

Summary of the March 5, 2010 WIRAB Meeting

The following members participated in the March 5, 2010 Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB) meeting, and constituted a quorum.

Alberta	Ian McKay
California	Bill Chamberlain
Colorado	Jim Tarpey
Idaho	Marsha Smith
Montana	Tom Kaiserski
Nebraska	Tim Texel
Nevada	Rebecca Wagner
Oregon	John Savage, Matt Muldoon
South Dakota	Brian Rounds
Texas	Donna Nelson, Melissa Oehler
Washington	Tony Usibelli, Mark Anderson
Wyoming	Steve Ellenbecker

Also present were Louise McCarren/Tom Schneider/Constance White/Steve Reuckert/ Mark Maher/Rachel Sherrard (WECC staff); Paul Feldman (WECC non-affiliated Board member); Steve Beuning (Xcel); Dilap Mahendra (SMUD); Jerry Smith (K.R. Saline); Matt Bolden; Nate Moore; Doug Larson/Tom Carr/Victoria Ravenscroft/Jim Williams (WIRAB staff).

John Savage (OR) opened the meeting, and welcomed guests from WECC. He reviewed the meeting agenda, and asked for public comments. Hearing none, he proceeded with the agenda as outlined.

Approval of Recent Meeting Summaries

WIRAB Chairman John Savage (OR) asked for corrections or objections to the draft summary of the December 3, 2009 meeting. No corrections or objections were made, and the summary was approved.

Development of Violation Interpretive Map Tool

After introduction and background by Doug Larson, Victoria Ravenscroft discussed WIRAB staff efforts to develop a violation interpretive map tool. She reviewed the differences in capabilities and costs between a full map tool and the pilot mapping tool that WIRAB is proposing. She then presented the staff proposal—that WIRAB authorize up to \$50,000 in consulting funds to develop the Violation Interpretive Map Tool Pilot Project.

Steve Ellenbecker asked why this initiative should be taken by WIRAB, rather than by WECC or NERC. Louise McCarren welcomed the WIRAB effort to “get the ball rolling,” especially since WECC has no resources for this at this time. McCarren agreed that WECC and/or NERC should develop and maintain the full system. She emphasized the potential value of the map tool in depicting the vulnerabilities of the standards compliance system, and noted the importance of

system design so as to avoid potential misuse of the tool. She volunteered WECC staff assistance to WIRAB in the development of the data base.

Tom Kaiserski clarified that the hosting and support cost elements are annual, not one-time costs. Bill Chamberlain stated that the tool appeared to be an area in which WIRAB could add value, and moved for approval of the staff proposal. Marsha Smith seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Study of Seams Coordination Tool and Energy Imbalance Service

Doug Larson introduced the staff proposal that WIRAB submit “advice” to WECC urging approval of the Seams Issues Subcommittee proposal for a cost/benefit/reliability impacts study of a seams coordination tool and energy imbalance service. The staff proposal recommends that a high-level oversight committee be created along with a technical steering committee. Both bodies would include state/provincial expertise. He further proposed that WIRAB authorize \$25,000 in consulting funds to support the study. Larson noted that he had consulted FERC staff about the SIS study proposal and received informal feedback that expenditures for such a study are an appropriate use of Section 215 funds.

Steve Beuning (Xcel; Chair of WECC Seams Issues Subcommittee) explained how an energy imbalance service could make more effective use of the grid. He noted the complementary study proposal from WECC’s Variable Generation Subcommittee (VGS) and potential funding support from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The full SIS study may cost \$450,000. The Market Interface Committee (MIC) will vote on the proposed SIS study at its meeting March 10-12, and then the WECC Board would take up the proposal at its April 28-30 meeting.

Bill Chamberlain noted the complementarity of this initiative with conclusions of the Western Wind and Solar Integration Study. WIRAB adopted a proposal to submit advice to WECC and approved funding with conditions as follows:

- WIRAB submit “advice” urging WECC to-
 - Approve funding for the SIS study;
 - Establish a high-level oversight committee comprised of selected WECC Board members, state/provincial representatives, and Balancing Area CEO representatives; and
 - Include state/provincial technical expertise in the study steering committee.
- Authorize \$25,000 in WIRAB consulting funds to support study contingent on contributions by other parties.

WECC Strategic Plan

Louise McCarren reported that the WECC Strategic Plan is in final revision, and will go to the WECC Board in March. (The WECC Board will probably hold a special meeting through a conference call in late March, although there is no public notice of such meeting as of March 8). McCarren responded to WIRAB’s December 23 [letter](#) to WECC raising concerns that the proposed new Strategic Plan eliminates two important WECC goals: (1) WECC should be **the** credible source for interconnection-wide data; and (2) WECC should serve as “a Western Interconnection-wide Policy

facilitator.”, McCarren and Rachel Sherrard stated that although the exact words of these goals do not appear in the proposed new Strategic Plan, the essence of these goals will be enshrined in two of the four Strategic Plan strategies.

Doug Larson asked when the revised strategic plan will be available for review prior to WECC Board action. The response was that the Plan would be made public after it has been acted on by the Board. Staff asked WIRAB members whether WIRAB should express its concerns to the WECC Board in the form of advice. John Savage suggested that staff proposed advice for Board review.

Regional Delegation Agreements

Louise McCarren discussed the status of developing new Regional Delegation Agreements between NERC and the Regional Entities. She expressed over arching concern that NERC will assert too much control in the management of the Regional Entities. McCarren identified specific concerns about a NERC concept expressed in the term “ERO enterprise” which is undefined and ambiguous. McCarren also expressed concern about a proposed requirement in the draft Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Plan (CMEP) that Regional Entities report “possible” as well as alleged and confirmed violations. The concern focuses both on the ambiguous definition of “possible violations,” and on the cost implications for Regional Entities.

Doug Larson inquired about NERC’s motivation for these proposals, and when it might be appropriate for WIRAB to “weigh-in.” Regarding the later, WECC staff advised that WIRAB input would be timely when a redline version of the CMEP is posted by NERC.

Other Topics

Doug Larson referenced a series of topics summarized in background materials, and asked if there were any questions on these items. Larson announced that an in-person meeting of WIRAB is scheduled for April 21 in Portland. He requested suggestions from WIRAB members and WECC on potential agenda items. Meeting logistics will be available shortly.