

# Charter for the Technical Review Committee Supporting the Building a Better Grid Initiative's National Transmission Planning Study

## Preamble

This stakeholder process has been developed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), together the “Labs”, and approved by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to support the National Transmission Planning (NTP) Study component of DOE’s Building a Better Grid Initiative, described in its [Notice of Intent](#) published January 19, 2022.<sup>1</sup> The goals of the NTP Study are to identify transmission that will provide broad-scale benefits to electric customers; inform regional and interregional transmission planning processes; and identify interregional and national strategies to accelerate decarbonization while maintaining system reliability.

Public engagement is a critical component of the NTP Study and includes four coordinated tracks: (1) national webinars to inform the public of the project; (2) outreach to existing national and regional organizations to leverage existing meetings with key stakeholder groups to seek technical information from individual attendees and share key findings; (3) tribal outreach to seek the input of interested tribes in NTP Study process; and (4) a structured stakeholder process consisting of a Technical Review Committee (TRC) with subcommittees and working groups.

This Charter describes the structure and function of the TRC process. Committee members (“Members”) are invited and selected by the Labs, subject to the approval of DOE, based on the criteria described in this Charter to ensure sufficient representation geographically and sectorally. The Labs also act as the Secretariat for the committees. Public engagement in the full TRC meetings is modeled after the approach taken by Regional Transmission Organizations, where Members participate in public meetings and non-members may observe. Through this approach, interested members of the public will be able to listen to webcast meetings. In addition, there will be a provision for the public to submit questions or comments that will inform the discussion. With the assistance of the Labs, DOE staff will participate in TRC meetings.

DOE and the Labs will use this process to exchange information and obtain data and other factual information to support their conduct of the NTP Study. DOE and the Labs will not use this process to solicit advice on federal policy or to arrive at a group position or consensus. Because the purpose of this stakeholder structure is informational and not advisory, there is no voting structure. DOE, with the assistance of the Labs, will make the final determination as to whether and how information is used, after considering comments by Members.

When inviting Members to the TRC, DOE and the Labs will coordinate with existing national and interconnection-wide organizations including the Western Electricity Coordinating Council, the Eastern Interconnection Planning Collaborative, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the National Association of State Energy Officials, and the National Governors Association that currently convene interested parties around transmission planning. DOE and the Labs may also seek input and data directly from these existing organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> 87 FR 2769.

Members may not discuss any topic that violates or that might appear to violate antitrust laws, including but not limited to any activity that might unreasonably restrain competition. Members who are market competitors cannot use their participation in this process to fix prices, boycott a third party, divide markets or customers, limit or allocate production, or in any other manner monopolize, attempt to monopolize, or conspire to monopolize.

## Secretariat

The Labs shall function as the secretariat for this stakeholder process. In this role the Labs shall:

- Report regularly to DOE about stakeholder activities, and when required shall prepare written summaries of stakeholder activities for use by DOE;
- Recruit Members for the TRC, consistent with the guidelines set forth in this Charter, and endeavoring to promote broad regional and sectoral participation, subject to the approval of DOE;
- Schedule and publish meetings of the TRC, subcommittees, and working groups;
- Prepare and distribute agendas for all public meetings of the TRC, subcommittees, and working groups;
- As appropriate, invite subject matter experts to prepare presentations on specific topics;
- Manage webinars for all public meetings of the TRC, subcommittees, and working groups, including chat monitoring and procedures for public observer submission of written comments;
- Consistent with DOE policies and cybersecurity guidelines, develop public project updates, schedules and agendas for stakeholder meetings for publication on DOE's website, and secure any required data transfer.

## Stakeholder Participation Structure

Members may expect to participate in as many as one virtual committee meeting per month, review and comment on NTP Study work products (drafts of milestone documents every four to six months), and solicit supporting expertise from their regions or sectors as Members deem useful. In addition, DOE and the Labs may ask individual Members to confer on specific questions, either directly or as part of a temporary Working Group.

Selection of Members will be based on technical qualifications, prior experience in transmission planning processes, availability to participate in scheduled meetings, and on their ability to articulate the overall perspectives of the sectors in which they are active. Members should avoid using their participation in the TRC or its subcommittees to advance individual commercial interests.

