled with a 40-ton air conditioner.

It is the first facility of its kind, NYPA said, able to use digital twins of devices and wires to see how they will interact.

AGILE can model cyberattacks and responses, draw on an archive of the effects of actual weather events, and run a post mortem on past



New York Power Authority Senior Engineer Rahul Kadavil explains the capabilities of the control room at the AGILE Lab, NYPA’s newly expanded power grid research and test facility, in Albany, N.Y., on May 29. | © RTO Insider LLC

NYISO News

failures of components or systems. Engineers can wheel actual components into the lab to record and analyze their performance, or they can work from existing performance data.

Importantly for the decarbonization of the grid, AGILe can model the effects of inverter-based resources and grid-enhancing technologies. It starts with the best possible model of the existing grid functioning perfectly and the best possible model of the effects of changes on anything from a 13-kV local line to a 765-kV backbone line.

AGILe Director Hossein Hooshyar said, as an example, that a wind farm developer could bring a control panel into the lab and simulate operation to see how it would impact the grid and find a way to avoid impacting the grid negatively.

“That’s the beauty of it,” Driscoll said. “You create what ‘perfect’ looks like ... and then test aberrations or changes in circumstances that you might face ... dynamic line ratings, advanced power controls, advanced conductor-ing — we could test that out before deploying it in the field.”

Standing amid banks of supercomputers and speaking over the cooling system’s hum, Reza Pourramezan, senior power systems engineer, explained AGILe’s capabilities.

“By receiving real-time measurements and data from sensors, as well as weather forecasts and load forecasts and market information, I can incorporate all this input into our simulations — that makes it even more realistic,” he said. Training, asset management, field support and collaborative decision-making also are



Hossein Hooshyar, director of the New York Power Authority’s AGILe Lab | © RTO Insider LLC

enhanced with this digital twin approach.

Senior power systems engineer Rahul Kadavil said the simultaneous rise of intermittent renewables, societal increase in power demand and growing weather-related threats to transmission created a need for the capabilities of AGILe.

“It will revolutionize the way we manage our energy infrastructure,” he said, standing before a wall of screens in the control room that provide a visual display of all the factors acting on the New York grid in increments of milliseconds.

Kadavil had Driscoll press the prominent red button in the middle of the room, triggering a simulated large grid disturbance, complete with flickering room lights, and an appropriate simulated response by the grid management.

The readouts for load and frequency spiked up and down briefly, then flattened back out.

“We have married real-time simulators with the immersive power of visualization to create that tactile feedback,” Kadavil said.

NYSERDA’s Harris said AGILe’s capabilities will speed the adoption of new technologies because utilities and other customers will be more confident about something that has been tested.

“This simulation allows us to understand the impacts [in advance] as opposed to physically deploying it in the field,” she said.

Ali Mohammed, NYPA senior director of digital innovation and transformation, said the lengthy evolution that led to the debut of the new lab created a unique tool for the energy transition.

“The digital twin asset is pretty much new in the industry,” he said. “No one has ever built a grid-level digital twin. Asset-level, yes, but not at the grid level!”

AGILe’s research partners will include Electric Power Research Institute, NYISO, NYSERDA, the Long Island Power Authority and investor-owned utilities. Potential clients include vendors, innovators, universities and grid operators from around the world.

Fees will vary by project details and by client, Mohammed said. ■

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NYISO News



Stakeholders Scold NYISO on Messaging Ahead of Summer

By Michael Brooks

NYISO stakeholders on May 29 scolded the ISO for using the wrong figure in a press release on its summer capacity assessment, saying it suggested capacity margins would be tighter this summer than expected.

Aaron Markham, NYISO vice president of operations, was presenting the ISO's *assessment*, which had been presented to the Operating Committee on May 16, to the Management Committee. (See *NYISO Reports Adequate Capacity for Summer, but Heat Waves a Concern.*) The ISO said there is enough capacity to serve peak load this summer under its baseline forecast, but it made a point of noting that margins continue to shrink and that a prolonged heat wave could lead to emergency operations.

NYISO expects to have about 40.7 GW of total capacity (34.9 GW after expected derates) to serve an expected peak load of about 31.5 GW. The day after the presentation to the OC, however, the ISO issued a *press release* reporting a "forecasted peak demand conditions of 33,301 MW."

That figure is actually the ISO's predicted peak load under its 90/10 forecast, an extreme weather scenario it expects has only a 10% chance of happening.

"I think it was a bit misleading to do that, as opposed to describing our baseline forecast and the conditions that you would expect," said Howard Fromer of PSEG Power. "It kind of suggested that things are much worse than our market is intended to support. ... If we think 90/10 is our reality, we need to have a conversation about how we're setting our markets."

He noted that the sentence following the figure reads, "In 2023, summer peak demand reached 30,206 MW."

"It suggests that there's a year-over-year increase of over 3,000 MW in spite of everything New York state is doing," such as energy efficiency and behind-the-meter solar, Fromer said.

The *Times Union* reported the 90/10 figure as the expected peak load and quoted Gavin Donohue, president of the Independent Power Producers of New York, as saying, "This has been a concern for quite some time, and now it is a red light concern." *T&D World's* report on the assessment was headlined "NYISO Warns of Potential Summer Power Shortages Despite Adequate Supplies Under Normal Conditions," also reporting the 90/10 figure.

2023 & 2024 Summer Capacity Assessment & Comparison					
Line	Item	2023	2024		
		Baseline Forecast	Baseline Forecast	90th Percentile Forecast	99th Percentile Forecast
1a	Summer Generation Capacity ¹	36,990	37,867	37,867	37,867
1b	SCR - ICAP Values	1,226	1,281	1,281	1,281
1c	Net Purchases & Sales	2,932	1,585	1,585	1,585
1	Total Capacity Resources	41,148	40,733	40,733	40,733
2	Assumed Unavailable Capacity (Gen + SCR) ^{2,3}	-5,092	-5,819	-6,230	-6,416
3 = 1 + 2	Net Capacity Resources	36,056	34,913	34,502	34,317
4	Peak Load Forecast	32,048	31,541	33,301	34,790
5	Operating Reserve Requirement	2,620	2,620	2,620	2,620
6 = 4+5	Total Capacity Requirement	34,668	34,161	35,921	37,410
7 = 3 - 6	Capacity Margin ⁴	1,388	752	-1,419	-3,093

| NYISO

"I very much support the concern about NYISO's press release," said Christopher Casey, utility regulatory director for the Natural Resources Defense Council. "I've been raising my own concerns with NYISO's press releases for almost a year now, and I think NYISO is increasingly giving a confusing message to the public. Having the release focused on the 90/10 criteria ... is pretty misleading."

Marc Montalvo of Daymark Energy Advisors said NERC's 2024 *Summer Reliability Assessment*, released May 15, found "the New York region being essentially normal, sufficient; no expectations for issues or insufficient operating reserves," while CAISO, ERCOT, MISO and ISO-NE face an "elevated" risk of insufficient operating reserves in above-normal conditions. (See *NERC Summer Assessment Sees Some Risk in Extreme Heat Waves.*)

"But this [NYISO's assessment] looks like, under high-load conditions, that you might have an expectation of operating reserve shortages. So I'm trying to reconcile these two presentations," Montalvo said. "If there's one set of information that suggests a certain type of [condition or concern], and ostensibly measuring the same thing, and it looks like it's telling a different story, it can be a bit confusing."

"We provide the NERC assessment with data in the format that they want it," Markham said. "Here we try to take a little bit more conservative view of what conditions might look like in New York. ... There can be various ways of accounting for forced outages of generation and how you calculate that number. ... Here we use the average over five years."

'Contributing to the Problem'

While NERC did say NYISO is expected to have sufficient reserves, it noted that a prob-

abilistic assessment by the Northeast Power Coordinating Council found the ISO "could experience resource shortages during high-demand conditions and require limited use of operating procedures for mitigation." However, even under the highest peak load scenarios, NPCC estimated a "small" cumulative loss-of-load expectation of 1.6 days for the season.

