**Meeting Summary**

**NorthWestern Energy Transmission Advisory Committee**

**June 29, 2016**

**9:30 AM, MDT**

**Meeting Participants**

This Transmission Advisory Committee (TRANSAC) meeting was conducted in person at NorthWestern Energy’s (NWE) offices in Butte, via teleconference and the internet site GoTo Meeting.com for those not able to join in person. Those participating included:

**Name Organization**

At NorthWestern Energy (NWE) Offices

Don Bauer NWE Electric Transmission Planning

Becki Christie NWE Regional Transmission Planning

Jim Hadley NWE Electric Transmission Planning

Josh Laurandeau NWE Regional Transmission Planning

Chelsea Loomis NWE Regional Transmission Planning

Kelly Lovell NWE Electric Transmission Planning

Mark Mallard NWE Electric Transmission Planning

Emmett Riordan NWE Transmission Engineering, Construction and Planning

B. J. Schubert NWE Regional Transmission Planning

Dale Mahugh NWE Customer Care Key Accounts/Meeting Facilitator

Via Telephone & Internet

Ken Neal NaturEner, LLC

Bill Pascoe Pascoe Energy Consulting

Mark Zora Talen Energy, LLC

**Standards of Conduct & Anti-Trust Policy Review**

After introductions of those participating in person and by phone, Kelly Lovell shared NWE’s Antitrust Policy, and the Standards of Conduct Policy and Safeguards. These documents are available at NWE’s OASIS web address:

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/01-Agenda_06-29-16-TRANSAC-Final.doc>

**Agenda**

Dale Mahugh next reviewed the posted agenda with the group.

**Administration**

March 16, 2016 Meeting Summary – Dale Mahugh asked if the participants had reviewed the meeting summary notes provided from the previous meeting and if there were any changes or corrections to be noted. There were none. The March 16, 2016, meeting summary is posted at NWE’s OASIS web address:

[http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/03\_16\_16\_Transac\_Meeting\_Summary-Final.docx](https://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/03_16_16_Transac_Meeting_Summary-Final.docx)

Action Item List

Kelly Lovell reported there were no new action items or updates to report.

Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) Load and Resource Data Request

In Cathy Mathew’s absence, Kelly Lovell shared the update which is available at NWE’s OASIS website address below. Two takeaways were that the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) 2016 *State of the Interconnection* report was posted to the WECC website on June 10 and the 2016 *Summer Reliability Assessment* was posted to the NERC website on June 15.

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/02-LR_Update.docx>

Compliance Efforts

Kelly Lovell next shared the report on compliance activities in Cathy Mathew’s absence.

This report along with the web links to specific referenced discussion items within the report can be accessed at NWE’s OASIS web site address:

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/03-Compliance_Update.docx>

Generation Interconnection Update

Kelly Lovell presented the Montana Generation and Interconnection Queue Update which has been posted on NWE’s OASIS web site address:

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/04-TRANSAC-GIA_Queue_Update_06-16.docx>

**Regional and Bulk Electric System Updates**

Chelsea Loomis noted that the NTTG Study Plan had been sent out for stakeholder comment earlier and a number of responses have been received. Most comments have been reviewed and incorporated into the draft. They are hoping to finalize this soon and then the actual study work can begin. There were multiple regional projects and three interregional projects submitted. These will be worked in conjunction with the 2026 TEPPC case.

Concerning solar interconnection projects, the recent Montana PSC ruling that stipulates only those projects ranging between 100 kW and 3 MW, with both a signed Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and Small Generator Interconnection Agreement (SGIA) as of June 16, 2016, will be granted the automatic QF-1 tariffed rate for generated energy. Because of this, NorthWestern Energy will not sign any further small solar interconnection agreements. Applicants will have the option of either continuing through the process until the agreement phase or withdrawing and losing their position in the queue. There are three 20 MW wind projects in process in South Dakota and another three 20 MW projects on Montana’s Hi-Line.