## Technical Review Committee

The *Technical Review Committee* (TRC) considers information related to how all NTP Study analytical components converge. TRC membership comprises all Members of the Government, Modeling, and Environmental Exclusion and Land Use Subcommittees.

## Subcommittees

Subcommittees consider detailed information on technical modeling assumptions and on issues related to environmental exclusion and land use. A government subcommittee will provide information on relevant state and federal policies represented in power system modeling. Subcommittees will include regional representation, defined as corresponding to planning regions used by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for matters related to FERC Order 1000. DOE and the Labs may convene regional Subcommittee meetings to allow Members to focus on issues specific to a region. DOE and the Labs, taking into account input from Members, may invite subject matter experts to participate in specific meetings as may be beneficial for conducting the NTP Study.

The Labs will invite the following organizations to nominate Members to the *Government Subcommittee*.

- New England Council of Public Utilities Commissioners, New York State Public Service Commission, Organization of PJM States, Organization of MISO States, Southwest Power Pool Regional State Committee, and the California Public Utilities Commission, Texas Public Utilities Commission.
- Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (representing Florida, South Carolina, and states included in the Order 1000 Southeastern Regional Transmission Planning area).
- Western Conference of Public Service Commissioners (representing the NorthernGrid and WestConnect regions).
- National Governors' Association.
- National Association of State Energy Offices.

In addition, representatives from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other regulatory bodies may be invited to attend and participate consistent with any restrictions they may have.

The *Modeling Subcommittee* shall provide information on data, assumptions, and methodologies used in the project's capacity expansion modeling, production cost modeling, power flow modeling, and other technical simulations. Members are expected to: represent the technical perspectives of their regions or industries; communicate activities in this project to others in their regions or industries; participate in committee meetings; possess experience in power system modeling; and when necessary, assist DOE and the Labs in obtaining data or other information necessary for the NTP Study. Candidates will be determined through both self-nomination and invitation, based in part on knowledge and expertise on existing and emerging power system and transmission system needs, power system modeling knowledge and expertise, knowledge of existing and emerging grid and power electronics technologies and capabilities, a history of active participation in recent transmission modeling efforts (e.g., participation in North American Transmission Forum, RTO transmission planning stakeholder calls, etc.), and interest and availability. Membership shall include:

- At least one transmission provider from each FERC Order 1000 planning region and ERCOT ("provider" means an RTO or a transmission utility providing service under a FERC-approved open-access transmission tariff).
- Load-serving entities, among which there will be both diversity in geographic location and annual net load, and who are not affiliated with a Member who is a transmission provider.
- Independent power system modelers from academic institutions.
- Balanced industry representation among energy production and management technologies whose characteristics are crucial to accurate NTP Study modeling, including (but not necessarily limited to) transmission, wind, solar, nuclear, carbon capture and sequestration, hydrogen, and battery storage technologies.
- Governmental or non-governmental advanced/clean grid professionals who have knowledge of other studies that address needs and opportunities for national transmission planning.

The *Environmental Exclusion and Land Use Subcommittee* shall provide general information on issues affecting the location of transmission and power generators. In addition to land constraints considered in project modeling, this Subcommittee's work may relate to the NTP Study's Interregional Renewable Energy Zone subtask and will be general in nature. Specific detailed transmission routes or generation sites will not be determined. In addition to the below categorical criteria, Membership will be selected to consider diversity in both geographic location and constituent representation (e.g., county, state, federal, rural, urban, etc.). Membership shall include:

- General environmental interests with expertise in geospatial information systems.
- Historic and cultural preservation organizations with expertise in land use databases.
- Local planners and siting offices.
- State wildlife offices.
- Federal land management offices.
- Federal fish and wildlife entity.
- Federal transportation organization.
- Federal organizations concerned with energy siting and water impacts.
- Legal scholars with expertise in federal rights of way and environmental justice.

### Working Groups

DOE and the Labs may form temporary Working Groups that will focus on specific aspects of the NTP Study. A Working Group may include members of one or more Subcommittees as well as invited subject matter experts and may focus on one or more regions.