Casey expressed confusion about "why [NYISO is] deciding that [data] should be presented and discussed differently to a stakeholder and New York public audience versus when you're reporting to" FERC and NERC.

"I think the ISO is in some respects ... contributing to the problem here," said Mark Younger, president of Hudson Energy Economics. "The summer assessment is not an evaluation of whether the ISO is likely to be unable to meet its loads. The summer assessment is an evaluation of whether the ISO can operate its system and remain under normal operating parameters for the whole thing. That is a long distance from where we are at risk of failing to meet load. ... The ability to use [emergency operating procedures] is probably something the general public and reporters would not at all understand."

Robert Fernandez, NYISO general counsel and chief compliance officer, said he appreciated the feedback, but "I reject categorically any implication that there was an intention to mislead the public or anyone else here. That is simply not the case. ... We can talk about clarifying [the presentation], but ... you guys know us better than that."

"I don't think you intended to, Rob; I'm not suggesting that at all," Fromer replied. "But the casual reader is going to look at this press release and say, 'Wow, our load went up 3,000 MW from last summer!'" ■

PJM News



EPRI: Clean Energy, Efficiency Can Meet AI, Data Center Power Demand Report Sees Potential Doubling of Power Demand from ‘Hyperscale’ Centers

By K Kaufmann

The burgeoning power demand from data centers and artificial intelligence can be met by other means than new natural gas-fired power plants that could hinder state and local emission-reduction goals, according to a new report from the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI).

The centers’ insatiable appetite for electricity could more than double by 2030, the report says; so, tech developers and utilities should work together to turn the passive demand of these megawatt-guzzling facilities into grid assets, by using their backup generators to provide system reliability and flexibility.

“The data centers all have 100% backup generation on site” — usually diesel generators — “to prevent catastrophic failures,” said David Porter, EPRI’s vice president for electrification and sustainable energy strategy. “The backup generation has the ability to function as a grid resource in times of need; it doesn’t have to be long term.”

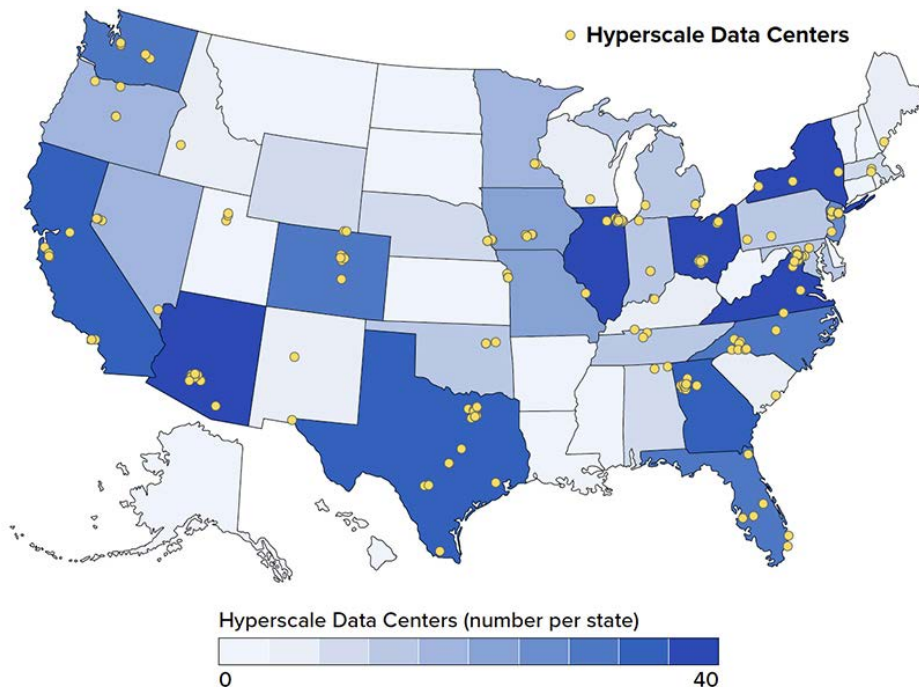
But creating these “shared energy” systems will first mean gaining data center willingness to set them up by addressing industry fears about how any use of their backup power might affect the reliability of their own operations, Porter said. In addition, utilities will also have to offer “the right incentives financially to the data centers to make it worth their while to participate in a program like that,” he said.

EPRI’s other options for keeping data center demand growth at lower levels include improved energy efficiency and better forecasting for new centers and the power they will need.

“Forecasts need to make better projections describing new point load locations, magnitudes and timing alongside better techniques for making decisions — to build or not build long-lead-time infrastructure — while facing the economic, regulatory and political uncertainty associated with siting these large [centers],” the report says.

EPRI’s research and recommendations stand in contrast to those recommending pushing back the closure of some fossil fuel-fired plants and adding new gas generation to deal with the load.

The prime example is Virginia, which boasts



Hyperscale data centers across the U.S. as of 2022 | EPRI

of having the largest concentration of data centers in the world in its northern, D.C.-area suburbs — the so-called “Data Center Alley” in Loudoun County. *Local concerns* center on the environmental impacts of the thousands of diesel backup generators already located at the centers and a new 500-kV transmission line being planned by PJM, as well as likely increases on residential utility bills.

The 2020 Virginia Clean Economy Act requires Dominion Energy, its largest investor-owned utility, to deliver 100% of its power from renewable sources by 2045.

The utility’s most recent long-term *integrated resource plan* sees most new generation between now and that deadline coming from solar and storage. But among the options considered in the IRP, Dominion’s preferred plan keeps some coal-fired generation online through 2030, converts a 415-MW coal plant to natural gas and builds at least three new natural gas plants with a combined capacity of 1,708 MW, with the final, 523-MW facility coming online in 2049.

The EPRI report counters with a focus on “scalable clean energy supply,” primarily solar, wind and storage. Tech giants like Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta and Microsoft — known in the industry as “hyperscalers” — are procuring

thousands of megawatts of new clean energy to cover their operational power demands, the report says.

Top data center developers — including Iron Mountain, Digital Realty Trust, QTS Realty Trust and Switch — similarly have increased their procurement of clean energy, according to a *2023 report* by S&P Global. Google, Microsoft and Iron Mountain have led industry efforts to match their power demand with carbon-free generation hour for hour 24/7.

In the long term, many in the industry are looking toward small modular reactors as an option for the kind of clean, dispatchable power that data centers need, but Porter does not expect the technology — now in the early stages of demonstration and deployment — to reach broad, commercial scale until the 2030s.

The coming clash between data center and AI load growth and the clean energy transition “is not going to be easy,” he said. “Even solar and wind resources that can really help with zero-carbon electrons ... are not coming online as fast as might be needed to support this and other growth.”

To keep electricity abundant, reliable and affordable, Porter said, “optionality is still our best opportunity for that, so, I think a col-

PJM News



lection of different types of resources.” Data centers might replace their backup diesel generators with a mix of renewables and energy storage, biofuels or green hydrogen.

Just How Much?

The EPRI report also provides a detailed picture of the power demand of data centers, their uneven geographic distribution and the dramatic impact AI is having on growth trends.

While a regular Google search eats up about 0.3 Wh of power, a similar search via AI takes close to 10 times as much electricity: 2.9 Wh. The appetite of generative AI, which can produce images, video or text, multiplied by millions of worldwide users, could “lead to a step change in power requirements,” the report says.

Hyperscale data centers require 100 MW or more of power — the equivalent demand of 80,000 homes — and can be built and brought online within two years.

Virginia’s data centers currently represent 25% of the state’s electricity consumption. But given ongoing high growth, EPRI estimates data center power demand in the state could almost double by 2030, to 46%. According to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the state already has *150, or 35%*, of the world’s hyperscale data centers.

