# 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. WestTEC is being jointly facilitated by the Northwest Power Pool d/b/a Western Power Pool (Western Power Pool or WPP) in partnership with the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) and is an industry-led effort which is supported by a thoughtful committee-based governance consisting of representatives from a broad array of regional partner and stakeholder interests and from the entire West.

The WestTEC Steering Committee is comprised of senior and executive leadership from diverse entities committed to the study effort. In addition, the Steering Committee includes a liaison representing State regulators named by the Committee on Regional Electric Cooperation’s Transmission Collaborative (CREPC-TC).

The WATT, Steering, and REC 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 responsible for resolving and making major decisions to structure the transmission plan and for providing its direction and guidance to the WestTEC Assessment Technical Task Force (WATT). While the Steering Committee will make decisions informing the transmission plan, it also carries the responsibility to collaborate with other committees organized to support the effort. The Steering Committee will work with the WATT, the Regional Engagement Committee (REC) and interested parties from the public on major elements of the study approach, including identification of renewable energy zones, resource expansion, electrification and load data, and scenario development. The WATT is the technical committee responsible for developing and proposing the study scope and approach for the transmission plan. The Regional Engagement Committee (REC) is the primary regional partners engagement body responsible for reviewing proposals, scopes of work for technical studies, draft plans, etc., and for providing feedback and making recommendations to the Steering Committee.

The meetings of the Steering Committee are closed meetings. The Steering Committee will engage public feedback through periodic public webinars and the Regional Engagement Committee meetings will be open to the public. Please see Appendix A for the complete list of committee and taskforce representatives.

# Objectives

The Steering Committee is responsible for resolving and making major decisions to structure the transmission plan and for providing its direction and guidance to the WATT. While the Steering Committee will make decisions informing the transmission plan, it also carries the responsibility to collaborate with other committees organized to support the effort and to partner with REC to engage the public. The Steering Committee has formed a Communication and Regional Partner Engagement Subcommittee for public engagement communication to partner with REC, ensuring consistent collaboration and joint ownership of managing public webinars and feedback.

# Deliverables

The Steering Committee is responsible for reviewing, approving, and determining final direction for all elements of the WestTEC effort, including the regional partners engagement plan, the study plan, and the final actionable transmission plan for both near-term and long-term planning efforts.

# Resources

The WPP and consultant will provide project management and meeting facilitation support to the Steering Committee. WPP will work collaboratively with the Steering Committee co-chairs to create agendas to keep the effort on schedule and to coordinate support from other resources and committees. Additionally, 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 staff will coordinate external communications regarding progress of the WestTEC project (press releases, public meetings, as appropriate).

# Procedures

## Meetings

Steering Committee meetings will typically be held twice a month. Additional replacement meetings may also be required with advance notice. Steering Committee meeting minutes, meeting recordings and works in progress will be communicated with the Steering Committee through use of a web-based collaborative platform site for use by the committee. Steering Committee meetings are not open to the public; regular engagement with the public will be conducted through the REC.

## Quorum

## Quorum is not required for the Steering Committee.

## Representative Term Minimum

Current Steering Committee 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.

If additional regional partners are interested in joining the WestTEC effort mid-process, Co-Chairs for the respective committee will make a recommendation to the Steering Committee for a new member to join. The Steering Committee will approve added members. If a new member joins, they are expected to join in and continue the process forward, and will raise any concerns noticed with previous decisions to the Co-Chairs, if applicable. The committee Co-Chairs will determine if any concerns need to be addressed. Co-Chairs

Co-Chairs will be determined by the sitting membership of the Steering Committee.

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

The Steering Committee is responsible for making all major decisions and for approving WestTEC deliverables. The Steering Committee will strive for and will act on the consensus of its members. However, in the event consensus cannot be obtained, voting procedures will be utilized. Steering Committee members are eligible to vote on matters before the Steering Committee. Each entity represented on the Steering Committee may only designate a single representative to vote, and a super majority of 75% is required for a voted decision to carry forward. If a vote doesn’t carry, the minority position will provide a report describing their position, with a recommended alternative option to move forward. The Co-Chairs will determine if a re-vote needs to be held for another meeting to enable further discussion. If significant disagreement persists following voting, the Steering Committee Co-Chairs will be responsible for making a decision.

