

PNUCC REPORT Council



Northwest Power and Conservation Council Meeting Notes – February 10, 2015

The Council met in Portland, with a light agenda of updates about staff’s ongoing work on the Council’s Seventh Regional Power Plan, which is slated for release this fall. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) also visited to explore opportunities for collaboration. Next meeting: March 10-11, in Eugene, Oregon.

In This Issue

Power Committee Moving the Ball on Seventh Plan.....	1
Seventh Power Plan Timeline Update	2
NOAA Seeks Greater Collaboration with Council	3

The Agenda

Power Committee Moving the Ball on Seventh Plan

Under committee reports, Montana Councilmember Pat Smith reported on several developments that are moving the ball forward in terms of completing the Council’s Seventh Regional Power Plan. There were reports on which resources will be considered for the Regional Portfolio Model, how much conservation will be factored into the plan and a high-level description of the future risk scenarios to be evaluated.



Analysis Focuses on Meeting Peak Need

Smith said that the Seventh Plan will be the first to incorporate more robust modeling to meet peak needs. The updated Regional Portfolio Model enhances the Council’s ability to test a new resource’s capability to provide peak capacity system support, as well as its ability to satisfy energy adequacy requirements. Smith said that one specific change, for purposes of the analysis, is that the cost of Demand Response resources will be ranked as a more important attribute than seasonal shaping.

Concerns were raised at the Power Committee meeting by Idaho Councilmember Jim Yost who asserted that seasonal shaping is of great significance in Southern Idaho during the summer. Oregon Councilmember Henry Lorenzen questioned how the modeling exercise would

differentiate between long and short peaks. Tom Eckman, director of the Council's power division, said that staff would return with supply curves and greater detail at the Council's March meeting.

Conservation Potential Decreases Due to Successes

Smith also reported on the pace of conservation in the Seventh Plan, noting that Council staff's preliminary estimate of remaining conservation potential has decreased from the Sixth Plan. "Staff is predicting decreased technical potential in all sectors due to the success of programs in energy efficiency, and federal standards and state codes," he said. These successes are only partially counter balanced by a few new opportunities for savings in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors. Bucking the trend is agriculture, which should see an increase savings potential. In terms of conservation, "all the low-hanging fruit has been accounted for in the Sixth Plan," Smith said. The Conservation Resources Advisory Committee will review its findings one more time, and will be making a presentation to the full Council in March.

Four Generating Resources to be Considered

Also at the Power Committee, staff presented a high-level summary of the generating resource characteristics to be included in the analysis for the Seventh Plan. A consensus on including four resources was reached: utility-scale wind and solar, natural gas peakers (single cycle turbines and reciprocating engines) and combined-cycle natural gas combustion turbines. A bit of a surprise is the addition of solar, as it was not an option in the Sixth Plan. While solar is a growing resource in Southern Idaho, it has a limited presence in the region overall. Other generating resource options will be discussed in the Plan narrative and not included in the analysis.

Scenarios Seek to Cover Wide Range of Risks



Last, the Power Committee had its first look at the list of potential scenarios to be evaluated – 14 in all. Two deal with existing policies, including those affecting renewable resource development and carbon emissions. Five scenarios consider various carbon risks, two study the major loss of a resource, two incorporate conservation mandates with more aggressive and slower paths, two explore the costs and risks associated with reliance on out-of-region electricity market resources, and one considers the impact of climate change. The committee also discussed ways to gather more input from stakeholders.

Seventh Power Plan Timeline Update

Tom Eckman reported on the staff's Seventh Plan progress. Having developed the draft scenarios, staff will commence its resource portfolio analysis next month. Staff is aiming for May to produce the annual adequacy assessment and then it will begin delivering chapter drafts to the Council over the following months. The hope is for a draft Seventh Plan this September, with a final in December. For those who wish to track its progress, go to the Council's [Seventh Plan webpage](#).

NOAA Seeks Greater Collaboration with Council

Barry Thom, NOAA Deputy Regional Administrator, proposed collaborating with the Council on long-term goal setting, including establishing a joint steering committee. Thom presented a four-step process for: identifying and mapping listed and non-listed salmon and steelhead, holding discussions with stakeholders, seeking a consensus on long-term goals, and setting strategies for achieving them. Council Chair Phil Rockefeller, Washington, agreed that there are opportunities for collaboration; and Washington Councilmember Tom Karier welcomed the invitation and the opportunity to set targets for a multimillion-dollar program.

Councilmember Yost expressed reservations, stating, “In Idaho, we’re trying to get our hands around the ESA (Endangered Species Act) ... and you want to move the goal posts ahead,” he said. “We’d feel better if we had more confidence that we were making progress in moving to recovery and delisting.”

“You have these recovery goals and positions, but the utility ratepayers are the ones who are paying for it. When we meet those goals, the ratepayers are finished with it. If you want to go further, you’ll have to do it on someone else’s dime.”

“It will be a stretch to meet those recovery goals in many of our streams.”
- Bill Booth, Idaho

Idaho’s Bill Booth, Council Vice Chair, said he first wants to see how the region is doing in terms of and how far away it is from meeting its recovery goals.

“It will be a stretch to meet those recovery goals in many of our streams,” Booth said. “I’d like to maintain the Council’s outline, and move phase by phase as to whether our goals will intertwine with NOAA’s. We’d like to see some delisting done. I’m not ready to commit to steps two, three and four until we see what the results of step one are.”

A consensus was reached to proceed on step one with NOAA this year: identifying and mapping listed and non-listed salmon and steelhead.