On a national level, data centers accounted for 4% of electricity consumption across the U.S. in 2023. EPRI’s report models low-, moderate-, high- and higher-growth scenarios, with data center demand either edging up to 4.6% of total consumption by 2030 (low growth) or more than doubling to 9.1% (higher growth).

Virginia and 14 other states spread across the U.S. make up 80% of that demand, the report says. Consequently, forecasts of demand growth should be looked at regionally, Porter said. Decisions about where data centers are located may depend on “several key things ... like what’s the communications infrastructure, what’s the price of electricity, what’s the price of land and is there still workforce available in the area?” he said.

“Power availability is also part of that, and depending on where you are, in some parts of the country, it’s easier to get large blocks of power than others,” he said.

While not specifically mentioned in the report, grid expansion must be part of the bigger picture on meeting data center power demand, Porter said. Hyperscale centers are “not going to be distribution-served facilities; [their power] will come from transmission,” he said.

“That’s part of why there’s a need for better communications, particularly with the near-, mid- and longer-term [planning] from the data centers to the utilities,” given the yearslong process for planning and permitting new transmission lines.

Grid-enhancing technologies — such as upgrading existing lines with advanced conductors — should be looked at as both interim and longer-term solutions for expanding transmission capacity, he said.

Energy Efficiency

Historically, data centers have been able to offset their increasing power demand through efficiency, but with the U.S. economy and data centers growing at unfamiliar and accelerated speeds, whether efficiency can keep up remains uncertain.

EPRI’s research has included “interesting conversations with hyperscalers,” Porter said. “They still firmly believe that as their capabilities to architect what happens inside data centers, coupled with continued improvements in chips ... the [electricity] demand for data centers will not grow in huge leaps and bounds.”

Major efficiency gains may be made in facility cooling — typically air conditioning — which has traditionally accounted for 35% of data center power demand, the report says. Newer cooling technologies that use liquids to absorb and dissipate heat can cut demand by up to 50%.

Using system redundancy at data centers is another option, Porter said. Centers may have backup or redundant servers “that are running at 50% of their capability,” Porter said. “The challenge with this is that a server running at 50% of capacity uses as much energy as it would if it were running at 100% capacity.”

Other approaches include “pruning”: cutting unnecessary elements in neural networks, which reduces computational complexity — and energy demand — while “maintaining robust performance,” the report says. Power capping reduces energy use but may slightly decrease speed by 3 to 4%, Porter said.

A recent webinar sponsored by Canary Media also looked at the role of wholesale markets in responding to the increasing power demands of data centers and the potential inefficiency of non-RTO markets such as the Southeast.

“If we had an RTO that covered the whole region, you wouldn’t be building three or four gas plants for the same load,” said Maggie Shober, research director at the Southern Alliance for

Clean Energy. “The flip side of that is we don’t have reserve margin sharing here in the Southeast,” so individual utilities may be predicting a need for larger reserves.

Shober and other speakers at the webinar zeroed in on the Georgia Public Service Commission’s recent approval of an updated IRP for Georgia Power after the utility predicted 17-fold growth in demand by 2030, largely from data centers. The new plan includes a power purchase agreement that would help keep a coal-fired plant in Mississippi online through at least 2028, along with three new, company-owned gas-fired plants with a total capacity of 1,400 MW.

The Clean Energy Buyers Association (CEBA) was able to push Georgia Power to a last-minute addendum to the IRP, committing the utility to develop a new program that allows large-demand customers, like data centers, to bring their own clean power into the utility’s system, said Priya Barua, CEBA’s senior director for market and policy innovation.

The utility has agreed to work with CEBA and other customers to design the program, which will be included in its 2025 IRP, Barua said. “I think it’s an important first step for opening a new path for Georgia to have kind of expanded options for meeting load growth” in the absence of an organized market.

Shober sees the Georgia Power and Dominion IRPs as a “trial run because we know this kind of load is coming. ... My worry is that this sort of panic reaction and kneejerk reactions by a number of utilities means that we don’t have the right processes in place and the right level of transparency to meet that kind of load” with proactive planning and a diverse set of options.

Simon Mahan, executive director of the Southern Renewable Energy Association, said such changes should include a hard look at the value different resources bring to the grid. “Historically, natural gas, coal [and] nuclear resources ... would get 100% accreditation. The utilities would just assume, ‘Oh yes, they’re always going to be around because we can turn them on and off.’

“The reality is showing that’s not the case. So, we need to appropriately accredit those resources as we’re also properly accrediting wind, solar [and] batteries.”

Barua agreed that new, more holistic thinking is needed — and maybe taking some risks. “We’ve reached the stage where we’re going to need to be uncomfortable to come up with the right kinds of solutions for the challenge that the system is facing right now.” ■

PJM News



IMM Alleges EE Ineligible to Participate in PJM Capacity Market

By Devin Leith-Yessian

The Independent Market Monitor filed a complaint May 31 asking FERC to reject all energy efficiency (EE) offers into PJM's capacity market, alleging that none of them meet the Base Residual Auction (BRA) participation requirements ([EL24-113](#)).

The complaint argues that EE programs that seek to help consumers buy more efficient appliances by entering into agreements with distributors and retailers — known as mid- and upstream programs — are not obtaining consumer-level data or entering into contracts with individual end users. It took aim at the measurement and verification reports of a dozen EE providers, stating they had not included information to demonstrate that installations of more efficient products occurred in a manner that would allow PJM and the Monitor to conduct audits.

"The reports fail to provide adequate evidence to demonstrate that the included EE measures meet the requirements to be approved and to receive payment. It is unjust and unreasonable to require PJM customers to pay a total of \$128 million in the BRA alone for EE MW that have not been demonstrated to meet the requirements to be paid," the Monitor wrote.

The complaint asks the commission to either bar the EE providers from receiving capacity market revenues in the 2024/25 delivery year or order PJM and the Monitor to open an investigation to determine eligibility.

Following the filing, PJM emailed EE market participants that it plans to delay signing off on all post-installation measurement and verification (PIMV) reports supporting EE offers until after the complaint is resolved, which also holds up capacity market payments to EE resources.

"Delay of PJM action on the PIMV reports provides FERC the opportunity to consider the merits of the IMM complaint," the email said. "As a result, no payments, deficiency charges and nonperformance charges associated with energy efficiency resources for the 24/25 delivery year will be invoiced to energy efficiency providers until FERC has ruled on the merits of the IMM complaint and PJM approves or rejects the PIMV reports. All replacement transactions associated with energy efficiency providers will be terminated and may be reentered depending on the outcome of this matter at FERC."



Monitoring Analytics President Joe Bowring | © RTO Insider LLC

PJM spokesperson Jeff Shields said the delay affects all EE offers, including components not related to midstream and upstream programs.

A representative of one of the entities named in the Monitor's complaint, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said it's alarming that PJM opted to withhold capacity market revenues with less than a day's notice before the start of the delivery year because of a complaint still pending before the commission.

"From our vantage point, it is hard to see this as anything other than the IMM unilaterally suspending energy efficiency and, for reasons kind of unknown, PJM going along with that and supporting that," they said.

They said it fits squarely in the Monitor's role to scrutinize a particular market participant; however, the complaint appears to target an entire class of resources and enact a policy change through a FERC complaint. They noted that there's an ongoing stakeholder process focused on the rules around EE measurement and verification that the complaint seeks to sidestep. (See "Stakeholders Regroup on Energy Efficiency Rules After MRC Rejection of Proposals," [PJM MIC Briefs: May 1, 2024](#).)

"It's entirely reasonable and within the IMM's discretion to take as close a look as he wants at any capacity resources ... but to approach it in this fashion, especially in the midst of an ongoing stakeholder dialogue on how to make the rules better — it seems entirely inappropriate," they said.

