

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission****Notice of Commissioner and Staff Attendance at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners 2012 Winter Committee Meetings**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) hereby gives notice that members of the Commission and/or Commission staff may attend the following meetings:

FERC/National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), Collaboratives on Smart Response and Emerging Issues, February 5, 2012 (8:30 a.m.–12 p.m.), Renaissance Washington Hotel, 999 Ninth Street NW., Washington, DC 20001.

FERC/NARUC Forum on Reliability and the Environment, February 7, 2012 (2:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.), Renaissance Washington Hotel, 999 Ninth Street NW., Washington, DC 20001.

Further information may be found at <http://winter.narucmeetings.org/program.cfm>.

The discussions at these meetings, which are open to the public, may

address matters at issue in the following Commission proceedings:

Docket No. EL11–62–000, Public Service Commission of South Carolina and the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff
Docket No. AD12–1–000, Commission Role Regarding Environmental Protection Agency's Mercury and Air Toxics Standards

Dated: January 31, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2012–2573 Filed 2–3–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Project No. 12711–005]

Ocean Renewable Power Company Maine, LLC; Notice of Staff Participation in Meeting

On February 15, 2012, Office of Energy Projects staff will participate in a meeting with representatives from Ocean Renewable Power Company Maine, LLC at the Federal Energy

Regulatory Commission's (Commission) Washington, DC office to discuss the draft license articles provided in the Commission's environmental assessment issued on January 4, 2012, for the Cobscook Bay Tidal Energy Project No. 12711.

A teleconference line will be made available for parties wishing to participate. Details on the teleconference are provided below:

Date: February 15, 2012.

Time: 1 p.m.

Call-in Number: (877) 857–1347.

Meeting ID: 12711.

Password: 12711.

For further information please contact Timothy Konnert at (202) 502–6359, or email at timothy.konnert@ferc.gov.

Dated: January 31, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2012–2571 Filed 2–3–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission****Notice of Workshop**

	Docket No.
Allocation of Capacity on New Merchant Transmission Projects and New Cost-Based, Participant-Funded Transmission Projects	AD12–9–000
Priority Rights to New Participant-Funded Transmission	AD11–11–000
Puget Sound Energy, Inc	EL10–72–001
National Grid Transmission Services Corporation Bangor Hydro Electric Company	EL11–49–000
Rock Island Clean Line LLC	ER12–365–000

Take notice that Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) staff will convene a workshop to obtain input on potential reforms to the Commission's policies governing the allocation of capacity on new merchant transmission projects and new cost-based, participant-funded electric transmission projects. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, February 28, 2012, from 9 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. (EST), at the offices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426. Members of the Commission may attend.

Advance registration is not required, but is encouraged. You may register at the following Web page: <https://www.ferc.gov/whats-new/registration/capacity-workshop-2-28-12-form.asp>.

Attached to this notice is an agenda for the workshop. If any changes are made, the revised agenda will be posted prior to the event on the Calendar of

Events on the Commission's Web site, www.ferc.gov.

This workshop is not intended to address the substance of any particular case pending before the Commission. However, out of an abundance of caution, notice is hereby given that discussions at the workshop may touch upon matters at issue in the above-referenced individual proceedings that are either pending or within their rehearing period.

The format of the workshop is a facilitated discussion with those persons attending the workshop. As such, there will be no panelists or presentations from participants. We encourage people to attend in person. However, if that is not possible, the Commission will provide a listen-only line. If you need a listen-only line, please email Sarah McKinley (Sarah.McKinley@ferc.gov) by 5 p.m. (EST) on Thursday, February 23, with your name, email, and phone number,

in order to receive the call-in information the day before the conference. Please use the following text for the subject line, "AD12–9–000 listen-only line registration."

The workshop will not be transcribed nor webcast. The Commission will be accepting comments following the workshop from all interested parties. Comments will be due within 30 days of the workshop.

FERC workshops are accessible under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For accessibility accommodations please send an email to accessibility@ferc.gov or call toll free (866) 208–3372 (voice) or (202) 502–8659 (TTY), or send a fax to (202) 208–2106 with the requested accommodations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Andrew Weinstein (Legal Information),
Federal Energy Regulatory
Commission, Office of the General

Counsel, 888 First Street NE.,
Washington, DC 20426, (202) 502–
6230, andrew.weinstein@ferc.gov.

Becky Robinson (Technical
Information), Federal Energy
Regulatory Commission, Office of
Energy Policy & Innovation, 888 First
Street NE., Washington, DC 20426,
(202) 502–8868,
becky.robinson@ferc.gov.

Dated: January 31, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.



