

## **Northern Tier Transmission Group (NTTG)**

### **Planning Group**

The NTTG Planning Group has been created to meet the following goal:

*To provide a forum where all interested parties are encouraged to participate in the planning, coordination, and implementation of a robust transmission system that is capable of supporting an efficient west-wide electricity market while meeting WECC and NERC reliability standards. The wide participation envisioned in this process (including transmission owners, customers and state regulators) is intended to result in transmission expansion plans that meet a variety of needs and have a broad basis of support.*

#### **Assigned work and schedule:**

The work of the Planning Group will be organized in two, potentially overlapping phases:

- 1a. Identify “Fast Track” transmission projects by June 30, 2007.
- 1b. Facilitate implementation of the Fast Track Projects.
- 2a. Produce a comprehensive transmission plan by June 30, 2009, and biennially thereafter.
- 2b. Facilitate implementation of the comprehensive transmission plans.

#### **Principles:**

The planning group will operate according to the following principles:

- 1. **Coordination** – Coordinate between the entities developing the transmission system, including the regulatory community, and the entities that utilize and benefit from the transmission system. It will be the responsibility of the project participants to determine the specifics of a project such as the scope of the project, lead entity or entities, project participants, and funding.
- 2. **Openness** – Meetings will be open to all stakeholders and conducted in accordance with critical infrastructure and standard of conduct rules;
- 3. **Transparency** – Provide a forum for transmission owners and operators to clearly disclose the criteria, assumptions, and data that underlie their transmission system plans;

4. **Information Exchange** – Provide a forum for the exchange of information among transmission owners, regulators and entities that utilize and benefit from the transmission system; and
5. **Interconnection-Wide Scope** – Encourage Western Interconnection-wide planning over sub-regional planning.
6. **Dispute Resolution** – Encourage use of WECC dispute resolution processes.
7. **Collaboration with Regulators** – Transmission plans will be developed in close collaboration with regulators to facilitate the implementation of energy policy, information sharing, and enhance and streamline project permitting, financing and construction.
8. **Avoid Duplication** - NTTG will perform technical study work that is not duplicative of work done by others and will rely as much as possible on the technical studies conducted by project sponsors and studies conducted in other forums.
9. **Share Workload** - Members of NTTG will share the study work. In general, members will study the areas where they have an interest. The results of the individual work will be shared with NTTG.

**Footprint/Coordination:**

The core transmission planning footprint includes portions of the states of Idaho, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Oregon and Nevada. Transmission plans will be coordinated with neighboring states and countries through:

1. **Interconnection Wide:** The Western Electric Coordinating Council's Transmission Expansion Planning Policy Committee (TEPPC).
2. **Canada:** The Northwest Transmission Assessment Committee (NTAC);
3. **Washington and Oregon:** The Northwest Transmission Assessment Committee (NTAC) and Columbia Grid;
4. **California:** The California Independent System Operator and through direct contact with other California entities such as the California Department of Water Resources;
5. **Colorado:** The Colorado Coordinated Planning Group (CCPG);
6. **Arizona and New Mexico:** The Southwest Area Transmission Study (SWAT) and WestConnect; and

**Planning Process**

### **Phase 1a – Identification of “Fast Track” Projects**

The first phase will identify projects where there is a clear near-term need. The intent is to move these projects forward quickly so that they do not need to wait for the full implementation of the continuing (Phase 2) NTTG planning process. In Phase 1, the following tasks will be completed:

1. Review existing integrated resource planning (IRP) documents and other plans to determine the potential for joint transmission projects that may better meet the overall resource integration needs than the individual utility plans.
2. Review past studies and available data to identify areas where transmission congestion is an impediment to the efficient operation of the grid. As part of the review, the transmission providers will be asked to disclose the basic criteria, assumptions, and data that underlie the transmission studies.
3. Review information available through Western Electric Coordination Council (WECC) and other sources about future projects and the needs of other regions that may affect the NTTG footprint.
4. Review input from the ATC working Group concerning the contractual needs of individual entities.

The work is intended to be completed primarily by the transmission owners in the footprint utilities with input from all interested stakeholders. After completing this work, the NTTG Planning group will prepare a report identifying specific projects, if any, whose development should be fast tracked.

### **Phase 1b – Project Facilitation**

After identification of Fast Track Projects and production of adequate transmission plans, the planning group will facilitate their implementation. However, project participation agreements, financing, permitting, and construction are ultimately the responsibility of the individual project participants.

### **Phase 2a – Comprehensive Transmission Plan**

The planning group will biennially prepare a long-term (10 years) bulk transmission expansion plan. The plan will provide strategic transmission options (economic and reliability projects) and specific alternative plans for reinforcing the transmission system. The plan is also intended to help coordinate the integration of new generation into the system and to reduce transmission congestion.

Specifically, the comprehensive transmission plan and/or planning process will:

1. Identify transmission needs of transmission customers (e.g., point-to-point, network, and retail native load).

- a. Native load needs will be incorporated by coordinating with the various integrated resource planning (IRP) processes. Network transmission customers will be asked to submit information on their projected loads and resources on a comparable basis (e.g., planning horizon and format). The intent will be to plan for all end-use loads on a comparable basis.
  - b. Each transmission provider's point-to-point customers will be asked to submit any projections they have of a need for service over the planning horizon and at what receipt and delivery points.
2. Identify transmission congestion that is an impediment to the efficient operation of electricity markets. Congestion on the existing and planned system will be reviewed and evaluated. In addition, the impacts on congestion of potential new generation facilities or new transmission projects will be considered. This is expected to include production simulation studies.
3. Work with TEPPC to include the needs of other sub-regions and support WECC transmission planning.

The work is intended to be completed primarily by the transmission owners in the footprint utilities with input from all interested stakeholders. After completing this need analysis, the planning group will prepare a comprehensive transmission plan.

### **Phase 2b – Project Facilitation**

After production of adequate transmission plans, the planning group will facilitate project implementation. However, project participation agreements, financing, permitting, and construction are ultimately the responsibility of the individual project participants.