Monitor Joseph Bowring told *RTO Insider* the complaint addresses a longstanding issue with EE participation in PJM's capacity market and is meant to ensure consumers are not overpaying for EE under the current rules. He said the complaint is unrelated to stakeholder discussions looking at how the capacity contribution

of EE resources is measured and verified. On the approach PJM and stakeholders should take in that forum, Bowring said he believes the tariff does not support the resource class being a part of the capacity market.

"EE does not belong in the capacity construct at all," he said.

Many of the Monitor's arguments in the complaint echoed those made by PJM as it drafted a proposal to tighten the measurement and verification requirements for EE. During the May 1 Market Implementation Committee meeting, PJM's Pete Langbein argued it has not been demonstrated that capacity market revenues flowing to EE participants is incentivizing consumers to buy more efficient devices they otherwise would not have.

"They shouldn't be able to claim things that are naturally going to occur. ... If I'm making a decision to purchase a high-efficiency air conditioner, an EE provider shouldn't be able to claim that unless they can prove" they incentivized the purchasing of that unit over a less efficient product," Langbein said in May.

Stakeholders representing EE providers pushed back, stating that the resource class efficiently provides a guaranteed reduction in consumption over PJM's load forecast.

The complaint argues that the party seeking to enter energy savings into the capacity market either must directly control the load reduction or hold a contract with the consumer granting rights to the capacity associated with the energy savings. Without contracts between EE providers and the consumers buying efficient devices, the Monitor also raised the possibility that multiple EE market participants could attempt to include the same load reduction in their capacity offers.

"There is no evidence that Indicated Energy Efficiency Sellers through midstream and upstream programs provided legally required consideration to any end users for the rights to their projects or products. The Indicated Energy Efficiency Sellers therefore are not the owners of the requisite contractual rights required by the PJM tariff to be eligible to receive revenues from the PJM capacity market," the Monitor said.

The Monitor also argued that EE programs that contract with retailers and distributors may not lead to lower costs for consumers buying more efficient devices and that no change in consumer behavior has been demonstrated. ■

PJM News



ACEG Report Lays out the Case for Proactive Planning in PJM

By James Downing

PJM should adopt a more proactive transmission planning process to deal with the changing resource mix and growing demand on its system in the coming 15 years, according to a report released June 4 by Americans for a Clean Energy Grid (ACEG).

“Transmission Planning for PJM’s Future Load and Generation” was written by Grid Strategies and David Gardiner and Associates.

“This report takes a deep dive into some of the inputs that PJM needs to take a closer look at in conducting more holistic scenario planning,” ACEG Executive Director Christina Hayes said in an interview June 3. “PJM has been making progress in evolving its transmission planning in recent months, and we’re excited about those efforts. We know that more will be required in implementing Order No. 1920, and we believe this report provides a road map to doing so.”

Skeptics of proactive planning argue that transmission plans are full of uncertainty and speculation, but ignoring the massive changes impacting the energy industry and continuing to plan reactively will not address those concerns, the report says. Uncertainty is best addressed by incorporating the best data on the future resource mix and running different scenarios to determine the optimum set of solutions, as Order 1920 requires.

The report forecasts demand will be higher than the forecast PJM released early this year

by about 8% in its “Expected” scenario and 18% for a high-growth scenario. Even those scenarios might be conservative given the continual announcements of new manufacturing facilities and data centers.

“We find PJM will need an additional 623 TWh of annual energy generation by 2040 to meet this resource gap under our Expected scenario — equivalent to 76% of PJM’s 2023 generation,” the report says. “Under the High scenario, PJM faces a larger resource gap in 2040 and will need to nearly double current energy generation by adding 798 TWh. The increase is driven by higher electrification estimates leading to larger load growth and higher amounts of generation retirements due to shorter plant lifespan assumptions.”

The biggest difference between PJM’s load forecast and the two scenarios in the report is the latter assume higher demand from electrification and higher generation retirements. The electrification estimates in the report are based on projections from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, while the report says PJM’s Independent Market Monitor has estimated higher retirements than the RTO itself.

“I think the one thing we can be certain of with every single demand forecast we have seen recently is that they will all be wrong. Right?” Hayes said. “Nobody is going to forecast the future with 100% certainty.”

But one thing that is certain is that several factors are leading to higher demand, and it

makes sense to ensure transmission is ready to meet that on time, she added.

“We do need to be thoughtful and measured in how we plan for it,” Hayes said. “But in doing so, we need to take the long view because if we wait until it’s upon us, we’re either going to have outages, or resources that we want to keep in the United States are going to end up being located outside the United States, which is a national security problem. Or we’re going to develop the grid in a more expensive way.”

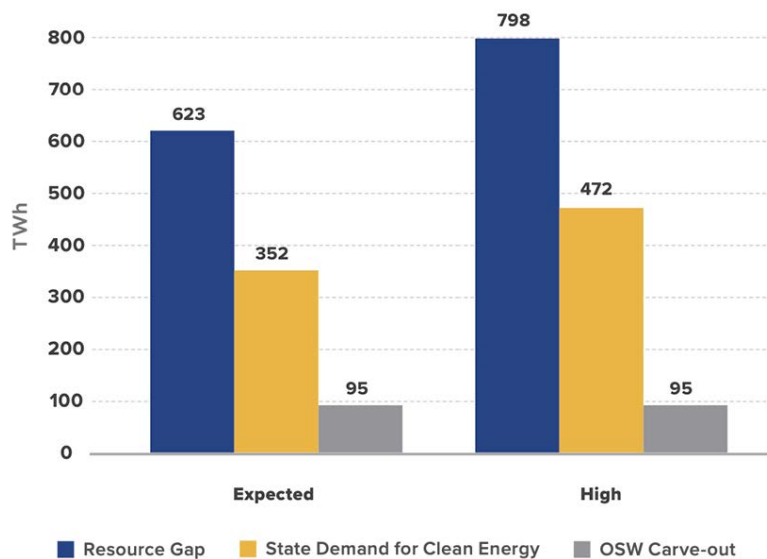
The Regional Transmission Expansion Process in place now includes a short-term reliability process looking out five years and another reliability planning process that looks out 15 years, both using base cases based on power flow models that includes capacity cleared in the market and only announced retirements. Retirements require only 90 days’ advance notice.

Better anticipating retirements can help significantly, as seen recently with the Brandon Shores coal plant in Baltimore. PJM found the grid would need \$785 million in transmission upgrades for it to retire reliably; those will take until 2028 to complete, 3.5 years from the plant’s desired retirement, the report says. A reliability-must-run deal for the plant might cost consumers an additional \$250 million a year, which could have been avoided or lowered with proactive planning.

“In Order 1920, FERC did a good job of identifying the various factors, looking at fuel costs and market impacts and likely resource retirements, and doing a deep dive on what the generation resource mix is likely to be in five to 10 to 20 years, and rolling those factors into multivalued, holistic planning,” Hayes said.

Another issue in PJM is a growing share of renewables as state and federal policies, lower costs and consumer demand push more and more onto the grid. While some states have policies driving that transition, others are not interested in it at all. Hayes argued that holistically planning the entire grid would even benefit the latter.

“There’s a lot of flexibility in FERC’s rule to allow states with additional goals to assume part of the costs and ensure that states that also partake in the economic/reliability benefits contribute as well,” Hayes said. “It’s the idea of a region being seen as a region rather than a loose collection of states; it is just more cost effective for the region to plan transmission together and then allocate the costs.”



ACEG’s projections of requirements for new resources required in PJM by 2040 | ACEG

SPP News

FERC Approves SPP's Cost-allocation Revisions

RTO Will Use Postage-stamp Rate in Certain Allocation Cases

By Tom Kleckner

FERC on May 31 accepted SPP tariff revisions that will allow certain transmission facilities' costs to be entirely allocated on a regional postage-stamp and cost-by-cost basis, effective June 1, 2024 ([ER24-1583](#)).

