

Project Summary

Applicant: Western Governors' Association

Project Director: Richard Halvey

Project Title: Building Cooperation Among Western States and Provinces on Electric Resource Planning and Priorities in the Western Interconnection

Objectives of the Project: The project will develop information and identify outcomes that will allow Western Governors and PUC Commissioners to fully understand how the Western Interconnection can achieve a clean, secure, reliable and reasonably priced electricity generation and transmission system, while facilitating state participation in the transmission planning process.

Description of the Project: WGA and Western Interstate Energy Board will complete the following tasks:

- Encourage load-serving entities (LSEs) that are interested in the same renewable energy zones to coordinate the timing of the procurement of renewable generation from such zones.
- Foster and facilitate interstate cooperation for renewable energy generation and transmission.
- Analyze potential carbon sequestration in renewable energy zones in order to evaluate the potential integration of near-zero emission fossil fuel resources into the renewable energy zones.
- Aid individual states in developing decision support systems that will compile all wildlife data relevant to the development of generation capacity and associated transmission facilities.
- Provide a forum for governors to communicate regularly with national, regional and local stakeholder groups on renewable energy transmission and policy development.
- Enhance state and provincial collaboration and participation in a broader Western Interconnection transmission analysis and planning process.

The work will identify various demand scenarios, the essential characteristics of the future generation and transmission system, and will develop generation/transmission scenarios that will meet demand and achieve those characteristics.

It will also facilitate the development of western renewable energy resources through the completion of the Western Renewable Energy Zone (WREZ) project, improving information and assessments of impacts on wildlife, and promoting state collaboration and input to Western Interconnection planning and analyses. . This project enables western states and provinces to provide crucial information and viewpoints in planning, scenario development inputs, and guide the technical consultants on alternatives to facilitate transmission expansion.

Benefits and Outcomes: The outcome from this project will be a transmission expansion planning process that is fully informed of public policy requirements and values. The project will lead to increased regional, interregional, and interconnection-level coordination among states, electric industry organizations and key stakeholder groups. The work will provide the governors and the PUC commissioners with the ability to understand the advantages and disadvantages of any respective scenario, and the impacts that scenario will have on the economies, natural resources, and landscapes of the West. The beneficiaries of this project include: state and provincial policy makers including governors, premiers and legislatures; state and provincial agencies responsible for regulation, energy planning, facility siting, water and wildlife; the federal government; generation and transmission developers; load-serving entities; and the public, including non-governmental organizations.