



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
NORTHERN TIER STEERING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Northern Tier Transmission Group (“NTTG”) Steering Committee was held in Salt Lake City, Utah on the 20th day of April 2017 at 10:00 am (MPT). Participation via web and phone conference was also available.

The following members and designated alternates were present, constituted a quorum and did not object to notice:

- Travis Allen, MATL LLP,
- Michelle Beck, Utah Office of Consumer Services,
- Ray Brush, NTTG Utility Co-Chair/NorthWestern Energy Corporation,
- David Clark, NTTG State Vice-Chair/Utah Public Service Commission,
- Jared Ellsworth, proxy for Dave Joerger, Idaho Power Company,
- Marshall Empey, UAMPS,
- Morgan Fish, proxy for Bill Russell, Wyoming Public Service Commission
- Shaun Foster, proxy for Larry Bekkedahl, Portland General Electric,
- Brian Fritz, PacifiCorp,
- Travis Kavulla, NTTG State Co-Chair/Montana Public Service Commission,
- Paul Kjellander, Idaho Public Utilities Commission
- Larry Nordell, Montana Consumer Counsel, and
- Nathan Powell, proxy for Phil Solomon, Deseret Power Electric Cooperative, Inc.

John Savage, NTTG’s representative for the Oregon Public Utility Commission, recently retired and a replacement has not yet been appointed.

The following guests were present:

- Rich Bayless, CPS for NTTG,
- Kathleen Fraser, Energy Strategies,
- Sharon Helms, CPS for NTTG,
- Bill Hosie, TransCanada,

Jennie Jonsson, Utah Public Service Commission,
John Leland, CPS for NTTG,
Chelsea Loomis, Northwestern Energy,
Craig Quist, PacifiCorp,
Ron Schellberg, CPS for NTTG,
Ed Sienkiewicz, ColumbiaGrid,
Bela Vastag, Utah Office of Consumer Services, and
Amy Wachsnicht, CPS for NTTG.

A motion by Travis Kavulla to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2016 NTTG Steering Committee was seconded by David Clark and approved. The minutes will be posted on the NTTG website.

RESOLUTION

ELECTION OF THE NTTG STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS

Ray Brush proposed that, due to the number of proxies in attendance, the vote for the Steering Committee Utility Vice Chair be deferred until a date to be established by the Utility Co-Chair.

Ray Brush opened nominations for the Steering Committee State Co-Chair and Vice-Chair, noting that Commissioner Kavulla has agreed to accept a nomination for another term as the NTTG State Co-Chair and Commissioner Clark as the NTTG State Vice Chair. Commissioner Kjellander moved to nominate Commissioners Kavulla and Clark and to close the nominations. Both nominees were elected by acclamation.

Commissioner Kavulla requested nominations for the NTTG Utility Co-Chair. Ray Brush nominated Brian Fritz, Commissioner Kavulla closed the nominations and Brian Fritz was elected by acclamation. The election of the Utility Vice-Chair will be at the direction of the Utility Co-Chair.

REPORT

NTTG REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLAN UPDATE

Craig Quist, NTTG Planning Committee Chair, walked members through a summary of the [2016-2017 Draft Regional Transmission Plan \(DRTP\)](#), including an overview of its purpose, (i.e., to identify the most efficient or cost effective projects to reliably meet the needs of the

NTTG footprint), the planning assumptions and data used to evaluate the needs, including the Public Policy Requirements and Interregional Transmission Projects considered, and the study results. The DRTP was posted at the end of 2016 and the window for [Stakeholder comments](#) opened in early 2017. Mr. Quist reviewed the four sets of comments that were submitted, the NTTG response drafted by the Planning Committee and reviewed with stakeholders at the April 19th Stakeholder Meeting, and the subsequent changes that were incorporated into the DRTP.

Mr. Quist further reported on NTTG's Quarter 5 planning process that provides an opportunity for transmission providers and stakeholders to inform NTTG of any material changes to the data submitted in Quarter 1. He reviewed the [NTTG Quarter 5 data submittals](#), and reported that as a result, the TWG are recommending additional analysis is warranted. The NTTG Technical Workgroup (TWG) is currently assessing the scope of work and revisions to the Study Plan that will be required to ensure the Quarter 5 updated data is appropriately considered. Mr. Quist provided an overview of the approach and study revisions that are being explored by the TWG.

Following discussion, the Steering Committee acknowledged the timing constraints associated with producing a Draft Final Regional Transmission Plan by the end of Quarter 6, and the need to obtain Steering Committee approval of a revised Study Plan. The Committee agreed that the TWG should submit a Quarter 6 Revised Study Plan to the Planning Committee for approval, and the Steering Committee will consider approval of the Amended 2016-2017 NTTG Study Plan at its next regularly scheduled meeting in July or August 2017.