The commission found SPP's capacity, flow and benefit analyses of the Sunflower Electric Power transmission facilities at the center of the proceeding provided benefits to the region as a whole. It said the grid operator demonstrated that its proposal will allocate the

facilities' costs in a manner "at least roughly commensurate with estimated benefits, consistent with the cost-causation principle."

SPP's analysis demonstrated that Sunflower's "wind-rich" transmission zone had generation capacity that greatly exceeded its load. Flow analyses demonstrate that more than 70% of the power flows over the utility's byway facilities are from generation unaffiliated with the zone's load.

"We find that SPP's capacity and flow analyses demonstrate that electricity generated from

resources inside the Sunflower zone is being used by load outside of the Sunflower zone and that the Sunflower byway facilities are being used to deliver this electricity," FERC said.

"The entire SPP region benefits economically," from Sunflower's facilities, the commission said. "We find that the proposed 100% regional, postage-stamp cost allocation will allocate the remaining costs of the transmission facilities in a manner that is at least roughly commensurate with benefits received and, therefore, is just and reasonable."

SPP allocates one-third of the cost of byway projects — on lines rated at 100 to 300 kV — to the RTO's full footprint, with customers in the transmission pricing zone where the project is built being allocated the rest. "Highway" projects — those larger than 300 kV — are allocated RTO-wide.

FERC rejected protests that the proposed allocation for the byway facilities' remaining costs is inappropriate because those facilities were built to address zonal reliability issues or forecast load growth that never was realized, rather than regional needs. It said other arguments were that SPP's analysis was "insufficiently granular" to determine whether the entire region would receive benefits at least roughly commensurate with costs.

"We emphasize that cost-allocation precedent does not require such 'exacting precision' in the commission's cost-allocation decisions," FERC said. "We find that a granular zone-by-zone benefits analysis is not necessary to find that SPP's proposal to allocate the remaining costs of the Sunflower byway facilities on a 100% regional, postage-stamp basis is just and reasonable."

The commission rejected SPP's initial 2021 proposal to establish a process allowing entities to petition the RTO's Board of Directors for exceptions from the highway-byway cost-allocation methodology. FERC accepted a revised proposal in 2022 in a 3-2 decision, only to reverse course in 2023 after several rehearing requests. (See [FERC Reverse Course on SPP Byway Cost Plan.](#))

Sunflower has advocated for relief from the highway/byway process since 2017. Transmission owners largely have opposed the proposal as it wound its way through the stakeholder process, saying it would shift byway cost responsibility from wind-rich areas to others. ■



FERC has accepted SPP's tariff revisions that will help lessen costs for utilities upgrading transmission facilities for renewables. | [Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority](#)

SPP News



Extreme Weather Workshop Hit by Extreme Weather

TPL-008 Drafting Team Readies Standard for 2nd Ballot

By Tom Kleckner

DALLAS — Attendees at a recent NERC and EPRI workshop on a draft standard addressing extreme weather's effects on transmission planning now have a more personal understanding of those impacts.

Violent thunderstorms ravaged North Texas on May 28, the day before the workshop began, knocking out power to about 1 million Texans and leaving destruction in its wake. Several speakers and attendees were unable to fly into the Dallas area's two airports after numerous

flights were canceled. Those who did arrive found restaurants and entertainment options closed, thanks to the outages.

It didn't get any better as the workshop adjourned May 30: Another line of storms rolled through the DFW Metroplex, *forcing the cancellation or delay* of flights out of the airports.

"It's very ominous to begin a workshop focused on extreme weather with extreme weather," Eknath Vittal, a senior principal technical leader in EPRI's transmission operations and planning department and the workshop's moderator, said May 29 in opening the workshop.

Pattel guided the diverse group of climate experts from national labs, research and development organizations, and other entities through a discussion of extreme weather and its implications for *FERC Order 896* and NERC's upcoming TPL-008 draft standard regarding extreme weather's effect on transmission planning.

The commission's 2023 order directed NERC to update *TPL-001-5.1* (transmission system planning performance requirements) or draft a new standard by December 2024 that addresses a lack of long-term planning require-



Dallas city officials say it will take about a month to clean up the storm's damage. | © RTO Insider LLC

SPP News

ment for extreme weather events. (See *FERC Approves More Extreme Weather Rules.*)

FERC's requirements included:

- developing benchmark planning cases based on major prior extreme weather events and/or meteorological projections.
- planning for extreme weather events using steady state and transient stability analyses expanded to cover a range of extreme weather scenarios, including the expected resource mix's availability during extreme conditions.
- using corrective action plans that mitigate any instances where performance requirements are not met.

The NERC drafting team's initial work product "failed miserably," as PJM team member Michael Herman said, on its first ballot. The team is reviewing the comments it received before determining next steps, he said.

"We've been reading the comments that everyone has submitted about this," Herman told his audience. "We're taking that information and we're working internally to process that information, and to determine what changes we need to make to the standard in order to address the concerns that all of you brought up."

Herman says the drafting team will work to improve the standard's language to better consider wide-area — entire reliability coordinator areas and critical flow and status information from adjacent RC areas — impacts and setting study area boundaries based on the benchmark events' planning coordinator or planning coordinator requirements.

"In general, we see a lot of need here to bring online nuances to these studies, not just with respect to the defining the benchmark events, but actually the assumptions that go into the analysis itself," he said.

A second draft is expected to be released for a second ballot in July. The drafting team will consider the need to define wide-area studies, bounding coordination requirements within a single interconnection and whether additional details are needed to specify addressing impacts on/from adjacent systems.

Vittal said the TPL-008 process won't take as long as the original standard, which took five years to approve.

"Well, there's the FERC directive behind it, so that kind of dictates the timeline in a way that might not apply to other standard-development



SPP's Jonathan Hayes asks a question during a workshop on an extreme weather standard as NERC's Eknath Pattel listens. | © RTO Insider LLC

processes," he said. "That's driving things at a little more pace."

"This conference raises a lot of questions about how much data and how much analysis should be put into [the standard] because there's a lot of assumptions and a lot of uncertainties that still require a lot of engineering and regulatory judgment," said SPP's Charles Yeung, executive director of interregional affairs.

He said the standard still will need a lot of work but that the workshop laid out a set of questions that will be tackled in the development process.

"I think it's very valuable to do that upfront, rather than having to go through this iteration of postings and Q&A," Yeung said. "This is definitely helpful because this is clearly something that's not done in the planning horizon. So how do you translate all that analysis into a planning horizon? That's going to be the challenge because the conditions and risks are very different going out far in the future than they are a week in the future."

Creating the benchmark planning cases will require exchanging information on who develops the case, the weather variables that will affect inputs and assumptions, and how planning coordinators will coordinate case development with other PCs.

The standard drafting team envisions coordination among adjacent affected PCs to include sharing all applicable modeling and contingency data and understanding the benchmark event being studied by adjacent impacted PCs.

"Every time I talk to anyone in industry about what we're trying to do ... they're so impressed because we're trying to take on something that has not been done before," said Soo Jin Kim, NERC's vice president of engineering and standards. "When NERC first came into existence ... it was in whether or not we had enough capacity on the system. That's no longer the case anymore. Now with our changing resources, with almost all of the generation projects coming into the interconnection queues being renewable resources, we have to run our system very differently."

Kim said other planning projects are on the horizon once TPL-008 is completed. She acknowledged the industry is "a little tired" of all the standards projects in play and asked for patience as NERC works to address severe weather effects.

"We do think it's important that we continue to grow, and we continue to make sure that the momentum moves forward," she said. "We're now at a point where we have to keep up. I think it's very important that we get ahead of the issue, and then we're not playing catch-up for the next two years." ■

SPP News

SPP's REAL Team Moves Package of Policies

Staff Say Months of Group's Work 'Coming Home'

By Tom Kleckner

SPP's resource adequacy stakeholder group has moved several policies that indicate the team's work is "coming home" after months of presentations and discussions.