Allocation of Capacity on New Merchant Transmission Projects and New Cost-Based, Participant-Funded Transmission Projects

AD12–9–000

February 28, 2012

Agenda

9–9:15 a.m. Welcome and Opening
Remarks

In March 2011, the Commission convened a conference to examine, among other things, the process of allocating transmission capacity of new transmission projects, including projects by merchant transmission developers at negotiated rates¹ and participant-funded projects being developed by incumbent public utility transmission providers and nonincumbent transmission developers at cost-of-service based rates.² Having analyzed the discussion and comments received, Commission staff is reviewing a range of more specific policy reforms that the Commission may wish to consider. The purpose of this workshop is to obtain input on possible policy reforms, balancing open access principles with the needs of transmission developers to reasonably allocate capacity created by new merchant transmission projects and new cost-based, participant-funded transmission projects. Each session will consist of a facilitated dialogue; there

will be no panelists or presentations by participants.

9:15–11:15 a.m. Session 1: Merchant
Transmission Projects

Commission staff seeks to explore the merits of potential reforms to the Commission's policies governing negotiated rate authority for merchant transmission projects. Prior to the *Chinook* order in 2009, the Commission required that all merchant transmission capacity be allocated during an open season. In *Chinook* and subsequent proceedings, the Commission has permitted flexible capacity allocations on a case-by-case basis with some share of capacity allowed for anchor customer presubscriptions and the remainder being allocated in a subsequent open season. In *SunZia*,³ the Commission rejected a request to allocate 100 percent of a line's capacity to anchor customers, finding that the applicant did not provide sufficient justification to support that allocation. The Commission, however, did not foreclose the possibility that an applicant could propose and justify a 100 percent capacity allocation to anchor customers. During a technical conference held in March 2011 in Docket No. AD11–11–000, several commenters suggested that the Commission allow 100 percent of a line's capacity to be allocated to an anchor customer.⁴

Staff seeks comment regarding whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to return to the pre-*Chinook* requirement for open seasons as the means to allocate all capacity on a merchant transmission line, but also to allow for distinctions among prospective customers in the open season based on transparent and not unduly discriminatory criteria, with the possible result that a single customer could be awarded up to 100 percent of capacity. Staff also wants to explore the use of the terms open season and anchor customer as used by industry. While petitioners have characterized certain parties as anchor customers, staff has noticed that at times the process used to select these looks like what staff would consider an open season. In evaluating whether this policy change would be an appropriate action for the Commission, participants are encouraged to consider the following questions:

1. Would the above-noted approach provide similar benefits as presubscription of anchor customers? If not, in what ways does presubscription

of anchor customers enable a project to succeed that are not also satisfied by allocating up to 100 percent of capacity through an open season, including to a single customer?

2. In the event of an oversubscription in an open season, would it be appropriate for the Commission to clarify that there is no obligation to prorate capacity allocations where bids are distinguishable by transparent and not unduly discriminatory criteria, such as creditworthiness, term of service sought, price bid, and net present value?

3. What criteria should the Commission use in evaluating whether a developer has appropriately sized a line?

4. Given the protections afforded by the open season process, should the Commission permit affiliates of the merchant transmission developer to be awarded up to 100 percent of capacity in the open season?

5. What are the characteristics of a well-designed open season process? Are there lessons learned from the use of open seasons for natural gas pipeline development that are relevant to merchant development of electric transmission?

6. Are the existing open season reporting requirements adequate to provide transparency as to how capacity rights are allocated?

7. Should the Commission retain its practice of considering responses to requests for proposals (RFP) by a merchant transmission developer to satisfy open season requirements, provided that any capacity in excess of the RFP amount be allocated through an open season?⁵

11:15 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Session 2: Cost-
Based, Participant-Funded
Transmission Projects

Staff also seeks to explore the merits of potential reforms to Commission policies regarding the development of participant-funded transmission projects at cost-based rates. In recent years, the Commission has received innovative proposals from transmission developers seeking to construct facilities for the use of specific customers in exchange for recovering the cost of the facilities from those customers.⁶ To date, the Commission has not required the use of open seasons for customer solicitation for these projects, nor has it required transmission providers to follow service request procedures set

¹ See, e.g., *Chinook Power Transmission, LLC*, 126 FERC ¶ 61,134 (2009) (*Chinook*).

² See, e.g., *Northeast Utilities Service Co. and NSTAR Electric Co., LLC*, 127 FERC ¶ 61,179, reh'g denied, 129 FERC ¶ 61,279 (2009) (*NU/NSTAR*); *Grasslands Renewable Energy, LLC*, 133 FERC ¶ 61,225 (2010) (*Grasslands*).

³ *SunZia Transmission, LLC*, 131 FERC ¶ 61,162 (2010).

⁴ *Priority Rights to New Participant-Funded Transmission*, March 15, 2011 Technical Conference, AD11–11–000. Tr. 21:24, 45:2.

⁵ See *Hudson Transmission Partners, LLC*, 135 FERC ¶ 61,104 (2011).

⁶ See *NU/NSTAR and Grasslands*.

forth in the *pro forma* Open Access Transmission Tariff (OATT).

