Pre-Summit Workshop:
Overcoming Interconnection Challenges

Monday, June 29, 2020

7:30-8:15  Registration and Networking Breakfast

8:15-8:30  Opening Remarks by the Chair

8:30-9:15  Keynote Address: FERC Interconnection Policy

Keynote:
Myra Sinnott, Energy Industry Analyst, Office of Energy Policy & Innovation, FERC
Kathleen Ratcliff, Senior Analyst, Office of Energy Market Regulation, FERC

9:15-10:00  Panel: Standardizing Transmission Planning Processes

The best wind and solar are found primarily in regions with little co-located transmission. Interstate coordination calls for standardizing grid planning processes in order to efficiently integrate more renewables. As supporters of big development square off against advocates for localized development, are efficiency in demand response and solar siting more compelling than large transmission projects? Panelists will compare RTO planning processes across the Midwest and discuss how to optimize the renewable integration process.

- How is transmission going to get planned and authorized?
- What has to happen at MISO, PJM, and SPP to increase transmission?
- How will the Technical Interconnection and Interoperability Requirements (TIIR) impact transmission development?
- What obstacles are presented by state regulations?

Panelists:
Beth Soholt, Executive Director, CLEAN GRID ALLIANCE
Justin Vickers, Staff Attorney, ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY CENTER
10:00-10:30  Networking Break

10:30-11:00  Presentation: Achieving Reliability through CapX2020 and CapX2050 Transmission Vision Studies
Presenter: Drew Siebenaler, Manager, Regional Transmission Planning and Analytics, XCEL ENERGY

11:00-12:00  Panel: Evaluating Cost Allocation Solutions for Optimizing the Interconnection Process
Expected interconnection costs for developing solar and wind are so high that MISO is unable to move forward on projects calling for new transmission, but there is debate about whether the cost numbers for transmission have been substantiated. Regardless, the question remains: Who is going to pay for it? Questions about cost allocation for new transmission have slowed renewable development. As commissioners roll back net metering, are they going to rely on avoided costs? This panel will include policymaker and regulator perspectives on issues tied to cost allocation.

- How do we allocate the costs between owners and customers?
- What is the role of interconnection levels and charges in transmission optimization?
- What would it look like to combine the traditional reliability planning with interconnection planning and then allocate the costs to generators and load?
- Is there a cost allocation methodology that is more fair from a benefits perspective?
- Can system improvements and infrastructure upgrades save on costs?

Panelists:
Brian C. Drumm, Manager, Regulatory Relations & Policy, AMERICAN TRANSMISSION COMPANY
Mike Huebsch, Former Commissioner, WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

12:00-1:30  Group Luncheon

1:30-2:00  Case Study: Transmission Project Update—Cardinal Hickory Creek Transmission Line
Presenters:
Greg Levesque, Director of Environmental and Local Relations, AMERICAN TRANSMISSION COMPANY
Sean Brady, Senior Counsel and Regional Policy Manager, East, CLEAN GRID ALLIANCE

2:00-3:00  Panel: Practical Strategies for Navigating the Queue
The queue process has proven expensive and inefficient, leaving 100,000 megawatts of proposed renewable development locked in place while awaiting connection to the grid.
This panel will discuss where we stand on queue reform and how the process can be optimized.

- What transformational changes need to be implemented to improve processing of the queue?
- What are the interconnection technical requirements and standards and how much will they cost?
- What are the impacts when projects drop out of the queue?
- How have changes related to FERC Order 845 affected the queue process?
- Would an integrated system planning process be more effective than the queue-based interconnection process?

Panelists:
Ravi Bantu, Director, Transmission, Americas, RES GROUP
Juan Hayem, Director of Transmission, INVENERGY LLC
Richard Seide, Director Transmission Policy and Regulation, APEX CLEAN ENERGY
David Mindham, Regulatory Market Affairs Manager, EDP RENEWABLES NORTH AMERICA

3:00 – 3:30  Networking Break

3:30 – 4:30  Panel: Enabling Renewables with Storage as a Transmission Asset

What are the rules of storage—how is it classified, who can benefit most from it? Storage regulations are in place, but questions linger. Should storage be viewed on the distribution level or should it be regulated on the transmission level? This panel will explore the storage interconnect process and consider whether storage can contribute to the grid’s flexibility by operating as a transmission asset.

- Can storage efficiently provide capacity through aggregation?
- Is storage a viable alternative to building more transmission?
- How are RTOs implementing new rules on storage?

Makarand “Mak” Nagle, Senior Director, Origination, SPOWER
Amber Greb, Supervisor, Transmission Planning, SOUTHWEST POWER POOL (SPP)


Seams can limit the reach of regional renewable energy, leaving renewable electricity generation sources isolated in their region. Enhancing the connections at the seams could provide benefits that outweigh the costs, including lower-cost, more reliable, and cleaner electricity. On the flip side, there is a cost from a reliability standpoint of adding non-dispatchable resources to the mix. This panel will discuss what it will take to break down the seams and how investment in higher quality, lower cost renewables with fewer geographic limitations might pay off.
• Are there reliability attributes we should be retaining, like ramping and flexible resources?
• What does flexible resources mean?
• Where do we cross the seams to support the system and to support growth of renewables?
• How to we allocate costs for this?
• How do we make it easier to import and export energy across seams?

Panelists:
Jeremiah Doner, Director of Seams Coordination, MISO
Erik Hanser, Energy Markets Analyst, MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
Megan Wisersky, Electric Planning Manager, MADISON GAS AND ELECTRIC
Sadzi Martha Oliva, Commissioner, ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

5:30 Pre-Summit Adjourns