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May 26, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Power Committee

FROM: Gillian Charles, Energy Policy Analyst

SUBJECT: RTF's Small/Rural Utilities Technical Needs Study

In the Sixth Power Plan, the Council identified the need for providing improved and specialized technical support to small and/or rural utilities implementing energy efficiency measures. Small and rural utilities face challenges unique to their service territories, including low line density, large geographic areas, and limited service providers, resources, and dedicated conservation staff (often less than one FTE). Action item CONS-17¹ in the Sixth Power Plan focuses on helping small and rural utilities develop and implement conservation programs.

In response to CONS-17, the Regional Technical Forum (RTF) contracted with Ecotope, Inc. to help determine what technical assistance the RTF can offer small and rural utilities to tailor their conservation initiatives to meet the unique circumstances of their service territories. Bonneville Power Administration (Bonneville) and the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) provided additional funding to the study to help determine what program design and delivery improvements they might offer to assist with the implementation of efficiency programs.

Ecotope worked with an RTF subcommittee to develop an interview guide designed to assess the utilities' needs related to the technical characteristics of conservation, such as deemed measures and standardized M&V protocols, and to determine which measures the RTF can best assist the utilities in developing and implementing. Twenty utilities were selected for interviews, which took place in early 2011.

At the June Power Committee meeting, staff will present the key findings, conclusions, and potential recommendations identified by Ecotope in its research. A final report is expected in mid-June.

¹ http://www.nwcouncil.org/energy/powerplan/6/final/SixthPowerPlan_ActionPlan.pdf

Report on the RTF's Small/Rural Utilities Technical Needs Study

Gillian Charles & Tom Eckman

Power Committee

June 7, 2011



Sixth Power Plan – Action Plan

CONS-17. Take into account the unique circumstances and special barriers faced by small and/or rural utilities in achieving conservation and the development and implementation of conservation programs.

Small/Rural Technical Needs Study

Objective 1: Determine what technical support, through improved existing/new deemed measures and standardized M&V protocols, the RTF can offer to help small/rural utilities achieve greater efficiency savings

Objective 2: Identify infrastructure and delivery constraints and determine what program design and delivery improvements NEEA and BPA can provide to assist with the implementation of efficiency programs

- Funded by RTF, w. contributions from NEEA, BPA
- RTF contracted with Ecotope in Fall 2010
- Assisted by RTF subcommittee

