

Summary of March 17, 2009 WIRAB Meeting

The following members participated in the March 17, 2009 Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB) meeting and constituted a quorum:

Alberta	Ian McKay
British Columbia	Shelly Murphy
California	Bill Chamberlain
Colorado	Jeff Hein
Idaho	Marsha Smith
Nebraska	Tim Texel
Nevada	Rebecca Wagner
Oregon	John Savage / Matt Muldoon
South Dakota	Brian Rounds
Wyoming	Steve Ellenbecker

Also present were Louise McCarren / Lisa Milanes / Brad Nickell (WECC), Pat Van Midde (SDG&E), and Thomas Carr / Jim Williams (WIRAB).

Approval of the February 6 Meeting Summary

WIRAB Chair John Savage (OR) asked for comments to the draft [summary](#) of the February 6, 2009 WIRAB meeting. The summary was approved without objections.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

WECC Update

Louise McCarren provided an overview of key issues before WECC. McCarren spoke first to a new NERC and FERC directive for regional entities to perform 30 audits on cyber security standards on the table 1 or largest entities by July 2010. This directive amounts to a 100% increase in the audit workload WECC has previously anticipated and is creating considerable angst among the regional entities. These cyber audits are entirely different than other compliance audits with different teams and personnel. Lisa Milanes described divergent expectations about the need to prepare for cyber security at the political federal level compared to the view held within the industry. As an example of the industry perspective, no entities making self certification filings on cyber security identified that they held critical assets for cyber security. WECC has been engaged in an outreach program to educate and familiarize industry on the new cyber security requirements.

McCarren spoke to several other WECC issues. She was pleased with NERC's first draft of its three-year assessment and is very interested to see if the second draft

maintains the same tone and perspective. A FERC audit is still underway to the extent WECC is responding to subsequent data requests. WECC anticipates a NERC audit sometime after the FERC audit.

Brad Nickell described recent developments about transmission planning from the Joint Committee meetings of the Market Interface Committee, Operating Committee and Planning Committee. David Meyer of the Department of Energy (DOE) spoke about the stimulus bill provision allocating \$80 million for regional planning activities. DOE will be issuing an RFP in the near future. Meyer spoke of aspirations for scenarios in the planning and interest in organizations that could participate. Dave Areghini, chair of the WECC Board instructed WECC staff to respond to DOE. Nickell observed that the WECC response would be inclusive of the views of WGA and the Western Electricity Industry Leaders (WEIL) group. The stimulus funding would be available over a 5-year time frame and could likely result in an acceleration and augmentation of TEPPC activities to perform interconnection-wide transmission planning.

WECC's Transmission Expansion Planning Policy Committee (TEPPC) will be meeting in Vancouver, WA on March 19-20. TEPPC will be consider approving its 2008 Report and send that report to the Board for consideration in April. Additionally, TEPPC will be considering study requests and how to structure its 2009 work plan.

Nickell also reported on the FERC technical conference held March 2 on integration of renewable energy. The conference was split into two topics, transmission planning and the operational issues. A common theme in the transmission planning participants was the need to address siting and cost allocation for new transmission. The operational participants looked at the need for more intra hour flexibility in the system to integrate higher levels of variable renewable generation. Nickell's own presentation addressed activities in the West including the joint initiatives project underway by ColumbiaGrid, NTTG, and WestConnect.

NERC Update

Tom Carr (WIRAB) reported on the NERC Members Representative Committee (MRC) and Board of Trustees meeting on February 9-10 in Phoenix. The MRC meeting revealed a growing concern by the NERC industry stakeholders regarding the direction of standards development, enforcement backlogs, and NERC's eagerness to respond to FERC while neglecting industry stakeholders. The stakeholder views stood in contrast to more positive outlooks by the NERC leadership and FERC.

FERC Update

Tom Carr briefed WIRAB on three recent FERC developments. First, FERC issued an order on Chinook and Zephyr transmission project by TransCanada at its February 19 meeting. The order reflected new FERC flexibility for financing merchant projects using anchor customer model. These TransCanada projects have signed up users for half of the current line capacity and intend on holding an open season for the

remainder of the capacity. Second, FERC issued another order on NERC budget compliance filing that dealt explicitly with SPP Regional Entity budget issues. FERC determined that the SPP Regional Entity had not reconciled its accounts and income pursuant to the delegation agreement, and directed SPP Regional Entity to develop and implement accounting procedures outlined in the order. Third, FERC held a technical conference on integrating variable renewable generation on March 2.

WIRAB

Meetings with FERC. John Savage reported on meetings in Washington, D.C. by a WIRAB delegation consisting of himself, Bill Chamberlain, Steve Ellenbecker and Doug Larson during the week of March 6. The WIRAB delegation had several meetings inside FERC offices including meetings with Commissioners Wellinghoff, Moeller and Kelly.

Transmission and renewables was an important topic in all meetings. There was much discussion on transmission legislation proposed by Senators Reid and Bingaman, the WREZ project, WGA policy on transmission, federal siting policy under EPAct Sections 1221 and 368, the collection and storage of transmission flow data, the stimulus bill provisions for transmission, and the joint initiatives project.

The second important topic at these meetings was reliability. The WIRAB delegation raised the topic of WECC's Tier 1 standards and contingency reserves, the large number of violations being processed through WECC and NERC, the ability for regional entities to provide regulated entities timely responses, and cyber security issues. Bill Chamberlain delivered important background and context about the WECC's Tier 1 standards and the effort to revise these standards. Commissioner Kelly has contacted WECC with more information regarding the one of the Tier 1 standards that relates to contingency reserves.

Future Meetings.

John Savage outlined the current plans for the next in person meeting in San Diego on April 7. We expect participation from Louise McCarren of WECC, Rick Sergel of NERC, and staff and commissioners from FERC. Commissioner Wellinghoff is scheduled to appear. Staff was asked to send out an email about potential topics for the agenda of the April 7 meeting.