"I know we've spent at least six, seven months on this now, so this is coming to a head and very important for the region," Casey Cathey, SPP's newly minted engineering vice president, said during a conference call with members of the Resource and Energy Adequacy Leadership (REAL) Team on May 24.

The team plans to bring several policy issues and tariff changes to the July and August governance meetings, where SPP's Board of Directors and its Regional State Committee hold the key votes.

The REAL Team endorsed policies that set the base planning reserve margins (PRMs) at 36% and 16% for the winter and summer seasons, respectively, effective with summer 2026 and winter 2026/27; and extend the sufficiency valuation curve's applicability so it applies to the three planning seasons beginning in 2026.

Cathey said staff will circle back to the June REAL meeting with proposed tariff revisions that codify the policies.

The team also approved a fuel assurance revision request (RR621) and agreed to evaluate and update the tariff's cost of new entry, effective summer 2028. RR621 would add an "after-the-fact" application of fuel assurance based on historical performance, rather than imposing prescriptive requirements; it would be additive to the approved performance-based accreditation (PBA) methodology and meet the RSC's directive to develop a policy incorporating PBA weighting based on critical system periods.

In a separate motion, REAL directed the Supply Adequacy Working Group to evaluate and recommend summer 2029 and winter 2029/30 PRMs for the September REAL meeting.

The team also agreed to staff's request for support in developing potential use cases for the value of lost load in resource adequacy and transmission planning studies using a "willingness-to-pay" calculation. As the use cases are developed, the calculation will be evaluated and updated as appropriate.

SPP is using willingness to pay for 30-minute, one-hour, two-hour and eight-hour outages, based on a recent study conducted by The Brattle Group for ERCOT. Its initial work has shown the weighted average of various commercial-and-industrial and residential sectors ranging from \$35,863 for a half-hour outage to \$220,592 for an eight-hour outage.

ERCOT is using an interim VOLL of \$25,000, and MISO is using \$35,000 to create its operating reserve demand curve and a market VOLL (price cap and administrative price during load shed) of \$10,000 to reflect a price that aligns with load that should be incented to shed.

"The work done here kind of lays the framework for us to move forward," Cathey said.

REAL rejected an alternative reserve-retention proposal, submitted by American Electric Power, for cases in which load-responsible entities are not able to secure excess reserves. The proposal would have set accredited capacity (ACAP) requirements for 2026 using a 36% base PRM; LREs that voluntarily agreed to retain or sell excess reserves within the region would have their ACAP reduced to effectively meet a 33% base PRM.

"This AEP proposal does step forward into the future, not just perpetuate this piecemeal reserve margin-setting process that we have before us," AEP's Richard Ross said.

Golden Spread Electric Cooperative's Mike Wise, supporting SPP's proposed PRM changes, pointed out AEP's suggestion had not been vetted through the LREs.

"I do like [AEP's] glide slope concept that he's got," Wise said. "The concern I have over Richard's proposal is that it needs further work." There would be "consequences intended and unintended that need to be really vetted and thought about."

Staff withdrew from REAL's consideration an initial proposal for optional voluntary load-mitigation agreements between the RTO and LREs. An agreement would satisfy LREs' deficiency for a transitional period during the summer and winter seasons. During a Level 3 energy emergency alert, the SPP would instruct voluntary load reductions *pro rata* among LREs with the agreements; additional load mitigation would be *pro rata* across LREs.

"I hate this," Ross said. "What about NERC



Casey Cathey checks his file during REAL Team meeting. | © RTO Insider LLC

penalties? I feel like this puts us in a situation where we are planning the system to not have adequate reserves. I fear that puts SPP in the position where they don't have a good answer, and I don't like NERC penalties."

"This is counter to what we're trying to accomplish, right? Having resources out there that we can count on when we need them instead of not having a resource and somebody banking on shedding load," Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority's David Osburn said. "We could in essence be creating almost like a free rider that the rest of us are spending a lot of money getting resources available when we need them."

"The bottom line is if this idea is not well formed, if it's not fully baked, maybe now's not the time to act on it," Cathey said.

Looking ahead, Cathey promised more discussion on PRM stabilization policies at the next REAL meeting June 13 in Little Rock, Ark. He said the focus will be on accurate forecasting and stronger assumptions, with more frequent studies ensuring SPP is sending moderate signal changes and smoothing out capacity requirements over time.

Staff will work with the SAWG to develop a plan for a plan, he said.

"We haven't spent a lot of time at the REAL on this," Cathey said. "This is sort of a strategic and recommended approach for the REAL to work with the SAWG and really have the SAWG come up with some longer-term solution." ■

SPP News



Tri-State CEO Gives Update on Energy Transition

Co-op Association Looking Forward to RTO West, Highley Says

By John Cropley

Rural electric cooperatives face challenges different from investor-owned utilities as they pursue clean energy goals, the leader of Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association said.



Tri-State CEO Duane Highley | *American Clean Power*

Tri-State CEO Duane Highley was the featured speaker in a May 28 webinar hosted by the American Clean Power Association. He pointed out that the customers served by cooperatives are often spread farther apart than IOUs' customers and that the commu-

nities that cooperatives serve often have high rates of poverty.

But one of the biggest differences is coal, which is in the crosshairs of most decarbonization scenarios. The Power Plant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 had the effect of steering cooperatives toward coal-burning plants at a time when they were rapidly expanding generation capacity, Highley said. As a result, they are more reliant on coal than other power industry sectors.

"And now as we make a transition, it's especially challenging because to reduce carbon emissions, we're retiring coal, which for us is the majority," he said. "So when you talk about, 'Oh, just shut down your coal plant,' what if that's over half of your capacity in one plant?"

Forty-one of Tri-State's 44 members are electric distribution cooperatives and public power districts. They serve more than 1 million customers across nearly 200,000 square miles in Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska and New Mexico.

ACP CEO Jason Grumet asked Highley how Tri-State is managing its transition from coal to renewables.

Tri-State's board and its member-owners were supportive of the move, Highley replied, as long as the result was reliable and affordable.

"So that's what we're doing, and we're doing it at what I'd call light speed for a utility," he said. "We ... are building hundreds and hundreds of megawatts of wind and solar. And people



Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association plans to close the coal-fired Craig Power Plant in Craig, Colo., as part of its clean energy transition. | *Shutterstock*

who said 'you can't do that and keep the lights on' are wrong. We're able to do this and prove reliability at an accelerated level."

To meet reliability needs, Tri-State is overbuilding renewables and looking forward to long-duration energy storage technology maturing, he said. And it is retaining fossil backup.

"We're going to keep a lot of gas and oil generation around because we have to have it for reliability," he said.

Tri-State's proposed resource plan calls for a new combined cycle gas-burning plant with carbon capture and sequestration capacity retrofitted later.

Highley is excited about the potential of small modular reactors as well, again as a backstop for reliability. But he thinks they are at least a decade away and that cooperatives cannot be first adopters; someone else must take the risk of proving the concept.

Tri-State also needs to be in an RTO, to transfer power between regions and balance out spikes or lulls in intermittent power generation, Highley said.

"And that's why we've been so much an advocate for promoting the western expansion of the Southwest Power Pool. And we believe it'll be starting up the first quarter of 2026 in our area," he said.

Along with the challenges unique to cooperatives, Highley laid out some that are common across the power industry: rapid growth of demand and constraints on transmission to meet that demand.

"There's definitely growth coming, and it is exceeding what we had been previously forecasting," he said, citing electric vehicles and overall electrification as the primary causes, along with data centers that can consume a gigawatt apiece.

"There's just not a utility that I know of in the West that has a gigawatt of surplus capacity that they say, 'Hey, I'm not using it right now. Would you like to hook up?'" Highley said.

"Plus the transmission question," he added. "There are very few areas on the grid where you can drop hundreds of megawatts of load without making some significant transmission investments. And what we've seen in the past is it can take anywhere from five to 15 years to get a new transmission line built."

