

APPLICATION FOR USDOE GRANT FOR A WESTERN POWER TRACKING SYSTEM

Background

Between 1998 and 2001 each of the three Westcoast states, California, Oregon, and Washington, will have initiated a mechanism for retail service providers in their states to disclose fuel mix or fuel mix and air emissions to electricity consumers. The belief is that such information will help customers to choose among the portfolios of various energy service providers and thereby create market pull for renewable resources. Other states in the United States Western System Coordinating Council (WSCC), through the forum provided by the Committee on Regional Electric Power Cooperation (CREPC), have expressed interest in tracking resource claims and the disclosure of fuel mix information to retail consumers.

A tracking system for the whole WSCC would allow states to trace power sold to consumers with particular source characteristics back to the output of generators having those characteristics. This would facilitate the market for these resources in the entire WSCC and minimize duplication of resource claims. The most common examples of markets that a western tracking system might encourage are renewable or clean resources (e.g. wind, low-impact hydro, solar, etc.).

California, Washington, and Oregon are interested in coordinating the tracking of power resource claims. Financial assistance would enable these states to take a leadership role in developing a tracking system for the WSCC and the CREPC. The funds would familiarize other states with the elements of the coordinated, yet unique approaches to resource tracking and disclosure by California, Oregon, and Washington; identify changes needed by other states to meet their public policy goals; and establish the basic structure and web-based software of a WSCC tracking and reporting system.

Objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

1. Develop and refine a database that can import data from the United States Energy Information Administration (EIA) to create a single source listing of U.S. generating resources in the WSCC as well as the Northwest Power Pool.
2. Develop a procedure for importing web-based reports into the database to calculate net system mixes for the U.S. Northwest, the Southwest, California, and the U.S. portion of the WSCC.
3. Identify data sources and develop procedures for consistent tracking of imports and exports to and within the WSCC to be used to calculate net system electricity mixes by fuel type.
4. Coordinate with other comparable organizations in other western states on western resources, disclosure and tracking of resource claims, and work with these stakeholders to identify potential modifications to database tracking system and the need and potential for coordinating data reporting with possible western system commercial trading mechanisms for renewable resources.
5. Explore possibilities for organizing and funding a regional authority to administer tracking or trading systems and maintain the databases needed to monitor power claims.
6. Develop web-based reporting forms. Develop a secure website or websites for reporting electricity supplier claims or sales in each state.