Northwestern University Electricity Dialogue

“Resilience, Reliability, and Regionality in the Western Interconnect: Bringing It Altogether”

Thursday, November 30, 2023 – Friday, December 1, 2023

Wasatch Ballroom—Hyatt Centric Park City
3551 N Escala Ct.
Park City, UT 84098

The challenges confronting the electricity systems in the Western Interconnection are considerable: weather extremes, electrification, decarbonization, and developing electricity markets, to name a few. Yet, the goals remain the same: assured reliability, enhanced resilience and improving regionality. This Western version of the Northwestern University Electricity Dialogue, by bringing together regulators, thought leaders, and industry executives together in a small-group, deep dive setting, discusses these challenges and goals with the hopes of illuminate what is going on, how they can be addressed and achieved and enrich the ongoing efforts.

Thursday, November 30, 2023

11:00-12:30 Lunch
12:30-12:45 Convening, Welcome, and Introduction
  • Derek Gundersen, Assistant Director of Program Operations, Northwestern Center on Law, Business and Economics
  • Lynne Kiesling, Director, Institute for Regulatory Law & Economics; Senior Research Affiliate, Northwestern Center on Law, Business, and Economics, Research Professor, CU Denver
  • Elizabeth Kronk Warner, Dean, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah
  • Thad LaVar, Chair, Utah Public Service Commission
12:45-1:30  **Opening Keynote Address:** *Title Forthcoming*

- **Introduction:** Lea Márquez Peterson, Commissioner, Arizona Corporation Commission
- **Keynote Speaker:** Allison Clements, Commissioner, U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

1:30-3:00  **Session One — Industry Leaders Panel**

The session is devoted to hearing from top utility executives on how they and their companies are working to meet the West’s challenges and goals as well as balancing the often-competing obligations.

- **Moderator:** Hayley Williamson, Chair, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada
- **Doug Cannon,** President and CEO, NV Energy
- **Jeff Cook,** Vice President of Planning and Asset Management, Bonneville Power Administration
- **Robert S. Kenney,** President, Xcel Energy-Colorado
- **Philip D. Moeller,** Executive Vice President, Business Operations Group and Regulatory Affairs, Edison Electric Institute

3:00-3:30  **Break**

3:30-5:00  **Session Two — Technologies, Costs, Reliability, and the Electricity Transition**

The economics, polices and promise of advancing technologies are reshaping the electricity landscape. Whether it is solar, wind, tidal, small nuclear, or smart homes each utility system needs to adapt to technological changes as well as adapting to customer demands. This session of experts will discuss these pressures as well as the needs of the transmission grid to support and enable the transition to assure that that lights stay on at affordable costs.

- **Moderator:** Letha Tawney, Commissioner, Oregon Public Utilities Commission
- **Scott Burns,** Vice President, Innovation, NRG Energy
- **Gary Hoogeveen,** President and Chief Executive Officer, Rocky Mountain Power
- **Michael Lee,** CEO, Octopus Energy USA
- **Hilary Pearson,** VP of Policy & External Affairs, Line Vision

5:00-6:00  **Break**
6:00 – 7:00  
**Cocktail Reception**

6:30-8:30  
**Dinner & Keynote Address: Looking Ahead at Energy Services and Options for the West**

- **Introduction:** Eric Blank, Chair, Colorado Public Service Commission
- **Keynote Speaker:** Barbara Sugg, President and Chief Executive Officer, Southwest Power Pool

**Friday, December 1, 2023**

7:15-8:15  
**Breakfast**

8:15-8:30  
**Reconvening & Welcome**

8:30-10:00  
**Session Three — Markets, the Electricity Transition, and Assuring Regional Resilience and Reliability**

The development of electricity markets, both real-time and day-ahead markets, are underway in the West. While touching on the status of those efforts, this session will primarily discuss how such markets can, will, could and should lower costs (or at least inhibit their increase!) and promote greater regional reliability.

- **Moderator:** Tammy Cordova, Commissioner, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada
- **Stacey Crowley,** Vice President of External Affairs, California Independent System Operator (ISO)
- **Julie Fedorchak,** Commissioner, North Dakota Public Service Commission
- **Kara B. Fornstrom,** Director, Center for Energy Regulation & Policy Analysis
- **Melanie Frye,** President & CEO, WECC

10:00-10:30  
**Break**

10:30-12:00  
**Session Four — Weather and the Energy Transition: Policies and Preparation**

While the drought conditions in the West may be over, the threat from weather remains. Whether it is from extreme events or long-term trends, the need to plan and prepare is still present. This session will examine the remaining threats, planning and preparation efforts that are underway and still needed,
as well as some of the longer-term policies, especially those limiting greenhouse gas emissions, that a number of the western states have enacted to address, as well as the longer-term risks.