Highley gave a nod to the state and federal policymakers who set decarbonization goals but don't have to do the actual work of meeting them.

"We can make lots of growth. We just can't make maybe as much as fast as people would like to see [in] some instances." ■

Company Briefs

PGE joins Grid United, ALLETE in 3,000-MW East-west Tx Line



Portland General Electric last week signed a nonbinding memorandum

of understanding with Grid United and ALLETE in the development of the North Plains Connector, an approximately 415-mile HVDC transmission line.

The \$3.2 billion project would be the nation's first HVDC transmission connection among three regional U.S. electric energy markets, including MISO and SPP.

The parties will now work to finalize definitive agreements regarding PGE's participation, which is expected to involve a 20%

ownership share of the project.

More: [Portland General Electric](#)

Hydrostor Chooses Denver for HQ

Canadian energy storage company Hydrostor is opening its U.S. headquarters in Denver, the company announced last week.

Chief Development Officer Tom Duckett said the company plans to hire 20 more people this year, boosting the Denver staff to about 30. The company employs roughly 100 people worldwide.

Hydrostor chose Denver as its U.S. base in part because of its industrial activity, Duckett said.

More: [The Denver Post](#)

Recurrent Energy Closes BlackRock Investment

Canadian Solar-owned Recurrent Energy last week announced the initial closing and funding of an investment in its platform by BlackRock through a fund managed by its Climate Infrastructure business.

Once the transaction is fully complete, BlackRock's \$500 million investment will represent 20% of the outstanding fully diluted shares of Recurrent on an as-converted basis. Canadian Solar will continue to own the remaining majority shares of Recurrent.

Recurrent expects to have 4 GW of solar and 2 GWh of storage in operation in the U.S. and Europe by 2026.

More: [Renews](#)

Federal Briefs

Manchin Leaves Democratic Party, Files as Independent



Sen. **Joe Manchin** last week officially left the Democratic Party and registered as an independent.

"Since becoming a United States senator in 2010, I have seen both the Democratic and Re-

publican parties leave West Virginia and our country behind for partisan extremism while jeopardizing our democracy," Manchin said in a statement. "Today, our national politics are broken and neither party is willing to compromise to find common ground."

Manchin, who chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, is not seeking re-election. West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice (R) is seeking the seat in November and is expected to win. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer had urged Manchin to leave the party but run for re-election. Justice's decision to enter the Senate race was seen

as a key factor in Manchin's decision not to seek re-election.

More: [Axios](#); [The New York Times](#)

Republican AGs Ask SCOTUS to Block Climate Change Lawsuits

Republican attorneys general in 19 states have asked the Supreme Court to block several Democratic-led states from pursuing climate change lawsuits against the oil and gas industry in their own state courts.

The request comes as dozens of states and local governments have filed lawsuits alleging that fossil fuel companies deceived the public about the risks of their products contributing to climate change. The lawsuits claim billions of dollars of damage from severe storms, wildfires and rising sea levels.

The GOP attorneys contend only the federal government can regulate interstate gas emissions, and states have no power to apply their own laws to a global atmosphere that reaches beyond their borders.

More: [The Associated Press](#)

Increasing Use of Renewables in US Yields Billions in Benefits



A new study published in Cell Reports Sustainability finds

emission reductions provided \$249 billion in climate and health benefits in the U.S.

By increasing its use of renewable energy between 2019 and 2022, the U.S. has not only slashed its carbon emissions but also improved air quality, yielding hundreds of billions of dollars of benefits, the report found. During that period, by reducing fossil fuel power plants, the nation's use of wind and solar power cut its carbon dioxide emissions by 900 million metric tons.

"These findings can help us target future wind and solar development to provide the greatest climate and health benefits," said Jeremiah Johnson, a climate and energy professor at North Carolina State University whose work was cited in the study.

More: [The Guardian](#)

National/Federal news from our other channels



SERC Reports Sufficient Resources in Summer Assessment



RTO Insider subscribers have access to two stories each month from NetZero and ERO Insider.

State Briefs

ALABAMA

EPA Formally Denies Plan for Coal Ash Waste



EPA last week formally denied the state's plan to allow Alabama Power and other utilities to continue storing coal ash in unlined pits.

The state's Department of Environmental Management said it was disappointed in the decision and would appeal. The state's coal ash program "meets all the legal, environmental and other requirements for approval. The program and the permits issued under the program are leading the way in protecting the public and the environment," the department said.

EPA first announced a proposed denial of the plan last August, saying it did little to protect humans and the environment. The decision marked EPA's first-ever denial of such a state plan.

More: [Inside Climate News](#)

FLORIDA

New Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority Members Sworn in

Five members of the Gainesville Regional Utilities Authority board were sworn into office last week, officially marking the return of the authority following a brief hiatus after all four former members resigned because of a lawsuit that challenged the eligibility of the Gov. Ron DeSantis appointees to hold their positions.

Ed Bielarski, the former general manager of GRU, was sworn in, along with Craig Carter, Eric Lawson, David Haslam and Robert "Chip" Skinner.

Bielarski was elected chair, while Haslam was named vice chair. Carter and Lawson are two of the former members who had resigned.

More: [Gainesville Sun](#)

ILLINOIS

ICC Rejects Peoples Gas Request for More Pipeline Funding

The Commerce Commission last week rejected most of a request from Peoples Gas to tack \$7.9 million onto a rate hike for emergency work tied to the utility's pipeline

replacement program.

The commission voted to add just \$1.6 million "out of an abundance of caution" to the \$303 million hike approved for Peoples last fall.

Earlier this year, the utility asked for a re-hearing to allow additional spending on the pipeline project, which was halted pending an investigation by the commission, as estimated costs have ballooned from \$2 billion to \$11 billion since 2007.

More: [Chicago Sun-Times](#)

Lawmakers Move to Pause, Regulate CO2 Pipeline Development



Gov. **JB Pritzker** last week said he plans to sign a bill that will ban new carbon dioxide pipeline projects until the federal government sets new safety rules.

The moratorium would expire on July 1, 2026,

if the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration doesn't finalize safety rules by then. The bill also requires monitoring of injection wells for at least 30 years after they close, a process that must be approved by the state and federal government.

More: [IPM News](#)

MAINE

PUC Rejects Settlement with Electricity Maine over Complaints

The Public Utilities Commission last week rejected a proposed settlement with competitive electricity provider Electricity Maine, ruling that the agreement calling for customer refunds and the opportunity to switch to different rate plans falls short of what's needed to punish the company given its hundreds of consumer complaints.

The PUC voted 2-1 against the agreement and asked a hearing examiner to set a "timely schedule" to resolve the dispute. The decision will prolong a case that has been pending since February 2023.

The settlement would have given refunds to about 18,000 customers, ranging from less than \$10 to nearly \$4,000 based on how much electricity they used. However, Chair Philip Bartlett II said it was not in the public interest.

More: [Portland Press Herald](#)

MICHIGAN

Consumers Energy Seeks Rate Increase for Wildfire Mitigation

Consumers Energy last week filed for a rate increase with the Public Service Commission for \$325 million to address wildfire mitigation.

The utility said the money would be spent on burying power lines and infrastructure upgrades, along with prioritized tree trimming and equipment upgrades in areas where there is increased wildfire risk.

The request would add about \$10 to the average residential bill.

More: [Detroit Free Press](#)

Consumers Fined over Faulty Meters, Delays in Services



Consumers Energy has agreed to pay \$1 million after the Public

Service Commission investigated complaints of malfunctioning electrical meters, violations of rules on estimated billing, and significant delays in providing new electric and gas service.

According to a statement from the PSC, the metering issue was tied to Consumers' transition from 3G cellular meters to 4G. The commission also said the utility violated its standard requiring 90% of new service installations to be completed within 15 days.

