# Background

The Western Transmission Expansion Coalition (WestTEC) is a West-wide effort to develop an actionable transmission plan to support the needs of the future energy grid. This effort was initiated to address a widely recognized concern that current transmission planning frameworks in the West do not result in sufficient transmission solutions to address regional and inter-regional needs.

West-wide coordination and collaboration is at heart of the WestTEC effort and robust engagement across the impacted region and across all sectors is required to achieve the overall objectives and goals of WestTEC. The Regional Engagement Committee (REC) is the primary regional partner committee led by West-wide representatives of various industry sectors, including consumer-owned utilities, independent power producers, independent transmission companies, public interest organizations, consumer advocates, Tribes, and representatives of the WestTEC Steering Committee.

The REC is responsible for reviewing scopes of work for technical studies, study proposals and other deliverables, and for providing feedback and recommendations to the WestTEC Assessment and Technical Taskforce (WATT) and Steering Committee. In addition, in coordination with the Steering Committee, the REC will promote engagement by creating meaningful opportunities to both share information developed by WestTEC with the public and to receive, evaluate, and bring valuable feedback to its decision makers and technical committees.

The REC, Steering, and WATT committees may form sub-teams within their respective committees, or across committees. Cross-committee teams will work collaboratively together to ensure the scope of the sub-team is clear, there is appropriate cross functional representation and committee chairs are in agreement to its scope and engagement. The Steering Committee will also consider sub-team formation with respect to scope of work and budget impacts.

The Steering Committee is WestTEC’s primary decision-making body, working with and taking input from the REC and providing guidance to the WATT. The WATT is the technical committee responsible for developing and proposing the study scope and approach for the transmission plan.

# Objectives

The key objectives of the REC are twofold:

1. **Provide input to the Steering Committee and WATT on technical proposals:**
The REC will be responsible for reviewing proposals, scopes of work for scenarios and development zone, draft plans, etc., and providing feedback on the appropriateness of scenarios and data proposed as well as ensuring that scenarios and data are in alignment. The REC will provide feedback to the WATT and make recommendations to Steering Committee.
2. **Solicit and facilitate engagement with the public on WestTEC’s efforts:**
The development of the study plan and the technical studies contemplated by WestTEC have several stages where both sharing information and soliciting input from the public will be necessary. The Steering Committee will hold the primary responsibility for hosting public webinars and facilitating public feedback on the study plan and technical studies contemplated by WestTEC. The Steering Committee will work closely with the REC on these efforts through the Communication and Regional Partners Subcommittee. The Steering Committee will develop a **Project Charter and Regional Partners Engagement Plan**, with REC support, that identifies the key milestones and opportunities for public engagement aligned with the technical scope and objectives. This plan will be subject to approval by the Steering Committee.

# Deliverables

* Support the development of the Project Charter and Regional Partners Engagement Plan The key elements of this plan will include:
	1. Committee roles in public engagement efforts
	2. Cadence/timing of public webinars to share information with the region
	3. Public comment opportunities (timing and how many) and process for comment review
	4. Project schedule with highlighted engagement opportunities

Review and feedback on proposals, scopes of work for scenarios and development zone, draft plans, etc. developed by WATT.

# Resources

The Western Power Pool (WPP) and consultant will provide project management and meeting facilitation support to the REC. WPP will work collaboratively with the REC to create agendas to keep the effort on schedule and to coordinate support from other resources. Additionally, the WPP will provide and maintain a web-based collaborative platform site for use by the committee. This site will capture past documentation, ongoing documentation work, meeting minutes and meeting recordings. WPP, with the communications sub-team will coordinate external communications regarding progress of the REC (press releases, public meetings, as appropriate).

# Procedures

## Meetings

REC meetings will typically be held monthly. Additional meetings may also be required with advance notice. REC meeting minutes, recordings, and works in progress will be communicated with the REC through a web-based collaborative platform site for the committee.

WATT co-chairs and the Steering Committee will be invited to REC meetings to further cross-communication and awareness between committees.

All REC meetings will be open to the public, however, public participants who are not members of WestTEC committees, will be in listen-only mode until the public comment section of the meeting (last 10 minutes of the meeting). REC meetings will be noticed in advance on the WPP website and through the WestTEC public email list. REC meeting minutes will be posted to the WPP website.

## Quorum

Quorum is not required for the REC.

## Representative Term Minimum

Current REC representatives are highly encouraged (but not required) to serve through the duration of the project (anticipated through Q3 2026.)

In the event that a sector representative resigns, the designated alternate will act as the interim representative in place of the resignee until another representative is selected by the respective sector. The resignee will inform their sector that designation of a new representative is necessary at the time of resignation.

## Co-Chairs

Co-Chairs will be determined by the sitting membership of the REC but cannot be an existing Steering Committee member.

