



MINUTES OF THE
NORTHERN TIER STEERING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Northern Tier Transmission Group (“NTTG”) Steering Committee was held in Salt Lake City on 14th day of December 2017. Participation via web and conference call was also available. The following members and designated alternates were present:

- Travis Allen, MATL,
- Michelle Beck, Utah Office of Consumer Services,
- Sean Foster, proxy for Larry Bekkedahl, Portland General Electric,
- Marshall Empey, UAMPS,
- Bryce Freeman, Wyoming Office of Consumer Advocates,
- Brian Fritz, NTTG Utility Co-Chair/PacifiCorp,
- Steven Bloom, proxy for Lisa Hardie, Oregon Public Utility Commission,
- Dave Joerger, Idaho Power Company,
- Travis Kavulla, NTTG State Co-Chair/Montana Public Service Commission and proxy
for David Clark, Utah Public Service Commission,
- Paul Kjellander, Idaho Public Utilities Commission,
- Andrew McLain, NorthWestern Energy Corporation,
- Larry Nordell, Montana Consumer Counsel,
- Bill Russell, Wyoming Public Service Commission, and
- Nathan Powell, proxy for Phil Solomon, Deseret Power Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The following guests were present:

- Rich Bayless, CPS for NTTG,
- Jared Ellsworth, Idaho Power and Planning Committee Vice Chair,
- Kathleen Fraser, Energy Strategies,
- Laura Hatfield, Puget Sound Energy, Inc.,
- Sharon Helms, CPS for NTTG,
- Fred Heutte, NW Energy Coalition,
- John Leland, CPS for NTTG,
- George Marshall, Puget Sound Energy, Inc.,

Tom Pankratz, Northwestern Energy,
Dori Quam, Northwestern Energy,
Craig Quist, PacifiCorp,
Ron Schellberg, CPS for NTTG,
Courtney Waites, Idaho Power Company and NTTG Cost Allocation Committee Chair,
Amy Wachslicht, CPS for NTTG.

A motion by Commissioner Paul Kjellander to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2017 and August 28, 2017 Steering Committee Meetings was seconded by Marshall Empey and approved. The minutes will be posted on the NTTG website.

REPORT

2016-2017 NTTG REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLAN (RTP) UPDATE

The September stakeholder comment window for the 2016-2017 Revised Draft Final Regional Transmission Plan yielded comments from TransCanyon and the Utah Association of Energy Users. Mr. Ron Schellberg, NTTG Technical Workgroup Project Manager, reviewed the [comments, NTTG's responses](#) and the subsequent [revisions to the plan](#).

Mr. Craig Quist, NTTG Planning Committee Chair, reviewed the evaluation process that was used to determine this cycle's regional transmission plan. Mr. Quist reminded members that the NTTG Regional Transmission Plan evaluates whether transmission needs within the NTTG Footprint can be satisfied on a regional and interregional basis more efficiently or cost effectively than through local planning processes. This cycle, the Technical Workgroup evaluated the [non-committed projects](#) (Boardman to Hemingway, Energy Gateway and the Antelope projects) along with the three [Interregional Transmission Projects](#) that were submitted for consideration. The evaluation included reliability analysis, transmission capacity and economic benefits associated with changes in capital costs, losses and reserves. Following an in-depth analysis, Change Case 23, with Boardman to Hemingway, Energy Gateway South, portions of Energy Gateway West and the Antelope Projects, was selected as the more efficient or cost-effective plan to meet NTTG's transmission needs in 2026.

Mr. Quist also reported on the [Public Policy Consideration Study](#) that was completed this cycle to evaluate a faster phase out of coal plants and replace coal with wind only or a combination of wind and natural gas resources. The results suggested that a replacement of wind or a combination of wind and gas for coal may be feasible. Additional analysis, however, would be required to understand the full impacts of coal plant decommissioning.

A discussion on the potential process for evaluation of re-dispatch alternatives to find the more efficient or cost-effective plan followed. It was noted that the Transmission Owners Local Integrated Resource Plan is responsible for optimizing the local transmission system and that jurisdiction of resource planning is with the states and not FERC.

Prior to voting to approve the 2016-2017 NTTG RTP, Marshall Empey stated that he will vote to approve the NTTG RTP, but the process has revealed that there are differences between the Transmission Owner's local planning processes and issues in the local processes that need to be addressed. Mr. Empey, however, conceded that the local planning process is outside the scope of NTTG's regional process.

Michelle Beck stated that she had concerns with how the stakeholder comments were responded to and that further clarification in the plan on what was and wasn't studied would have been helpful.

