

WILDFIRES:

WHAT UTILITIES NEED TO KNOW

January 25–26, 2023, in SeaTac, Wash.



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

11 a.m.

Registration opens

Noon

Welcome (box lunch provided)

Scott Corwin, Executive Director, Northwest Public Power Association

12:30 p.m.

Keynote: USFS and the Path Ahead

Jim DeMaagd, Deputy Regional Forester - Region 6, U.S. Forest Service

1:20 p.m.

Using Downed Conductor Algorithms in Three-Wire Systems

Terron Hatch, Lead Creative Technical Support Engineer, Hubbell Power Systems

2 p.m.

How AI Can Make Drones Smarter

Susan Rossbach, CEO, Brains4Drones

2:20 p.m.

Break

2:40 p.m.

Wildfire Causation, Risks, and Insurance

Phil Irwin, President & CEO, Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange

3:10 p.m.

Fire Risk and Analytics

[Risk and Data for Mitigation Planning](#)

Richard Reed, Senior Solutions Manager, Technosylva

[Daily Situational Awareness and Prevention](#)

Keith Koenig, Head of Business Development, WeatherFlow-Tempest

4:10 p.m.

DIY Fire Risk Analysis Using GIS and Public Data

Sephe Fox, GIS Analyst, Clatskanie PUD

4:30 p.m.

Fire Alerts, Public Partnerships, and Federal Funding

Nick Maggio, Ph.D., Assistant Director - Wildfire Technology, Oregon Hazards Lab at University of Oregon

5 p.m.

Evening reception

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

8 a.m.

Hosted breakfast

8:30 a.m.

The Portland General Electric Approach

Moderator: Scott Corwin, Executive Director, Northwest Public Power Association

Panelists: Maria Pope, President & CEO, PGE; Bill Messner, Director - Wildfire Mitigation and Resiliency, PGE; and Arvind Satyam, Chief Commercial Officer, Pano

9:45 a.m.

Break

10 a.m.

Western States' Experience—Planning and Power Shutoffs

Tom Green, Director, Energy Strategies LLC

Heide Caswell, Administrator - Utility Safety, Reliability, and Security, Oregon Public Utility Commission

10:35 a.m.

System Hardening—New Directions in Utility Poles

[Going Metal](#)

Aaron Loosli, Regional Sales Manager - West, McWane Poles

[All Wrapped Up](#)

Dean Anderson, Director - U.S. Pole Sales, Stella-Jones

11:15 a.m.

Utility Leader Roundtable: Lessons Learned and Hot Topics

Moderator: Scott Corwin, Executive Director, Northwest Public Power Association

Panelists: Keith Brooks, General Manager, Douglas Electric Cooperative; Paul Hauser, General Manager, Trinity PUD; Richard Wallen, General Manager/CEO, Grant County PUD; and Kirk Hudson, General Manager, Chelan County PUD

12:15 p.m.

Wrap up and evaluations

SPEAKERS

SCOTT CORWIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NORTHWEST PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

Scott Corwin is executive director of the Northwest Public Power Association, which provides education, training, communications, government relations, and other value-added services to over 150 utility members in nine western states and British Columbia. Previously, he was executive director of the Public Power Council for 12 years. Corwin has also worked for PNGC Power, Portland General Electric, the Speaker's Office of the Oregon House of Representatives, and in various positions with the U.S. Senate in Washington, D.C.



Corwin graduated from Dartmouth College, has a law degree from the University of Washington, and is a member of the Oregon Bar Association and the District of Columbia Bar Association. He has served on numerous industry task forces, has been an expert witness before Congress, and served on various charitable and community boards. He has also served on national advisory committees to APPA and NRECA.

JIM DEMAAGD, DEPUTY REGIONAL FORESTER - REGION 6, U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Jim DeMaagd is the deputy regional forester for the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service, Region 6, which covers the geographic areas of Washington and Oregon. He came to the position after serving as chief of staff for the regional forester in Region 6, and he has held multiple other positions over his 29-year career with the agency. Before starting his career with the Forest Service, he worked five seasons as a wildland fire fighter with CAL FIRE. He is also an advanced agency administrator for fires. DeMaagd has a Bachelor of Science in geology from California State University at Chico and his wife, Billie Jo, is a budget analyst with the Bureau of Reclamation.



TERRON HATCH, LEAD CREATIVE TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINEER, HUBBELL POWER SYSTEMS

Terron Hatch is currently the lead creative technical support engineer for Hubbell, Beckwith division specializing in the M-7679 recloser control. He works closely with companies like PGE, PacifiCorp, Northrop Grumman, and others to provide account and technical support for any Beckwith products, especially the M-7679. Of many key features, Hatch mainly focuses on fire mitigation capabilities of the Beckwith units such as the SGI and BCD found in the M-7679.



SUSAN ROSSBACH, CEO, BRAINS4DRONES

Susan Rossbach is the co-founder of Brains4Drones, a woman-owned robotics company out of Dallas. Her first job out of engineering school was inspecting bridges. In one year, she climbed up and rowed under every state-owned municipal bridge in eastern Massachusetts equipped with a clipboard, a pencil, a measuring tape, and a film camera.



