

## Regional Stakeholder Consultations

# Input on a Potential New Power Plan Advisory Committee

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1

## The Northwest Power Act Assigns Three Primary Roles to the Council

- Section 4(d)(1) “...the Council shall prepare, adopt, and promptly transmit to the Administrator a regional conservation and electric power plan.”
- Section 4(h)(1)(A) “...the Council shall promptly develop and adopt, pursuant to this subsection, a program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife...”



2

## The Northwest Power Act Assigns Three Primary Roles to the Council

- **Section 4(g)(1) “To insure widespread public involvement in the formulation of regional power policies, the Council and Administrator shall maintain comprehensive programs to –**
  - 4(g)(1)(A) inform the Pacific Northwest public of major regional power issues,
  - 4(g)(1)(B) obtain public views concerning major regional power issues, and
  - 4(g)(1)(C) secure advice and consultation from the Administrator’s customers and others.”



3

## Requirement to Establish Power Plan Advisory Committee

- **Section 4(c)(11) “The Council shall establish a voluntary scientific and statistical advisory committee to assist in the development, collection, and evaluation of such statistical, biological, economic, social, environmental, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council’s development and amendment of a regional conservation and power plan.”**
- **Section 4(c)(12) “The Council may establish other voluntary advisory committees as it determines are necessary or appropriate to assist it in carrying out its functions and responsibilities under this Act.”**



4

## Requirement to Establish Power Plan Advisory Committee

- Section 4(c)(13) “The Council shall ensure that the membership for any advisory committee established or formed pursuant to this section shall, to the extent feasible, include representatives of, and seek the advice of, the Federal, and the various regional, State, local and Indian Tribal Governments, consumer groups and customers.”



5

## Council Members' Involvement in Power Plans

- Provide policy guidance for work by Council staff
- Consider information and analyses provided by Council staff
- Receive stakeholder input, including from power plan advisory committees
- Hold public hearings in each state
- Using technical and policy information from staff, and input from stakeholders and the public, adopt a regional plan for conservation and generating resources consistent with the Act's requirements



6

## Council Member and Staff Roles in Advisory Committees

- Council members are encouraged to participate
- Staff functions
  - Prepare agenda and materials for the meetings
  - Facilitate meetings
  - Certify meeting minutes
  - Report to the Executive Director and Council Members on progress and recommendations



7

## Advisory Committee Operations

- All meetings are open to the public
  - All notices, agendas, materials, minutes, membership lists, etc. are posted on each committee's webpage
- Committees serve in *advisory* capacity only
  - No votes are taken
  - Role is to review information, vet assumptions and information and make recommendations to the Council



8

## Existing Power Plan Advisory Committees

- **Conservation Resources Advisory Committee (CRAC)**
- **Demand Forecasting Advisory Committee (DFAC)**
- **Generating Resources Advisory Committee (GRAC)**
- **Natural Gas Advisory Committee (NGAC)**
- **System Analysis Advisory Committee (SAAC)**



9

## System Analysis Advisory Committee Functions

- **Examine methods of the Regional Portfolio Model (RPM)**
- **Review sources and nature of assumptions and data**
- **Advise on interpretation of RPM results**
- **Evaluate computer models and analytical techniques used to arrive at resource portfolio recommendations**
- **Suggest enhancements and improved approaches**



10

## Gap Identification

- **Stakeholder comments**
  - Council staff analytical activities not transparent
  - Lack of trust in relying on 'black box' models
  - Want more attention on meaning, implications of analysis
  - Increase relevance and usefulness of power plans
- **Regional Portfolio Model Review Panel**
  - Improve communications, better fit analysis into overall process
  - Provide actionable intelligence
  - Review and check consistency across various assumptions
  - More clearly show how model inputs drive model results



11

## Proposal

- **Establish a new Resource Strategies Advisory Committee**
- **Primary functions:**
  - Bring together technical and qualitative topics for consideration on an integrated basis
  - Gather and communicate to the Council higher-level perspectives on power planning
  - Engage stakeholders in regional resource strategy issues during power plan development
- **Would not replace existing advisory committees – instead, fills broader need**



12

## Potential Committee Topics

- Review and comment on overall power plan analyses, key considerations to be included
- Reality-check major assumptions, results of analyses
- Provide input on factors not easily captured in computer models (e.g., intra-regional variability, implementation considerations)
- Advise on formulation of power plan resource strategy recommendations



13

## Committee Membership and Meetings

- Include members who represent stakeholder interests at the resource policy level (e.g., utility executives, senior advisors at state agencies, environmental groups, trade organizations, etc.)
- Balanced, diverse participation
- To get good participation, will need to use committee members' time efficiently
  - Meet at key stages in the power plan process
  - Focus on key issues, strategic and practical considerations (e.g., define questions for analysis, interpret meaning of analytical results)



14

## Anticipated Benefits

- Improve interaction during power plan development
- Increase relevance; use broader context to help guide analysis
- Facilitate internal communication between management and technical staff at utilities, other stakeholder groups
- Obtain richer, more useful input for Council Members
- Strengthen resource strategy development
- Increase stakeholder participation, understanding and support for Council power plans



15

## Questions

- How does your organization participate in Council power plan processes?
- Specifically, when, where and how do you engage on substantive issues of power plan resource strategy development?
- To what extent is it relevant and appropriate for power plan advisory committees to address policy matters?
- Would a new advisory committee on power plan resource strategies be useful?
- If a new advisory committee is formed, how can participation be organized to ensure balanced involvement with a broad range of stakeholders?
- How can the advisory provide useful input without impinging on the Council's obligations and authorities to determine the power plan?



16