As the Commission receives similar proposals in the future, staff anticipates that questions of customer access to capacity for such cost-based projects will arise. In resolving these questions, staff also anticipates that the nature of the transmission developer may be relevant, with potential distinctions made between incumbent public utility transmission providers and nonincumbent transmission developers.⁷ With regard to incumbent public utility transmission providers, staff seeks comment regarding whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to adopt a policy requiring such entities to use service request and transmission planning rules contained in their OATTs for the development of all new transmission facilities. With regard to nonincumbent transmission developers, staff seeks comment on whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to adopt a policy requiring such entities to allocate capacity on new cost-based, participant-funded projects pursuant to an open season, similar to the development of merchant transmission projects.⁸ In evaluating whether these would be appropriate actions for the Commission, participants are encouraged to consider the following questions:

1. Would it be appropriate for the Commission to distinguish for this purpose between incumbent public utility transmission providers and nonincumbent transmission developers, given that the former have a set of rules in place to govern the processing of service requests and planning of grid expansion, while the latter do not?
2. Is requiring incumbent public utility transmission providers to use the service request and transmission planning rules contained in their OATTs when allocating capacity on cost-based, participant-funded lines necessary to ensure transparent planning of transmission expansion?
3. Would requiring incumbent public utility transmission providers to use the service request and transmission

planning rules contained in their OATTs when allocating capacity on cost-based, participant-funded lines undermine the ability of some projects to succeed? If so, how?

4. Is requiring nonincumbent transmission developers to allocate capacity on cost-based, participant-funded projects through an open season necessary to ensure that such developers have sufficient information to make appropriate sizing decisions and avoid undue discrimination among customers?

5. Would requiring nonincumbent transmission developers to allocate capacity on cost-based, participant-funded projects through an open season undermine the ability of some projects to succeed? If so, how?

6. For purposes of allocating capacity on cost-based, participant-funded projects, would it be appropriate for the Commission to treat a nonincumbent transmission developer as an incumbent public utility transmission provider once it energizes transmission facilities? 1–1:15 p.m. Wrap-Up

[FR Doc. 2012–2575 Filed 2–3–12; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OW–FRL–9627–4]

Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act; Availability of BEACH Act Grants

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: Section 406(b) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) as amended by the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act authorizes EPA to award program development and implementation grants to eligible states, territories, tribes, and local governments to support microbiological monitoring and public notification of the potential for exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in coastal recreation waters, including the Great Lakes. EPA encourages coastal and Great Lakes states and tribes that have received BEACH Act grants in the past to apply for BEACH Act grants to implement effective and comprehensive coastal recreation water monitoring and public notification programs (“implementation grants”). EPA also encourages eligible coastal and Great Lakes tribes to apply for BEACH Act grants to develop effective and comprehensive coastal recreation water monitoring and public

notification programs (“development grants”). This notice announces the availability of BEACH Act grants for fiscal year 2012 and also describes the requirements associated with the receipt of BEACH Act grants for fiscal year 2012 and future years, if funds are appropriated by Congress.

DATES: States, Erie County, Pennsylvania, and tribes that previously received BEACH Act grants must submit applications for fiscal year 2012 grants on or before April 6, 2012. Other eligible tribes should notify the relevant EPA Regional BEACH Act grant coordinator of their interest in applying for a grant on or before March 22, 2012. Upon receipt of a tribe’s notice of interest, EPA will establish an appropriate application deadline.

ADDRESSES: You must send your application to the appropriate EPA Regional grant coordinator listed in this notice under Section VI, Grant Coordinators.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lars Wilcut, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., (4305T), Washington, DC 20460. Telephone: (202) 566–0447. Email: wilcut.lars@epa.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

What are BEACH Act Grants?

The Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act of 2000 amends the Clean Water Act (CWA) to better protect public health at our nation’s beaches through improved water quality standards and beach monitoring and notification programs. The BEACH Act added Section 406 to the CWA to authorize EPA to award grants to develop and implement monitoring and public notification programs for coastal recreation waters. Currently, 34 states, two tribes, and one local government (Erie County, Pennsylvania) operate beach monitoring and notification programs using BEACH Act grant funds.

What is the statutory authority for BEACH Act Grants and what are the performance criteria?

The general statutory authority for BEACH Act grants is section 406(b) of the Clean Water Act, as amended by the BEACH Act, Public Law 106–284, 114 Stat. 970 (2000). It provides that, “(T)he Administrator may make grants to States and local governments to develop and implement programs for monitoring and notification for coastal recreation waters adjacent to beaches or similar points of access that are used by the public.” CWA section 406(b)(2)(A), however,

⁷ Nonincumbent transmission developers include a transmission developer that does not currently have a retail distribution service territory or footprint as well as public utility transmission providers proposing transmission projects outside of their existing retail distribution service territory or footprint. A similar distinction was made in Order No. 1000, *Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation by Transmission Owning and Operating Public Utilities*, Order No. 1000, 136 FERC ¶ 61,051 at P 225 (2011).

⁸ In the alternative, the nonincumbent transmission developer could use the service request and transmission planning rules of the *pro forma* OATT to allocate capacity on a project, even where the developer is not yet a public utility.