There had to be a better way! Her experiences as a QC engineer and construction project manager fueled her passion to build better inspection tools. Since 2016, her team has developed several drone-based solutions for the electric utility industry that keep inspectors safe and productive. To date, Brains4Drones has received \$1.4 million in funding from the Department of Energy; their most recent grant helps utilities detect issues before they start wildfires.

PHIL IRWIN, PRESIDENT & CEO, FEDERATED RURAL ELECTRIC INSURANCE EXCHANGE

Phil Irwin is president and CEO of Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange. He has 34 years with the company, where he also served as CFO and senior vice president of finance. He graduated from Kansas State University with a B.S. in accounting and is a CPA. He and his wife, Cheri, have three children and one granddaughter. Federated is the leading provider of property and casualty insurance for rural electric utilities. It is owned and directed by the rural utilities it serves and has insured rural utilities since 1959.



RICHARD REED, SENIOR SOLUTIONS MANAGER, TECHNOSYLVA

Richard Reed is a senior solutions manager at Technosylva, working with utilities in identifying tools that assist them with assessing wildfire risk for decision support around operations and mitigation planning. He has a bachelor's degree in atmospheric sciences and over 25 years in the commercial weather industry, specifically working with utilities and telecoms around data solutions for situational awareness and extreme weather events and wildfires.



KEITH KOENIG, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, WEATHERFLOW-TEMPEST

Keith Koenig is currently the head of business development at WeatherFlow-Tempest in charge of fostering partnerships to deliver better weather situational awareness at scale. He has recently worked with companies including Disney Resorts, Amazon Prime Air, SpaceX, and the U.S. Coast Guard—to name a few. Koenig and his team at WeatherFlow-Tempest are also partnering with regional utilities, emergency managers, and fire agencies across North America to deploy cost-efficient weather networks and to provide decision tools to help mitigate the impact of changing weather.



SEPHE FOX, GIS ANALYST, CLATSKANIE PUD

Sephe Fox is the GIS analyst at Clatskanie PUD and has great enthusiasm for the value and insight GIS can bring to an organization, especially in the area of wildfire mitigation. Before coming to the utility five years ago, Fox spent many years mapping wildland fires with the Oregon Department of Forestry, and has seen firsthand the devastation that fires can bring. She is a certified GIS professional and wildfire mitigation specialist. This combination of background and skills makes her passionate about helping utilities identify areas of their system at highest risk from utility-sparked fire so they can target mitigation efforts accordingly.



NICK MAGGIO, PH.D., ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - WILDFIRE TECHNOLOGY, OREGON HAZARDS LAB AT UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Dr. Nick Maggio is assistant director for wildfire technology at the Oregon Hazards Lab (OHAZ). OHAZ's mission is to mitigate multi-hazards within the Pacific Northwest as part of the ALERTWildfire consortium, the ShakeAlert earthquake early warning system, the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network, and the SAGE continuum. OHAZ operates a federated data network to drive scientific and technological solutions that serve a wide range of stakeholder partners. Maggio oversees wildfire-related planning, end-user engagement, technology development, engineering, and field operations for OHAZ. Previously, he was the director of research advanced computing services, the University of Oregon's high-performance computing facility.



MARIA POPE, PRESIDENT & CEO, PORTLAND GENERAL ELECTRIC

Maria Pope is president, chief executive officer, and a member of the board of directors of Portland General Electric, Oregon's largest electric company. Pope joined PGE in 2009 as chief financial officer and treasurer. She went on to oversee the company's power generation facilities, wholesale power marketing, and long-term resource strategy as senior vice president of power supply, operations, and resource strategy.



Pope represents the electric industry on the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board. Her other board work includes the Edison Electric Institute, Electric Power Research Institute, and others. Pope is an alumna of the Stanford Graduate School of Business and earned her bachelor's degree from Georgetown University.

BILL MESSNER, DIRECTOR - WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND RESILIENCY, PORTLAND GENERAL ELECTRIC

Bill Messner joined Portland General Electric in February 2014 as director of PGE’s newly centralized safety department. Since then, he has been the director of several departments. Most recently, in November 2020, he was named the director of wildfire mitigation and resiliency.



Messner joined PGE from Southern California Edison Co. in Rosemead, California, where he served as director and principal manager of the company’s corporate environmental, health, and safety department.

Messner has a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from California Polytechnic University Pomona, Juris Doctor from Suffolk Law School, and a master’s degree in business administration from University of California at Los Angeles.

ARVIND SATYAM, CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, PANO

Arvind Satyam leads a team that encompasses sales, marketing, customer success, strategic partnerships, and regulatory activities. Previously, he held executive roles in sales and business development for Cisco’s \$13 billion Public Sector, IoT, and Smart Cities businesses and executed venture investments, acquisitions, and strategic alliances for Cisco’s \$10 billion services and solutions business. Growing up in Sydney, Australia, and now living in the San Francisco Bay Area, fires are top of mind and he is passionate about bringing emerging tech solutions to this space. Satyam was selected as a young global leader by the World Economic Forum for his pioneering work in Smart Cities and innovation in sustainability.