APPROVAL

APPROVAL OF THE 2016-2017 NTTG REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLAN

RESOLVED: A motion by Paul Kjellander to approve the [2016-2017 NTTG Regional Transmission Plan](#), as presented, was seconded by Brian Fritz. Deseret Power voted against the motion and the Utah Public Service Commission and Utah Office of Consumer Advocates abstained. The requirement for two-thirds of the member representatives or alternates in each class that are present at a meeting at which a quorum is achieved was satisfied and the motion was ADOPTED.

APPROVAL

DISTRIBUTION OF THE 2016-2017 NTTG REGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLAN

RESOLVED: Travis Kavulla motioned that the 2016-2017 NTTG Regional Transmission Plan, along with a [transmittal letter](#) describing NTTG's membership, study process and key findings, be distributed to commission representatives, governors, neighboring regional planning entities and other appropriate state energy and siting offices. The motion was seconded by Dave Joerger and unanimously APPROVED.

REPORT

2018-2019 NTTG PROJECT SPONSOR PRE-QUALIFICATION RESULTS

Jared Ellsworth, NTTG 2018-2019 Planning Committee Vice Chair and Courtney Waites, NTTG Cost Allocation Committee Chair, walked through the [TransCanyon](#) and [Great Basin Project](#) Sponsor Pre-Qualification data submittals. The data submittals have been assessed

and both sponsors have been notified that their submissions satisfied the minimum standards to be deemed as a qualified Project Sponsor in Northern Tier's regional planning process.

REPORT

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND TRANSMISSION IN MONTANA

Mr. John Leland, NTTG Technical Advisor, reported on the recently initiated efforts of the State of Montana and the Bonneville Power Administration to host a series of meetings focused on developing a sustainable long-term strategy to support developing new renewable energy resources in Montana. Mr. Leland represented NTTG at the kick off meeting held on December 8th, with the expectation that following the initial meeting a more concrete understanding of the effort, NTTG's role and the required resource commitment would be available to assess NTTG's ongoing participation.

Mr. Leland briefed members on the meeting [objectives](#), [participants](#) and [results](#). He confirmed that the effort appears to be focused on the local NorthWestern Energy and Bonneville Power Administration transmission planning perspective and not a regional perspective. Based on his understanding of the issues to be addressed, Mr. Leland recommended that NTTG not take an active role in the committees that were established but be available to provide expertise and presentations. Following a discussion, Steering Committee agreed with the recommendation that NTTG not have a formal presence but be available to participate and provide presentations upon requested.

REPORT

POTENTIAL NEW REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION UPDATE

Brian Fritz, Steering representative for PacifiCorp and NTTG Utility Co-Chair, presented an update on the efforts of NTTG and ColumbiaGrid to combine the two planning organizations into one. Mr. Fritz reported that a planning process has been developed that includes an area plan for the footprint of all members and a regional plan that includes the footprint of the FERC jurisdictional members for Order 1000 cost allocation. The FERC jurisdictional members are required to go through cost allocation process, but the non-FERC jurisdictional participants can choose to participate or not, as they are not under the same mandated requirements. Agreements that need to be put into place are being discussed and include governance, funding, a transition plan, tariff filings and a Request for Proposal for an organization that would do the planning. Participants will also be evaluating how to bring the regulators into the process and ensure they have opportunities for meaningful input.

The group is working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that all participants will be asked to sign committing them to continue to develop processes. No indication, at this point, if all parties will sign or not. If a participant does not sign the MOU they can still participate in the meetings but will not have voting authority.

Recent discussion about unwinding ColumbiaGrid yielded more questions than answers. Members of ColumbiaGrid are asking for more information on what the agreements require specific to termination and renewal. Based on information known today, the earliest possible date for forming a new organization would be 2020.

After the MOU is signed, the next steps are to flesh out and develop the required agreements and obtain a better understanding of what it means for ColumbiaGrid members to opt out or dismantle ColumbiaGrid. Tariff filings are targeted for late 2018 with implementation of a new Regional Planning Organization in 2020.

STAKEHOLDER COMMENT PERIOD

No additional comments or topics were offered.

ROUND TABLE/OTHER BUSINESS

Brian Fritz thanked Craig Quist for his leadership last cycle as the Planning Committee Chair. No additional comments or topics were offered. There being no further action, the meeting adjourned.



By:

Sharon Helms, NTTG Project Manager



Approved:

Brian Fritz, NTTG Utility Co-Chair



Approved:

Travis Kavulla, NTTG State Co-Chair