



## **Minutes for Conservation Resources Advisory Committee February 26, 2026**

Kevin Smit, NPWCC, began the meeting at 1:30 by asking Christian Douglass, NWPC, to take roll call.

### **Treatment of EE Measures with Short Measure Lives**

Emily Gilroy, WA UTC, asked if the measures on [Slide 7] represent 200kW per year or 200kWh across the life of the measure. Smit said it's 200kWh per year every year.

Jim Lazar, independent, asked: Does behavioral energy use reduction meet the statutory definition of "conservation in the Act?" in the question pane. Jennifer Light, NWPC, answered: This issue is broader than behavior. But to the question on behavior, there are aspects that do meet the definition of conservation. This is something we will chat about later in this presentation if there is time. Lazar then wrote: "Conservation" means any reduction in electric power consumption as a result of increases in the efficiency of energy use, production, or distribution.

Michael Coe, Snohomish PUD, asked: Is the 200 kWh for the full measure life or first year savings? In the questions pane.

Quentin Nesbitt, Idaho Power, explained how he pays the incentive for Measure 1 once and maybe again at year 18 and while Measure 5 is paid for over and over. Nesbitt said the rate is low for the one-year measure and thought the issue might be with Council staff assumptions about replacement. Nesbitt said that is not true unless, like in Measure 5, the utility reinvests.

Smit said there is a cost assumed at the end of each measure life, even for Measure 1, but the utility usually pays to maintain those savings. Nesbitt understood but was not entirely pleased. Smit said this gets into persistence.

Sarah Widder, NEEA, thought the problem was well-outlined, calling it more of an accounting rather than a resource issue. Widder explained further, saying the lifetime could be infinite and it was important to come up with a way to treat this.

Nolan Kelly, BPA, asked for more clarity on the bullet on [Slide 4] that said, "savings that are not incremental do not reduce load." Smit agreed it was confusing, saying it's about one-year measure life and not repeating the same kWh.

Widder said the second bullet on this slide has the same problem. Widder insisted that this is a resource that need to be accounted for. Smit agreed.

Kelly said he understood but called for clarity around the word “savings.” Smit agreed.

Lazar said this work was done decades ago in the early years of the RTF. Lazar pointed to Measure 2 as example, saying that when it was time to replace the widget there would be no poor choices left to replace it with. Lazar said behavioral savings need maintenance and then talked about commissioning and re-commissioning, calling it a valuable resource that needs attention.

Lazar agreed that load flexibility needs continual investment even though the Act does not define it as conservation. Smit thanked him for his good points.

David Tripamer, BPA, said the example on [Slide 20] was purposefully abstract, but argued that the type of measure is important. Tripamer explained that a widget is different than homeowner behavior which may not continue in perpetuity. Smit understood the point but said a behavior program encourages reduced consumption and the utility is paying to maintain the reduction.

Tripamer probed the question, asking if it was reasonable to assume the energy use would jump back without maintenance. Smit said that is the question. Tripamer said there is some anchoring at the 2000kWh per home as opposed to 100kWh. Smit agreed.

Lazar wrote: If my kid goes to college, and my usage goes down, that is not efficiency. If I retire and stay home all day with the heating/cooling running, my house uses more energy, but that is not inefficiency. In the question pane.

Kelly wrote: Is the assumption of 'no snapback on re-install' mandated by the Power Act? in the question pane. Light wrote: Not required by the Power Act. It is a matter of how we do planning, connecting to load forecasting, and what we are representing in what the resource is. This is a good conversation that might be worth a deeper dive with the Council team at some point.

Nesbitt thought this was an accounting issue and said Idaho Power’s potential study doesn’t look like this slide. Nesbitt explained how his utility approaches the issue for their potential study. Nesbitt thought this might be an issue with how Council staff incorporate utility data and suggested some fixes. Smit said this is the goal, but staff needed more information about what is incremental. Nesbitt agreed that there are reporting issues that need to be addressed.

Kim Boynton, Avista Corp, pointed out that homeowners come and go but widgets remain. Boynton then said that behavioral changes need reinvestment as cohorts change, adding that these are people not widgets.

Douglass agreed, explaining that staff know it’s not the same measure but called it the same resource.

Thomas Elzinga, Central Electric Cooperative, was confused about what kind of measure life Home Energy Reports have if not one year. Elzinga wondered how durable they would be without the investment.

Jennifer Finnigan, Seattle City Light, wrote: *Tomas - Seattle City Light had home energy reports for years, and then stopped the program pre-COVID. We did do some studies after HER ended and saw lingering savings.* in the question pane.

Widder thought it would be helpful to call these Operational Resources and separating them from the accounting. Widder admitted that this doesn't solve the durability or investment issue and thought some research might help. Smit said that sounds like a job for NEEA. Smit admitted that he didn't have good numbers or costs for the measures and asked for resources. Smit then spoke about how accounting could work in ProCost.

Nesbitt explained that his utility didn't use ProCost before outlining how Idaho Power approaches the issue.

Light said she is hearing two different issues and asked that they be split. Light said there talk about the problem with behavior programs and a pure accounting issue with short-lived measures. Light suggested focusing on the accounting issue for now for clarity.

Elzinga said the CEC doesn't think you "save 4000kWh in year two" [Slide 20], but 2000kWh plus any incremental savings. Elzinga saw no difference between a one-year measure life and a two or three-year measure, saying this must be an accounting issue. Smit agreed that it might be an issue of how these savings are reported to the Council. Elzinga added that he agreed that persistence is key to maintain these kind of savings.

Sofya Atitsogbe, WA UTC, addressed accounting in the IRPs, saying her staff is also getting two inputs with inflation on the Conservation Plan relative to the IRP side. Atitsogbe then said the Energy Independence Act doesn't integrate with the IRP stature resulting in utilities showing big savings. Atitsogbe said both are inflated and Home Energy Reports (HERs) are a cheap program that causes this illusion.

Atitsogbe asked how Council staff are thinking about structuring the commitment around HERs, saying 20 years is a generation and people can reliably be taught behaviors over that time span. Atitsogbe then asked if the savings are significant enough to put in the IRP. Smit reminded her that the forecasts are for 20 years, but the Region updates every five. Smit said that means the baseline is reset every five years. Smit also said that the action plan covers the next six years and that's where there is a strong need for accuracy.

Emily Gilroy, WA UTC, wrote: *It almost seems to me like short measure life items are closer to traditional generation than other conservation measures are. Considering the idea of this conservation as a resource being "leased" or a "subscription." Not sure how to reconcile this idea with how we plan.* in the question pane.

Gilroy then wrote: Maybe savings needs to be attributed to the specific actions suggested in the report rather than the report itself?

Frank Brown, BPA, spoke about a Bonneville program from the 1980s that showed the electric bill in real time. Brown said there was participation in this program and explained how savings were accounted for. Smit called this approach interesting.

Lazar moved to [Slide 23], saying most of these savings are not conservation as defined in the Act. Lazar then referenced Atitsogbe's comment saying he starts a diet every new year for the last 20 years and loses 20 pounds but does not weigh 400 pounds less than he did 20 years ago.

Lazar then said washing clothes in cold water is not conservation but buying a better washing machine is. Lazar said program evaluators need to measure conservation as defined by the Act versus load reductions.

Lazar concluded by pointing to rate levels, saying people will use less energy in response to big rate increases. Lazar said the response will be a mix of elasticity (turning down the thermostat) and conservation (installing better windows), adding that there is still lots of opportunity to get that conservation. Smit said this is also on staffs' minds.

Kelly noted that Smit outlined ways to fix the accounting issue [Slide 24] but said some of those approaches are highly dependent on implementation. Kelly then asked about a supply curve workbook for behavior, wondering if this will be in the Ninth Plan. Kelly added that BPA would like a supply curve workbook for behavioral changes. Smit confirmed that this measure will not be in the Ninth Plan, largely because of Lazar's earlier point.

Kelly pointed to the difference between conservation and curtailment, asking if it's conservation if BPA incents the purchase of a washing machine and a person, who didn't have a washing machine before, buys one.

Light moved to the behavior supply curve saying a lot of actions in the remaining supply curves could be behaviors and staff didn't want to double count.

Light then said the incentive is not causing a consumer to buy a washing machine but moving them to a more efficient option and the load forecast picks up changes over time. Nolan was not sure this made sense. Light answered that staff thought a lot about this issue and asked to talk more offline. Kelly said okay before stressing that he would still like to see a supply curve workbook for behavior.

Lazar wrote: Savings need to be attributed to distinct actions taken. If those actions achieve greater efficiency in energy end-use, those actions have helped achieve conservation. in the question pane. Lazar then wrote: If the customer incented to buy an efficient washer previously used a less efficient way to wash their clothes, yes, that is conservation. If they did not previously wash their clothes as all (pheww!) maybe not.

Tripamer said [Slide 20] made sense with widgets but not behavioral programs, adding that he thought some behavioral programs are true conservation, using a smart thermostat as example. Smit agreed.

Widder hesitated to define conservation too narrowly, pointing to commercial strategic energy management. Widder said it is possible to be flexible as we're looking for an outcome, which in the washing machine example is clean clothes.

Widder added that this is similar to DR and load flex, which she called a real resource that needs to be used. Smit agreed, saying DR is a resource but not conservation.

Finnigan asked about next steps and results [Slide 25]. Smit said the next step is what's happening with the Regional Conservation Progress Report, adding that RTF team is working on adjustments for next year. Smit said staff will probably reach back out to utilities with that soon.

Finnigan asked what staff learned from this conversation and what the role of the CRAC is, saying she heard a lot of opinions but no consensus. Smit agreed saying the goal was to educate the CRAC on staff perspective and get on the same page as far as tracking and reporting. Smit said it sounds like a lot of utilities understand the issue and the point was not to come up with solutions yet.

Bonnie Watson, BPA, wrote: Jennifer, BPA is doing a couple of evaluations on behavioral programs in 2026. Reach out if you want details! in the question pane.

Nesbitt suggested fixing the accounting. Smit said thanks.

Douglass reminded the room that stakeholders are often siloed and this was a way to get the region together. Douglass the said these are really big numbers that require accuracy and attention.

Smit asked members to follow up with an email or phone call and ended the meeting at 3:00.

Questions from Craig Patterson, independent, were:

Why do the HVAC programs show very little benefits?

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE IS A PROPER FEED BACK LOOP FOR DETERMINING ACCURACY OF ENERGY SAVINGS.

## Attendees via Zoom Webinar

Jennifer Light	NWPCC	John Stalnaker	BPA
Kevin Smit	NWPCC	Nolan Kelly	BPA
Christian Douglass	NWPCC	Kyle Morrill	Energy Trust of Oregon
Emily Gilroy	WA UTC	Bonnie Wtson	BPA
Jim Lazar	independent	Andrew Grant	Cadmus Group
Chris Johnson	Benton PUD	Ted Light	Lighthouse Energy
Michael Coe	Snohomish PUD	Kim Boynton	Avista Corp
Sophia Spencer	Nauvoo Solutions	Trevor Frick	Clark PUD
Sofya Atitsogbe	WA UTC	Hope Lobkowicz	BPA
Jennifer Snyder	WA UTC	David Tripamer	BPA
Frank Brown	BPA	Sarah Widder	NEEA
Kyla Kelsay	BPA	Jeff Harris	NEEA
Heather Nicholson	Orcas Power & Light	Quentin Nesbitt	Idaho Power
Jonathon Belmont	BPA	Jennifer Finnigan	Seattle City Light
Thomas Elzinga	California Energy Com	Leah Kim	Tacoma Power
Lonnie Junderson	Tacoma Power	Elizabeth Osborne	NWPCC
Debbie DePetris	Clark PUD	Angelena Bohman	WA UTC
Arielle Magliulo	Cadmus Group	Shailesh Shere	Clallam PUD
Craig Patterson	independent		