



NWPPA August Recess Talking Points

August 2023

NWPPA represents over 150 not-for-profit electric utilities: municipalities, cooperatives, and public/peoples' utility districts in 10 western states (Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) and British Columbia, Canada. Our member utilities are owned by the people we serve, in communities large and small, and we value local decision-making. Many NWPPA members operate federally licensed hydropower facilities and/or receive federal hydropower from Bonneville Power Administration or Western Area Power Administration. Many of our members are located in areas of highest risk for wildfire in the country.

Permitting Reform

NWPPA appreciates the reforms enacted to reduce delays in the federal permitting process, but more needs to be done, especially for hydropower projects. **NWPPA supports additional reforms to the permitting process** to facilitate electric generation, transmission, and to facilitate integration of additional clean and renewable energy resources into the electric grid.

- **NWPPA supports Rep. McMorris Rodgers' bill, H.R. 4045, the Hydropower Clean Energy Future Act**, which would confirm that hydropower is an essential renewable energy resource and **streamline the hydropower relicensing process**, including identifying FERC as the lead agency to coordinate federal reviews; establishing firm schedules and timelines for permitting completions; and exempting certain closed-loop pumped storage and small hydropower projects from the federal licensing process.

Reduce Supply Chain Constraints for Transformer Production

The Department of Energy has proposed new energy conservation standards for distribution transformers that would exacerbate existing supply chain challenges while barely increasing energy efficiency. Supply chain delays already threaten utilities' ability to acquire grid components needed to respond to extreme weather events and address other customer needs.

- **NWPPA opposes the proposed DOE rulemaking and urges Congress to support and pass S. 2036 (introduced by Sen. John Barrasso) and H.R. 4167 (introduced by Rep. Richard Hudson)**, which would prohibit DOE from issuing revised energy conservation rules for distribution transformers for the next five years.

Seek Utilities' Expertise in Considering Impacts of EPA Greenhouse Gas Regulations

The Environmental Protection Agency proposed new regulations for greenhouse gas emissions for power plants that threaten utilities' ability to provide affordable, reliable electric service to consumers. The new regulations will require carbon capture and storage technology that is not yet in operation at any U.S. plant and creates challenges for continued reliability of the electric grid.

- **NWPPA urges congressional oversight of the EPA as it seeks to implement these aggressive regulations**, and to provide time and flexibility to utilities to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets in order to mitigate reliability and affordability impacts to electric consumers.

- **NWPPA urges Congress and the administration to give strong consideration to electric utilities' expertise** as they work to determine the best system of emissions reduction based on adequately demonstrated technology.

Continued Support for Wildfire Prevention and Suppression

NWPPA appreciates the influx of funding for forest management and wildfire prevention activities and programs provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Along with increased funding for forest treatments, wildfire prevention, and fire suppression activities, the federal land management agencies—specifically the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management—must work with utilities to further implement the 2018 vegetation management law that facilitates fire prevention activities near utility rights of way on federal lands.

- **NWPPA urges Congress to provide adequate funding for wildfire suppression, as well as active forest management and wildfire prevention activities** that include vegetation management on and near utility rights of way, building fire breaks, and other actions that help reduce the catastrophic impacts of wildfires in forested areas.
- **NWPPA supports increasing the staff and focus of federal land management agencies to ensure that they expedite the review and approval process for vegetation management plans, forest treatments, and other fire prevention efforts.**