If a vote is required, a non-binding polling system will be utilized. Members who are not present will be allowed to vote electronically. Votes will be due in two (2) business days and the results of the polls will be communicated to the Committee by the co-chairs on the third business day.

## Working together (principles of engagement)

Steering Committee representatives will strive to represent the best interest of meeting WestTEC’s objectives. A spirit of collaboration will govern discussions, and the Steering Committee 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 Steering Committee will work with the WPP Project Management team and consultants on routine logistical issues |
| Amongst Steering Committee representatives | Communications among the Steering Committee representatives are encouraged as appropriate; all issues coming before the Steering Committee for recommendation should be discussed in the full Steering Committee forum. The Steering Committee 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 Steering Committee in accordance with the overall WestTEC project plan will engage feedback from REC and WATT. 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)

# Steering Composition

The Steering Committee includes senior or executive leadership from a diverse group of entities, including a liaison representing State regulators named by the Western Interstate Energy Board.

# Appendix A

## Current Representation

Co-Chairs: Kelsey Martinez (PNM) and John D. Martinsen (Snohomish PUD)

**Steering Committee Members**

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Company** | **First Name** | **Last Name** | **Primary/ Alternate** |
| Bonneville Power Administration | Ravi | Aggarwal | Primary |
| Portland General Electric | Larry | Bekkedahl | Primary |
| Portland General Electric | Jennifer | Galaway | Alternate |
| PacifiCorp | Richard | Vail | Primary |
| PacifiCorp | Kris | Bremer | Alternate |
| Snohomish PUD | John D. | Martinsen | Primary |
| Puget Sound Energy | Jens | Nedrud | Primary |
| Idaho Power Company | Jared | Ellsworth | Primary |
| Avista | Mike | Magruder | Primary |
| NorthWestern | Michael | Cashell | Primary |
| NorthWestern | Thomas  | Pankratz | Alternate |
| NV Energy | Charlie | Pottey | Primary |
| Southwest Power Pool | Casey | Cathey | Primary |
| Southwest Power Pool | Tony  | Green | Alternate |
| GridWorks/State Liaison | Rich | Glick | Primary |
| Western Interstate Energy Board/ State Liaison | Robin | Arnold | Alternate |
| Western Electricity Coordinating Council | Branden | Sudduth | Primary |
| Western Electricity Coordinating Council | Kris | Raper | Alternate |
| InterWest | Ben | Fitch-Fleischmann | Primary |
| Renewable Northwest | Kyle | Unruh | Primary |
| Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee | Crystal | Ball | Primary |
| WestConnect | Heidi | Pacini | Primary |
| WestConnect | Charles | Reinhold | Alternate |
| Arizona Public Service | Sarah | Kist | Primary |
| Public Service Company of New Mexico | Kelsey | Martinez | Primary |
| Western Area Power Administration | Paul | Schwabe | Primary |
| Western Area Power Administration | Tina | Ko | Alternate  |
| Salt River Project | Nate | Tate | Primary |
| Xcel Energy | Stephen | Martz | Primary |
| California ISO | Neil | Millar | Primary |
| California ISO  | Danielle  | Mills | Alternate |
| Powerex | Michael | McWilliams | Primary |
| Powerex | Dan  | O’Hearn | Alternate |
| Northwest & Intermountain Power Producers Coalition  | Spencer | Gray | Primary |
| Public Power Council | Scott | Simms | Primary |
| Public Power Council | Lauren | Tenney Denison | Alternate |
| Warm Springs Power & Water Enterprises | Cathy | Ehli | Primary |
| Warm Springs Power & Water Enterprises | Edison | Elizeh | Alternate |
| Colorado River Energy Distributors Association | Leslie | James | Primary  |
| Pattern Energy | Cameron | Yourkowski | Primary  |
| GridLiance | Robb | Davis | Primary  |
| Invenergy | Ajay | Pappu | Primary  |
| LS Power | Sharon | Segner | Primary  |
| Cascade Renewable Transmission | Jeff | Wood | Primary  |
| Cascade Renewable Transmission | Corey  | Kupersmith | Alternate |

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