The duties of the co-chairs will include, in partnership with consultant facilitator:

1. Development of meeting agendas
2. Facilitation of meetings, ensuring committee members are given time to speak and contribute as appropriate, discretion to allow public comment
3. Working to ensure that meeting and committee objectives are achieved
4. Calling a special meeting outside regular schedule with advance notice
5. Closing part of meeting as necessary to discuss sensitive materials.

During the course of discussions and debates, it is recognized that the co-chairs will sometimes need to represent views or considerations particular to their sector. Whenever a co-chair is expressing their particular sector views or considerations, they will make their best efforts to note this to the committee.

The co-chairs will be supported by WPP staff and consultants to fulfill their duties.

## Decision Making

While the Steering Committee is the primary decision-making committee, the REC has a significant role in providing feedback on technical materials to WATT and Steering. There will be opportunities for REC to provide informal and formal written input to WATT and the Steering Committee and there may be opportunities to provide consensus-based recommendations. In these scenarios, the REC will strive for and will act on the consensus of its members. However, in the event that consensus cannot be obtained, a majority and minority opinion can be shared with other committees/groups.

## Working Together (Principles of Engagement)

REC representatives will strive to represent their respective sectors while working in the best interest of meeting WestTEC’s objectives. A spirit of collaboration will govern discussions, and the REC will strive to manage cordially through conflicts and differences of opinion. Consistent attendance and engagement at meetings by the identified representative are critical.

# Communications

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Management Team and Co-Chair | The REC will work with the WPP Project Management team and consultants on routine logistical issues |
| REC representatives to their sectors | It is the responsibility of the sector representatives to provide two-way communication between their sectors and the REC to ensure accurate representation of the sectors’ needs and concerns. Such communications will be consistent with any REC confidentiality expectations |
| Among REC representatives | Communications among the REC representatives are encouraged as appropriate; all issues coming before the REC for recommendation should be discussed in the full REC forum. The REC will strive to perform most of its discussions in its meetings but may make use of email dialogue as appropriate. These discussions may be utilized as official records. |

# Schedule

# The REC will provide feedback to WATT and the Steering Committee in accordance with the overall WestTEC project plan informed by WATT and approved by the Steering Committee. The high-level project schedule is as follows:

**April 2024-August 2024**
Develop Study Plan

**August 2024-October 2026**
Complete actionable transmission plan (detail to be developed after completion of study plan).

Details of the public engagement process and timing will be developed in the Project Charter and Regional Partners Engagement Plan and in accordance with the project schedule informed by WATT and approved by the Steering Committee.

# REC Composition

The REC’s members represent various industry sectors, including consumer-owned utilities, independent power producers, independent transmission companies, public interest organizations, consumer advocates, and Tribes. To ensure continuity between committees, there are also four official representatives of the Steering Committee serving on the REC. (All members of the Steering Committee are invited to REC meetings.)

# Appendix A

## Current Representation

**Regional Engagement Committee Sectors and Members**

The current composition of the REC is as follows[[1]](#footnote-2):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sector** | **Organization** | **Representative** |
| Consumer-Owned Utilities | Whatcom County PUD | Chris Heimgartner |
| Northwest Requirements Utilities | Matt Schroettnig |
| Colorado River Energy Distributors Association | Leslie James |
| PNGC | Erin ErbenMelissa Buchler (Alternate) |
| Public Interest Organizations | Western Resource Advocates | Vijay Satyal |
| Natural Resources Defense Council | Angus Duncan |
| Clean Energy Transition Institute | Eileen V. QuigleyJeanne Currie (Alternate) |
| NW Energy Coalition | Fred Heutte  |
| Ratepayer Advocacy Organization Representatives (residential and small commercial) | Wyoming Office of Consumer Advocates | Anthony Ornelas |
| Public Advocates Office at the California Public Utilities Commission | Kanya Dorland |
| Tribes | From the Light Consulting LLC | Donald Williams |
| Navajo Transitional Energy Company | Connie Paoletti |
| Independent Transmission Companies | Grid United | Gimod Mathew |
| GridLiance | Robb Davis |
| Pattern Energy | Cameron Yourkowski |
| LS Power | Sharon Segner |
| Independent Power Producers | Avangrid Renewables | Tashiana Wangler |
| EDF Renewables | Eusebio Arballo |
| Savion | Mark Walter |
| Aypa Power | Andrew BreyerNihit Shah (Alternate) |
| Industrial Customer Representatives (large commercial) | Clean Energy Buyers Association | Bryn Baker  |
| Steering Committee Leadership | PacifiCorp | Kris Bremer |
| Bonneville Power Administration | Ravi Aggarwal |
| Western Electricity Coordinating Council | Kris Raper |

1. As determined on January 21, 2025. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)