- **Moderator**: Gabriel Aguilera, Commissioner, New Mexico Public Regulation Commission
- **Ilkay Altintas**, Chief Data Science Officer, University of California San Diego, Supercomputer Center; Founding Board Member, Climate and Wildfire Institute (CWI)
- **Anne Sherwood**, Area Vice President - Wildfire Mitigation: Regulatory and Policy, Xcel Energy

12:00 **Adjourn**

**Confirmed Utility Commissioners** (as of 10/5/2023):

1. Gabriel Aguilera, Commissioner, New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (*Panel Moderator*)
2. Eric Blank, Chairman, Colorado Public Utilities Commission (*Keynote Introduction*)
4. Tammy Cordova, Commissioner, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (*Panel Moderator*)
5. Julie Fedorchak, Commissioner, North Dakota Public Service Commission (*Panelist*)
6. Thad LeVar, Chairman, Public Service Commission of Utah (*Introduction*)
7. Anthony O'Donnell, Commissioner, Montana Public Service Commission
8. Lea Márquez Peterson, Commissioner, Arizona Corporation Commission (*Keynote Introduction*)
9. Tricia Pridemore, Commissioner, Georgia Public Service Commission
10. Ann Rendahl, Commissioner, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (*Panel Moderator*)
11. Letha Tawney, Commissioner, Oregon Public Utilities Commission (*Panel Moderator*)
12. Hayley Williamson, Chair, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (*Panel Moderator*)

**Confirmed Participants** (as of 10/5/2023):

13. Ilkay Altintas, Chief Data Science Officer; Founding Board Member, Climate and Wildfire Institute (CWI), University of California San Diego, Supercomputer Center
15. Scott Burns, Vice President, Innovation, NRG Energy
16. **Doug Cannon**, President and CEO, NV Energy
17. **Jeff Cook**, Vice President of Planning and Asset Management, Bonneville Power Administration
18. **Stacey Crowley**, Vice President of External Affairs, California Independent System Operator (ISO)
19. **Kara B. Fornstrom**, Director, Center for Energy Regulation & Policy Analysis, University of Wyoming
20. **Melanie Frye**, President & CEO, WECC
21. **Gary Hoogeveen**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Rocky Mountain Power
22. **Robert S. Kenney**, President, Xcel Energy-Colorado
23. **Lynne Kiesling**, Co-Director, Institute for Regulatory Law & Economics; Senior Research Affiliate, Northwestern Center on Law, Business, and Economics, Research Professor, CU Denver
24. **Michael Lee**, CEO, Octopus Energy USA
25. **Philip D. Moeller**, Executive Vice President, Business Operations Group and Regulatory Affairs, Edison Electric Institute
27. **Anne Sherwood**, Area Vice President - Wildfire Mitigation: Regulatory and Policy, Xcel Energy
28. **Barbara Sugg**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Southwest Power Pool
29. **Elizabeth Kronk Warner**, Dean, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah

**Confirmed Registrants (as of 10/5/2023):**

30. **David Boyd**, Regulatory and Policy Strategist, AESL Consulting
31. **Lincoln L. Davies**, Dean & Frank R. Strong Chair in Law, Michael E. Moritz College of Law, The University of Ohio
33. **Francis Durnford**, Executive Director, Market Policy, Powerex
34. **Jose Esparza**, Sr. Vice President, Public Policy, Arizona Public Service (APS)
35. **Jennifer Gardner**, President & Founder, Envision Energy
36. **Sam Johnston**, Policy Manager, Interwest Energy Alliance
37. **Travis Kavulla**, VP, Regulatory Affairs, NRG
38. **Alyssa Koslow**, Director of Federal Regulatory Affairs & Compliance, Arizona Public Service (APS)
39. **Andie Madsen**, JD Student, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah
40. **Rodney Ross**, Director State Affairs & Compliance, Arizona Public Service
41. **Amy Sopinka**, Director, Market Policy, Powerex Corp
42. **Vijay Satyal**, Deputy Director - Regional Markets, WRA
43. **Jordan White**, Executive Director, NextEra Energy Transmission