TOM GREEN, DIRECTOR, ENERGY STRATEGIES LLC

Tom Green has over 40 years of experience in the electric utility industry. As a director with Energy Strategies, he supports transmission planning, generator interconnections, energy markets, and project management. Previously, he worked for Xcel Energy in the wildfire mitigation group where he supported the development and implementation of the Public Service Company of Colorado Wildfire Mitigation Plan. He also worked in transmission planning, where he managed and developed transmission plans to meet resource, compliance, strategic, and regulatory requirements. He has served as an expert witness and has held numerous leadership roles in western planning forums.



HEIDE CASWELL, ADMINISTRATOR - UTILITY SAFETY, RELIABILITY, AND SECURITY, OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Heide Caswell is the administrator - safety, reliability, and security at the Oregon Public Utility Commission. She has been involved in the utility business during and after receiving her Bachelor of Science in civil engineering at the University of Washington. She worked at Washington Natural Gas, Puget Sound Energy, and then PacifiCorp before transitioning to OPUC in 2022. Her roles have been primarily utility planning for gas and electric systems and then transitioning to reliability analysis, reporting, improvement, wildfire/ risk quantification and mitigation, and distribution system planning. She was a representative during California’s 10-year journey with wildfire mitigation rulemaking, representing PacifiCorp. She is heavily involved in industry standards and their development, playing a part in IEEE and NERC.



AARON LOOSLI, REGIONAL SALES MANAGER, MCWANE POLES

Aaron Loosli has worked for McWane for 17 years. As a second-generation employee, he is proud to be a part of the McWane family. He has held several positions over the years. He was formerly with McWane Ductile on the pipe side of the business but recently transferred to McWane Poles, which manufactures ductile iron utility poles for electric infrastructure. He loves getting to know the many different people that work with McWane products and cherishes the relationships he has formed both inside and outside of the company. He enjoys spending his free time golfing, hiking, and camping with his family.



DEAN ANDERSON, SR. DIRECTOR - U.S. POLE SALES, STELLA-JONES

In his role as senior director of U.S. Pole Sales, Dean Anderson is responsible for supporting 11 regional sales managers and managing Stella-Jones' relationship with some of the largest utilities in North America. He specializes in developing complex supply programs tailored specifically to the inventory, logistics, and service needs of these customers. Prior to his current role, Anderson served as product manager for Stella-Jones' southern yellow pine business, which has grown from approximately \$5 million in revenues in 2006 to over \$350 million in 2022.



Prior to his time with Stella-Jones, Anderson worked as customer relationship management and business consultant for 13 years. He resides in Lakebay, Washington, with his wife Lisa. He has two grown daughters, Kelly and Maddie.

KEITH BROOKS, GENERAL MANAGER, DOUGLAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Keith Brooks is the general manager of Douglas Electric Cooperative. He holds a bachelor's degree in business and serves on the boards of both PNGC and GenPac. Over the course of his 30-year career, he has held various positions such as staking engineer, GIS analyst, IT manager, member service manager, and finally GM/CEO. During his last five years at Douglas, he has seen the worst snowstorm in the company's history, with nearly 500 broken poles and 100% of DEC services out of power, followed by a worldwide pandemic, a supply chain crisis, record inflation, and the threat of wildfire looming large. Yet, somehow, he is still a happy person and optimistic about the future.



PAUL HAUSER, GENERAL MANAGER, TRINITY PUD

Paul Hauser has been the general manager for the Trinity Public Utilities District since September 2011. He also worked for the City of Redding, California, as their electric utility director and has been in California since 2005. He began his electric utility career in North Carolina with Duke Power Company in 1989 and has also managed municipal utilities in North Carolina and Missouri.



Hauser is a registered professional engineer with a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering from North Carolina State University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Missouri.

RICH WALLEN, GENERAL MANAGER/CEO, GRANT PUD

Rich Wallen joined Grant PUD in June 2017. His professional background includes 30 years of energy industry experience within nuclear, coal, gas, and hydro. He earned his bachelor's degree from West Virginia University and received a master's degree in business management from Clayton State University. He is a veteran of the U.S. Navy, where he served onboard the USS Enterprise as a nuclear power plant operator. He holds a project management professional certification.



KIRK HUDSON, GENERAL MANAGER, CHELAN COUNTY PUD

Kirk Hudson began serving as the general manager of Chelan County PUD in January 2022. He has 24 years of experience at Chelan County PUD and during that time has been responsible for generation and transmission, reliability compliance, engineering, project controls, electric distribution, warehousing, fleet services, customer service, water/wastewater, wholesale telecommunications operations, and natural resources.



Hudson is also the president and chairman of the board for the Hydropower Research Institute. Prior to joining Chelan County PUD, Hudson provided engineering and environmental consulting services in the Seattle and Tri-Cities areas of Washington. Hudson grew up in the Tri-Cities area of Eastern Washington and graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in civil engineering.

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