More: [Michigan Advance](#)

Wind, Solar Farm Law Won't Make November Ballot

A proposed ballot initiative to repeal the state's new renewable energy permitting law will not appear before voters in November.

Officials with Citizens for Local Choice had until 5 p.m. on May 29 to turn in the 356,958 signatures needed to place the measure on this fall's ballot. The group did not meet that deadline.

The initiative emerged soon after Gov. Gretchen Whitmer last fall signed a suite of bills that aim to transition the state to 100% clean energy by 2040. As part of the package, the law changed the way large-scale wind, solar and battery storage arrays are approved and puts permitting authority in the state's hands. Opponents argued it

deprived communities of the right to make their own land-use decisions.

More: [Bridge Michigan](#)

MINNESOTA

Judge Rules Xcel's Negligence in Coal Plant Accident Merits Refunds



Administrative
Law Judge
Ann O'Reilly

last month concluded that Xcel Energy's negligence contributed to a catastrophic equipment failure in 2011 at the company's Sherco 3 power plant in Becker and merits a refund of certain costs to customers.

The Public Utilities Commission must now decide whether to accept the judge's ruling and issue the refund. The size of the proposed refund was not disclosed, but it would be less than \$34 million, split among Xcel's 1.3 million state customers.

The November 2011 accident at the coal-fired Sherco 3 ripped giant turbine blades off their mountings, hurled shards of metal across the plant and triggered a fire. No one was hurt, but the plant was closed for repairs for 22 months. While it was, Xcel had to find replacement power on the wholesale market or from other plants. The PUC allowed Xcel to bill customers for the extra costs of replacement power.

More: [Star Tribune](#)

NEW JERSEY

Galloway Passes Resolution Against OSW Development

The Galloway Township Council last week passed a resolution opposing offshore wind projects.

"The Township of Galloway further opposes any wind turbine projects along New Jersey's coast, regardless of height of the structures and distance from New Jersey's pristine shorelines, until proper studies are performed," the resolution states.

The council urged the Atlantic County executive and Board of Commissioners to pursue all appropriate action, including legal action, to prevent the approval and construction of wind turbine projects.

More: [The Press of Atlantic City](#)

Orsted to Pay \$125M for Pulling out of OSW Projects

Gov. Phil Murphy last week announced that

Orsted will pay the state \$125 million for pulling out of two offshore wind projects.

The settlement is less than half of the \$300 million Orsted originally guaranteed if it failed to build the first wind farms off the state's coast. In October 2023, the company announced it had scrapped its Ocean Wind 1 and 2 projects because of inflation, rising interest rates and supply chain bottlenecks.

The administration said it plans to use the money to further support offshore wind projects by investing in manufacturing facilities and other clean energy programs.

More: [The Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

OHIO

Householder Pleads not Guilty to New Charges



Imprisoned former House Speaker **Larry Householder** last week pleaded not guilty to 10 additional felony counts brought against him by the state.

Charges brought by Attorney General Dave

Yost against Householder include one count of theft in office, two counts of aggravated theft, one count of telecommunications fraud, one count of money laundering and five counts of tampering with records.

The indictment alleges Householder misused campaign funds to pay for his criminal defense in his federal case — for which he was found guilty of racketeering and sentenced to 20 years in prison — and failed to disclose fiduciary relationships, creditors and gifts on required ethics filings, including House Bill 6, the law that was at the center of a massive bribery scheme by FirstEnergy.

More: [The Associated Press](#)

Youngstown Explosion Caused by Cut Gas Line, NTSB Says

A crew working in the basement area of a building in Youngstown intentionally cut a gas line not knowing it was pressurized before a deadly explosion last week, the National Transportation Safety Board said.

The agency said a preliminary investigation shows workers were in the basement of the 13-story Realty Tower, which contains apartments on the upper level, to clear out piping and other outdated infrastructure and debris in anticipation of a city project to fill in the area and replace the sidewalks.

Workers smelled no gas before they started cutting the pipe.

The explosion blew out much of the ground floor, killing a Chase Bank branch employee and injuring several others. Youngstown Mayor Jamael Tito Brown said in a news release that the city had contracted with a construction company called GreenHeart to perform private utility relocation in the basement of the tower. He said "there is no evidence" that cutting the gas line the NTSB mentioned was necessary to complete that work.

More: [The Associated Press](#)

OREGON

PUC: State Can't Limit PacifiCorp's 2020 Wildfire Payouts

The Public Utility Commission last week ruled that PacifiCorp can't limit how much it will have to pay for wildfire damage.

The PUC rejected the request by Pacific Power's parent company to limit how much it will have to pay by excluding noneconomic damages from its penalties, even in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct. Both the PUC and PacifiCorp officials suggested it might require action from the legislature to limit the utility's costs.

More: [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#)

VERMONT

Scott Vetoes Lawmakers' Priority Energy Bill



Gov. **Phil Scott** last week vetoed a bill that would require state utilities to buy more renewable energy at a faster pace, with most utilities purchasing all their energy from renewable sources by 2030.

Scott cited cost as his main concern, saying the bill would "will raise Vermonters' utility rates, likely by hundreds of millions of dollars." While members of the Public Service Department projected the bill would cost ratepayers \$1 billion, the state's Joint Fiscal Office later said the bill's price tag would be less than half the department's estimate.

The bill would accelerate the state's renewable transition, requiring most utilities to source 100% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030 and all utilities to make the switch by 2035.

More: [VT Digger](#)

VIRGINIA

Federal Judge Rejects Request to Halt Virginia Beach OSW Farm

U.S. District Court Judge Loren AliKhan last week denied a request from a coalition of conservative interest groups that sought to halt construction of Dominion Energy's Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project in Virginia Beach.

The groups sued the Biden administration earlier this year, arguing federal agencies ignored threats to endangered whales when approving the project. The suit will still move forward this fall, but the decision denied plaintiffs' request for a preliminary injunction to stop construction while the lawsuit is decided.

AliKhan said there wasn't enough proof that plaintiffs would suffer irreparable harm from construction on the project moving forward.

More: [WHRO](#)

Hearne Named Director of Electric Utility Reg Commission

Carrie Hearne last week was hired as the

executive director of the Commission on Electric Utility Regulation.

Hearne will take the role after five years at Virginia Energy, where she was the director of affordability and competitiveness.

The commission reviews requests to change the state's energy laws and regulations.

More: [Virginia Mercury](#)

WASHINGTON

Inslee Rejects Recommendation to Halve Wind Farm

Gov. Jay Inslee last week rejected a recommendation to cut a proposal for what would be the state's largest wind farm in half.

Plans for the \$1.7 billion Horse Heaven wind farm originally included up to 222 wind turbines across 24 miles of the Tri-Cities area, plus three solar arrays covering up to 8.5 square miles. But last month, the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council recommended slashing the proposal in half because nests of the endangered ferruginous hawk were found in the area. Inslee rejected the council's recommendation and told the group to reconsider in hopes of expanding the project closer to its full potential.

The council has deliberated over the Horse Heaven wind farm for more than three years. Now it has three months to consider the governor's notes and revise its original recommendation.

More: [The Associated Press](#)

WISCONSIN

Alliant Plans to Convert Sheboygan Coal Plant to Natural Gas



Alliant Energy last week announced it plans to convert its coal-burning power

plant in Sheboygan County into a natural gas plant in 2028.

The utility did not provide cost projections for the plant's transition but said it will help retain the workforce at the Edgewater Generating Station as it continues to burn coal until 2028 instead of 2025. It is the second time Alliant has pushed back Edgewater's retirement, which was initially planned for 2022.

The transition still needs to be approved by the Public Service Commission.

More: [Wisconsin Public Radio](#)

Mid-Atlantic news from our other channels



[NJ Accelerates OSW Plans Again](#)



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[BOEM Offers Maine Offshore Wind Research Lease](#)



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