REPORT

NTTG PUBLIC POLICY CONSIDERATION (PPC) STUDY

Chelsea Loomis, NTTG Planning Committee Vice Chair, briefed the Committee on the [Public Policy Considerations Study](#) request submitted during the 2016-2017 planning cycle by the Renewable Northwest and Northwest Energy Coalition. The purpose of the request is to understand the transmission and reliability impacts associated with retiring Colstrip units 1, 2, and 3 with alternative replacements including wind, synchronous condenser, or natural gas plants. Ms. Loomis described the collaboration between the submitters and NTTG to modify the request to accommodate recent retirement announcements, as well as the study assumptions and approach. In conclusion, she reported that while the results of the analysis suggest that it may be feasible to replace coal with wind or a combination of wind/gas, parties should not lose sight of the fact that this was a high-level study with a limited modeling scope.

REPORT

ANCHOR DATA SET (ADS) WORKFLOW and INTERREGIONAL DATA SHARING

UPDATES

John Leland, NTTG's Technical Advisor and TEPPC representative, updated members on the development of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) Anchor Data Set (ADS) that is intended to provide a common starting point with consistent data assumptions for all production cost model and power flow model datasets used by TEPPC, the Planning Coordination Committee (PCC) and each of the four Western Planning Regions. Mr. Leland walked through the [ADS process flow](#) that was jointly developed by WECC and the four Western Planning Regions (NTTG, California ISO, ColumbiaGrid and WestConnect) and describes the roles and responsibilities for the development and oversight of ADS. He reported that good progress had been made towards implementation and a 2028 ADS, with consistent power flow and production cost data, should be available by Quarter 4 2017. He noted that this is the first time through the process, and ADS may not be 100% error free, but it is expected to provide significant improvements that will allow more time to be focused on analyzing results and less time fighting the data.

Ron Schellberg, NTTG's Technical Workgroup Project Manager, reported on the current interregional coordination efforts underway in support of the California ISO's 2017 out of state resource portfolio studies and the work of the small group of subject matter experts from each region that are meeting weekly to develop the ADS seed case. Mr. Schellberg noted that each of the region's starting point for the ADS is based on a different WECC base case and described the steps that are being taken by the small workgroup to provide WECC with a seed case that reflects each regions' most current transmission plan by mid-July.

REPORT

ALTERNATIVE REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Ray Brush, Regional Transmission Policy Manager, Northwestern Energy, briefed members on the efforts by the NTTG funding members and signatories to the ColumbiaGrid Planning and Expansion Functional Agreement (PEFA) and Order 1000 Agreement to assess the potential benefits of a [single regional planning organization in the west that would supplant both](#)

[ColumbiaGrid and NTTG](#). Mr. Brush noted that the report and presentation were his and not necessarily Northwestern Energy's views or NTTG's.

Based on the evaluation completed to date, the anticipated benefits of restructuring include cost reductions from the current combined average annual cost of \$4M-\$6M, as well as better planning stemming from a reduction in seams with a larger footprint. Some of the downsides include more complex cost allocation and planning processes. The organization, as contemplated, would be an association and not a corporation, with the authority and decision-making role designated to those who fund the organization. Mr. Brush reported that over half the participants are non-jurisdictional entities and agreement could not be reached to allow the states and consumer advocates to participate as a voting member, but instead would be provided the opportunity to participate in an advisory role. Mr. Brush reviewed the staffing options that were considered and the rationale for favoring the vendor solution vs. a full-time staff.

Regulatory and consumer advocate representatives responded by sharing some initial concerns, including a need to fully understand what has changed to alleviate the division and policy separation that historically have been difficult, impacts to the carefully crafted NTTG policies (e.g. cost allocation), and the lack of opportunity to participate in a more meaningful manner, i.e., as NTTG members and not stakeholders, in these discussions. Commissioner Kavulla stated that the state and consumer advocate participants have not had adequate opportunity to consider this in depth and need a more fully developed proposal to respond to.

Mr. Brush reviewed the timeline and next steps, noting that a business case proposal would be provided to the executives of each of the potential participants by May 1st. The schedule calls for a 60-day evaluation that concludes with each company's determination on whether there is sufficient merit to dedicate the resources necessary to proceed with further development of the proposal. Assuming there is agreement to move forward, the next steps would be to develop agreements and tariff language, charters or bylaws by the end of the year. In addition, a stakeholder outreach program is not in place, but it was noted one would need to be developed.

STAKEHOLDER COMMENT PERIOD

No additional comments or topics were offered.

ROUND TABLE/OTHER BUSINESS

No additional comments or topics were offered. There being no further action, the meeting adjourned.

By:

Sharon Helms, NTTG Project Manager

Approved:



Ray Brush, NTTG Utility Co-Chair

Approved:



Travis Kavulla, NTTG State Co-Chair

Approved:

