Northwest **Power** and **Conservation** Council

Minutes for Systems Analysis Advisory Committee
May 6, 2026

John Ollis, NWPCC, began the meeting at 9:00am, pointing to both the amount to work ahead and the minutes from the last meeting. Chad Madron, NWPCC, explained how to best interact with the Zoom webinar platform. Ollis called for introductions.

Modeling Corrections

Aliza Seelig, PNUCC, asked about the set-up of OptGen, expressing curiosity about the double counting [Slide 3]. She confirmed that the same inputs were used, expect for the adequacy credit. Tomás Morrissey, NWPCC, said the model co-optimizes, explaining the process. He said staff gave credit for the gas portion while the coal plant had no credits for reserves or firm energy. He said this meant the model didn't see the coal plant.

Seelig asked if the model, from an economic standpoint, selected to build it. Morrissey said the gas unit was a must-take resource while the coal unit was left on in the background. He said it made market prices a little cheaper but didn't impact what the model was picking for resources.

Ollis stressed that this was only in the market build out once and was pulled out. Morrissey added that staff used the information available at the time.

Garcia asked if the far-right column on [Slide 4] includes the Centralia fix. Morrissey answered no, explaining that they are discreet fixes designed to see individual impacts. Garcia then asked what happens if both fixes are made, wondering if the changes would be more pronounced. Morrissey said staff did not test that.

Seelig agreed that the differences look small, except for solar. She wondered about the wide variety of load and if resource adequacy need is the driver versus economics. Seelig asked what gives staff the comfort that the model isn't stuck in a local minimum versus global minimum.

Morrissey had the same impression that the model is building for resource adequacy and policy while still meeting firm energy targets and reserves.

Ollis addressed local minimum versus global minimum, saying the models are solving to a gap, which means you are within a certain percentage of a global minimum. He said you could solve to a smaller gap but if the costs are marginal then the decisions are marginal.

Garcia again asked what would happen if staff fixed both issues [Slide 5]. He questioned how to interpret the information as they haven't been fixed together, wondering if there would be a 20MW difference. Morrissey didn't know as they haven't been run together but felt results would fall into the noise bin.

Garcia was concerned that there are two fixes that show a not inconsequential change, wondering if the answer would fall outside the error bound if both fixes were made. Morrissey called the point fair. Ollis added that the analysis is not the Plan.

Garcia asked if the fixes significantly affect the location of the resources, wondering if more granular information is obscured by the collective numbers presented [Slide 6]. Morrissey said staff sees more thermals go into Washington, but the wind build doesn't change.

Elizabeth Hossner, PSE, wondered how gas plants in Washington meets state policy. Morrissey said CETA is modeled in two different ways, an annual energy target and social cost of carbon associated with Washington's net load. He admitted this is not as granular as PSE would use.

Hossner cautioned staff to be careful about where the energy is coming from post 2045. Morrissey explained that staff cannot tag that in the model. Hossner asked where the gas plants are going, adding that there are a lot of them. Morrissey stated they're mostly going into Idaho and Montana with some in Washington.

Hossner asked if the Washington plants convert to a different fuel. Morrissey answered that they stay on gas. Ollis explained how staff accounted for Washington. Hossner confirmed that staff are not doing anything with Washington gas post 2045. Ollis confirmed. Hossner thought it might be a good test to look other assumptions, especially resource adequacy post 2045.

Hossner then added that sometimes individual fixes get results, but things can get interactive between the fixes. She thought testing the fixes together could change results.

Garcia thought it would be helpful to run both fixes at the same time [Slide 8] as it would give peace of mind. He then referenced the challenges of getting power across the Cascades, pointing to an area that will have a problem maintaining grid reliability. He said staff should emphasis, and not just note, the westward shift of thermal resources.

Additional Power Plan Resource Strategy Analysis Results

Seelig asked if the hydro ops tax credits are the same as resources and transmission risk except for the change in federal policy [Slide 8]. Ollis said it's the other way around, moving to [Slide 7] to explain that the hydro ops are under the old policy while the federal policy is a way to test for the fish and wildlife program.

Jennifer Light, NWPCC, noted that the reason for this strategy had to do with the timing of the analysis, which started before the One, Big, Beautiful Bill was passed.

Garcia noted that utilities are challenged to build anything, voicing concern about accomplishing this by 2032 or 2046. He said, in the spirit of both following state policy and informing policy makers, if staff could provide perspective on what would happen to grid reliability if these resources are not acquired. Ollis said he has heard this concern from others which is why staff set up the sensitivities as they did. Ollis said, in general, all the sensitivities met adequacy by 2032, and this shows a path to maintain an adequate system. Finally, Ollis said the Council Members are considering other risks as well.

Garcia did not disagree with any of the characterizations but was concerned about what would happen if local politics meant you could only build some gas or no wind. Ollis said the constrained world scenario is similar to those concerns. Ollis assured Garcia that his concerns will be passed to Council Members.

Seelig said she was thinking about these results in relationship with PNUCC's 2026 NW Regional forecast and seeing how those 58,000MW of supply side resources add up. She called this the lower hanging fruit and wondered about the data center load.

Seelig thought staff could do optimizations under different load growth trajectories wondering if running 2046 under the mixed growth bag would give a better range. Ollis said that we don't know what is going to happen and we're in a place where it would be nice to optimize on any load growth future, adding that people are building into uncertainty. Ollis called this a "least regrets" environment. Seelig thought this would offer better understanding of the locational value of resources/policies.

Light said Council Members have already expressed interest in runs where we don't plan for the adequacy of data centers. She said the runs are not out to 2046 but are a way to inform a strategy and action. Seelig countered that only running it to 2032 will not give as much locational value.

Devin Mounts, PGE, called it valuable to see these trends which are similar to E3's analysis. Mounts asked about the tax credit assumptions across the sensitivities. Ollis reviewed the assumptions.

BREAK

Seelig noted the connection to WECC on [Slide 29]. She thought WECC used constant demand and confirmed that the changing demand is just for the northwest. Ollis confirmed that only regional demand changes.

Seelig then confirmed that gas prices and volatility change for the entire WECC. Morrissey confirmed that gas prices and volatility change. Seelig then asked about generation. Ollis said the variable energy resources change, offering to get back to her on hydro.

Sibyl Geiselman, Public Generating Pool, asked why emission costs look so similar across the chart. Ollis answered that the emissions costs are related to places where there are emissions prices, adding that these are regional, Washington-associated emissions costs.

Geiselman thought that by 2046 Washington was supposed to have a no-emission portfolio. She wondered if this was policy compliant, pointing to the E3 study which looked different. Ollis addressed CETA saying the model met the requirement for firm, annual energy.

Seelig confirmed that these are the transmission+ sensitivities. Light said it is market price for typical days averaged across zones and all sensitivities.

John Crider, EWEB, wrote; Do you have a similar chart showing max hour/ min hour volatility, in the question pane. Ollis answered no but said he has slides that explore volatility coming up.

Crider asked what technology is assigned when the model is estimating the dynamic probabilistic reserve [Slide 32]. Ollis said it has to be hydro, thermal, or batteries. Ollis added that EE and DR can be used to lower the amount required on an overall reserve. Ollis admitted that staff can do more with the treatment of DR next time.

Crider confirmed that the model output confirms which units are assigned for reserve capability. Ollis said yes, staff can assign reserve candidate resources. Crider asked if OptGen can co-optimize when batteries are used for reserves versus load/time shift. Ollis answered yes.

Crider asked if staff took wavers for environmental policies during most critical hours into account [Slide 38]. Morrissey answered no, adding that this looks at annual average utilization and some months have higher levels of utilization. Ollis moved to [Slide 45] to show generation by month and location.

Seelig noted December versus January/February on [Slide 45] proposing that average utilization is higher because it is a single month. Ollis said maybe, adding there is really nothing different about December. He added that spring will have a lower capacity factor than summer or winter.

Ollis ended the meeting at 12:30.

Attendees via Zoom Webinar

Dor Hirsh Bar Gai	NWPCC	Alexandra Karpoff	Puget Sound Energy
Jennifer Light	NWPCC	Frank Brown	BPA
Tomás Morrissey	NWPCC	Rebecca Klein	Seattle City Light
John Ollis	NWPCC	Gordon Matthews	independent
Daniel Hua	NWPCC	Doug Grob	NWPCC (member)
Steven Simmons	NPWCC	Philip Mote	Oregon State
Nicolas Garcia	WPUDA	Jess Kincaid	PNNL
Pat Byrne	BPA	Brian Dekiep	NWPCC
Ryan Bottem	PGP	Elizabeth Hossner	PSE
Ian McGetrick	Idaho Power	Paul Barrager	WA UTC
Verene Martin	Seattle City Light	Annika Roberts	NWPCC
Devin Mounts	PGE	Aliza Seelig	PNUCC
Sibyl Geiselman	PGP	Eric Graessley	BPA
John Purvis	Clallam PUD	Jared Hansen	Idaho Power
John Lyons	Avista	John Crider	EWEB

Kaitryn Olson	PSE	Mike Swirsky	CRITFC
Fred Heutte	NW Energy Coalition	Christopher White	PGE
Nolan Kelly	BPA		