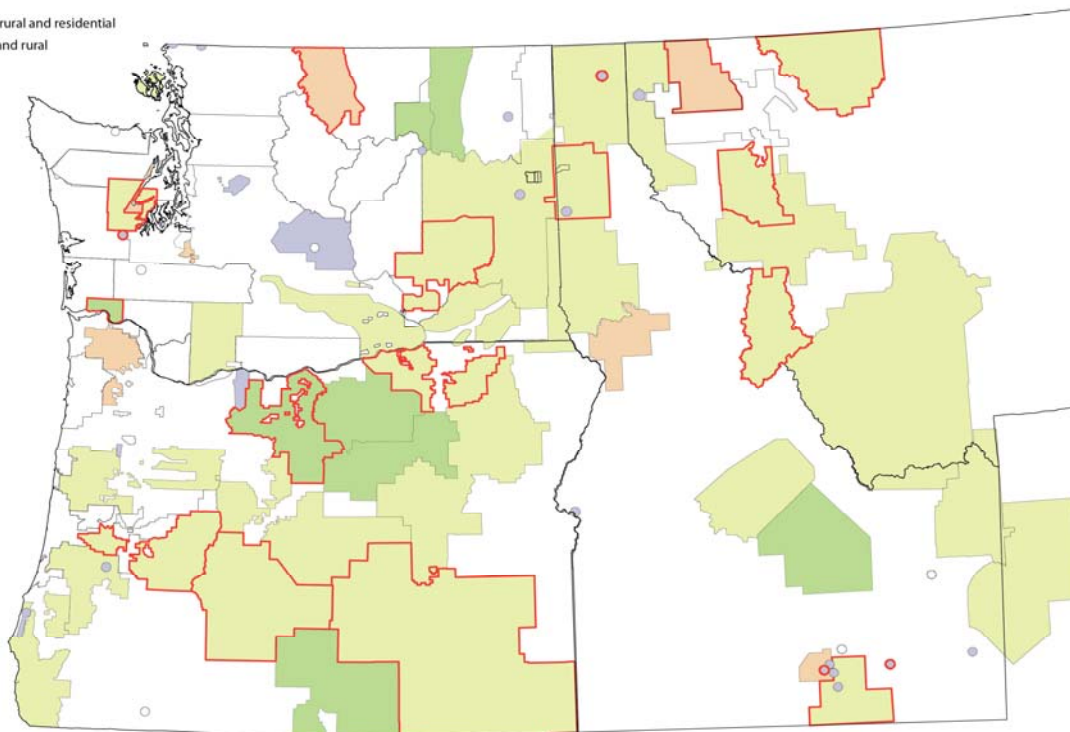
Process

- Review historical efficiency measures and achievements
- Define small and rural
- Develop interview guide and select 20 utilities
- Conduct interviews – in person and/or on phone
- Identify key findings and conclusions, develop recommendations for RTF, NEEA, and BPA

Northwest Regional Map of Small and Rural Utilities

(Utilities outlined in bold were selected for interview)

- Rural
- Small
- Small, rural and residential
- Small and rural



*77 utilities in this study identified as small, rural, or both represent ~10% of the region's load (2009 retail sales)



5



Report Contents

- Raw utility survey answers and recommendations
- Key findings and conclusions
- Recommendations from Ecotope to RTF, NEEA, and BPA
- Detailed recommendations by measure category (e.g. weatherization, PTCS, GSHP, Irrigation, DEI, DHPs, commercial lighting, schools)



6



Key Findings and Conclusions

- There is significant diversity among utilities within the small/rural characterization
 - e.g. Umatilla Electric and the City of Bonners Ferry
- Utilities want measures and programs that:
 - Are deemed and easy to implement
 - Achieve high savings
 - Remain stable
- Utilities appear to require process improvements and strategic support, rather than technical changes to existing RTF measures
- Many of the utilities are not aware of what role the RTF and/or NEEA plays in the region

Recommendations

Ecotope recommended that the region further segment the small and rural utilities, as a lens for:

- Measure recommendations
- Regional collaboration and communication
- Prioritization

Type 1: utilities w/ own programs, developed and marketed to their customers

Type 2: utilities using the PTR as main guideline

Type 3: utilities w/ no defined program or implementation approach

Recommendations (cont.)

- RTF should focus on utilities in Type 1
 - Ag measures, M&V, evaluation, QC, deemed commercial measures
- RTF should develop and utilize a standard “measure review” form to assess and clearly communicate the applicability of new or revised measures
- NEEA and BPA should focus on utilities in Type 2 & 3

Next Steps...

- Ecotope and RTF subcommittee compiling final report – available late June
- Recommendations to be considered for 2011 and 2012 RTF work plans
- Council’s Sixth Power Plan mid-term check-in
 - CONS-17 states that “a panel consisting of Bonneville and small and/or rural utilities should report its findings back to the Council”

Thank You - Participating Utilities

- Big Bend Electric Co-op
- City of Bonners Ferry
- Glacier Electric Co-op
- Harney Electric Co-op
- Kootenai Electric Co-op
- Lane Electric Co-op
- Lincoln Electric Co-op
- Mason County PUD # 3
- City of McCleary
- Midstate Electric Co-op
- City of Milton-Freewater
- Mission Valley Power
- Okanogan County PUD
- Raft River Rural Electric Co-op
- Ravalli Electric Co-op
- City of Rupert
- Umatilla Electric Co-op
- United Electric Co-Op
- Wahkiakum PUD
- Wasco Electric Co-op

... and Ecotope, RTF subcommittee, NEEA, and BPA