Chelsea also shared that there are several large projects in NWE’s queue. They are: 300.9 MW wind project on the 230 kV Colstrip bus, 750 MW wind project on the 500 kV bus, 250 MW project on 230 kV Broadview bus, and a 96 MW wind project in NorthWestern’s transmission system, but not on Path 8.

Chelsea also provided updates on several Regional Planning activities.

-Talks continue between the Northern Tier Transmission Group (NTTG) and Columbia Grid (CG) about forming a new regional planning organization. At this time, it appears necessary to hire a project manager to become involved in order to proceed. This action would require funding from all participating entities.

-The Northwest Power Pool (NWPP) is planning to host an engineering forum in the Portland area in September. Executive Committee participation discussions are taking place now.

-Blackstart analysis continues and currently review is taking place starting from the Cochrane units instead of the SKQ (previously Kerr Dam) units. This will include reviewing both dynamics and steady rate analysis.

-Work continues with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Avista (AVA) to re-evaluate the 2200 MW westbound Path 8 rating. The concern about Miles City tripping if the loads were to increase on the line appear to be more restrictive than necessary.

-NOPSG is currently performing import and export winter analyses for Path 80.

**Local Area Plan Update**

Load Forecast and Base Case Development

Mark Mallard next shared load forecast information with the group and reviewed the Balancing Authority Area information which has been compiled. It was noted that for the portion of the summary containing actual information from 2000 thru 2015, the winter of 2015-16 was abnormally mild which can easily be seen in the forecast graphics shared. Through regression analysis, future forecast information is based on more “normal” conditions. Load growth looking forward is projected to be moderate, but constant over the next 15-year period and NWE is projected to continue to be a summer peaking utility, albeit only slightly. Load growth of approximately 1 percent (1%) annually is anticipated. It was noted that the “System Load” includes NWE Hi-Line load, and subtracting out Colstrip Startup, BPA- and WAPA-served loads, the REA’s, and Bighorn. There is also a change coming in how substation transformer loading is determined. Currently, non-coincident peak values are used, and then “scrunched” or reduced slightly until system load is balanced with known generation and tie-line flows. This will be changing to the use of coincident peaks in the future which will provide a more accurate depiction of loads.

This information shared can be accessed at NWE’s OASIS web site address below:

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/05-Load_Forecast_Basecase_Discussion-_TRANSAC_20160629.pptx>

Local Area Plan Update:

Jim Hadley next shared information concerning the Local Area Plan starting with the base case scenarios. There will be 10 cases studied, eight peak load cases (heavy summer and heavy winter) covering the 15-year planning horizon, and two off-peak cases (light spring) for the current system and five-year model only. Light autumn cases were not found to be useful in the study, and are no longer produced or studied by WECC. System Normal and Outage studies will be completed for all seasons of 2016-2017 base cases to determine the present “state of the system” as it exists today. In the next steps studies, the five-year interval cases looking forward from 2021 to 2031 will be studied. Sensitivity cases may take a close look at the speculation regarding coal-fired generation; this will be particularly relevant for Colstrip Units 1 & 2. Also the variability of renewable resources (wind, solar) may be considered.

The Local Area Plan Update presentation shared at the meeting is available at NWE’s OASIS website address below.

<http://www.oasis.oati.com/NWMT/NWMTdocs/06-LAP_Update-TRANSAC-06-29-16.pptx>

**Action Item List Review**

There were no items to be added.

**Upcoming Meetings**

Posted Public Meeting dates, and the proposed dates for the remaining TRANSAC group meetings in 2016 are as follows:

* **September 14, 2016:** Transmission Advisory Committee (TRANSAC) – Meeting

This meeting date conflicts with an NTTG meeting that is scheduled for the same day which will affect several of our members. An alternate, date will be found and

Stakeholders will be notified.

* **December 7, 2016:** Transmission Advisory Committee (TRANSAC) – Meeting

**Adjournment:**

After asking the group if there was anything further to be brought before the group and hearing none, Dale thanked everyone for their participation, wished them a happy and safe 4th of July and declared the meeting adjourned.

**Disclaimer**

Committee members provide advice to NWE as individual professionals; the advice they provide does not bind the agencies or organizations they serve.