



# Regional Portfolio Advisory Committee

## Q3 2023 Meeting Notes Final

August 29, 2023

10:00am – 3:00pm PST

Hybrid, Online and at NEEA Office

### Meeting Attendees

#### Committee Members:

Whitney Jurenic, NorthWestern Energy  
Jim White, Chelan PUD  
Debbie DePetrus, Clark PUD  
Quentin Nesbitt, Idaho Power Company  
Phillip Kelsven, Bonneville Power Administration  
Fred Gordon, Energy Trust of Oregon  
Jeff Feinberg, Snohomish County PUD  
Danie Williams, NorthWestern Energy  
Roger Kainu, Oregon Department of Energy  
Peter Kernan, Oregon Public Utility Commission

Kevin Smit, Northwest Power and Conservation Council  
Jeff Tripp, Puget Sound Energy  
Jonathon Belmont, Bonneville Power Administration  
Alexa Bouvier, Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources  
Laura James, PacifiCorp  
Natasha Houldson, Tacoma Power  
Quentin Nesbitt, Idaho Power Company

NEEA Staff: Alisyn Maggiora, Becky Walker, Britt Cutsforth Dawkins, Brandon Lindquist, Emily Moore, Jeff Harris, Suzi Asmus, Ryan Brown, Peter Christeleit

### Resources

- Agenda Packet: [Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance \(NEEA\) | Q3 2023 RPAC Agenda...](#)
- Slide Deck: [Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance \(NEEA\) | Q3 2023 RPAC Meeting...](#)
- Recordings:
  - RPAC Part 1 – <https://vimeo.com/859177200>
  - RPAC Part 2 - <https://vimeo.com/859180432>

### Welcome, Introductions & Agenda Review

### Housekeeping and Looking Ahead

- Public Outreach on 2025 – 2029 Business Plans
  - Plans posted on [www.neea.org/plans](http://www.neea.org/plans)
  - Feedback review at September Board workshop
  - Final plans for vote at December Board Meeting
  - After plan is approved, contracting begins with funders
- 2024 Operations Plan Timeline
  - NEEA is in the middle of the 2024 Operations planning process
  - Draft plan will be emailed to the Board, RPAC, and NGAC on October 12. Feedback period will be from October 12 to November 1.

- There will be a single webinar for RPAC, NGAC, and the Board that goes through the high points of the Operations Plan.
- There will be an RPAC+ marketing portion for the final hour of the webinar
- Proposed Heat Pump Water Heater Consideration Campaign
  - Consumer awareness is growing. NEEA suggestion is to run a small-scale consideration campaign in 2024 with the purpose of moving consumers from awareness to consideration.
  - October 26 webinar will have a presentation of the proposed campaign and there will be an opportunity for feedback in November. There will be a campaign election vote at RPAC in Q1 2024 and the campaign is expected to run in Q2 2024.
- Leadership in Energy Efficiency awards will be on December 4. Nominations open now through September 15. Nomination categories are Rising Star, Innovative Collaboration, and Lifetime Achievement. Nominate at <https://neea.org/leadershipawards>
- Upcoming meetings
  - Q3 Board Meeting on September 12
  - 2024 Draft Operations Plan Webinar is October 26
  - Q4 RPAC Meeting on November 2
  - Draft 2024 RPAC meeting schedule is February 19, May 16, August 22, and November 5. May 20 may replace the May 16 date.

## Market Transformation 101

(Please refer to [slides](#) 16-42, the [packet](#) p.3, or the recording for additional detail)

### Overview

Jeff Harris of NEEA joined the meeting to continue his refresh for RPAC on the basics of Market Transformation. See Q2 topic notes for detailed description on what was covered in that session. In Q3, Jeff Harris further reviewed the steps for Market Transformation: Develop market characterization and baseline; identify barriers and opportunities; develop interventions and metrics; and intervene and manage adaptively. High first cost is an issue when consumers are actively seeking out the product; it is not the only barrier.

### Discussion:

**Jeff Feinberg (Snohomish PUD):** How might Market Transformation keep pace with the accelerating world of utilities?

**Jeff Harris (NEEA):** The needs for energy efficiency are increasing by the day. Collaboration as a region is the key to keep up. The forces that are leading to an increasing pace are also driving change and that is an opportunity for Market Transformation.

**Becky Walker (NEEA):** The balance between the short-term and long-term view for NEEA was a focus at the board-level while developing the new Strategic and Business Plans. There are areas highlighted in the Business Plan that are acceleration opportunities to help address the increasing pace.

**Fred Gordon (Energy Trust):** How can we be better at identifying when to stick with something and when to cut our losses?.

**Jeff Harris (NEEA):** Our Market Transformation efforts and stage gate process continuously provide us with learning opportunities on when to move on.

**Becky Walker (NEEA):** One of the benefits of the alliance is risk pooling. Failing faster with that risk would be beneficial.

## Refresher: RPAC Voting Process

(Please refer to [slides](#) 46-48, the [packet](#) p.4, or the recording for additional detail)

### Overview

Alisyn Maggiora reviewed the RPAC voting process for the benefit of the group. An RPAC voting member can vote Yes, No, or Abstain. One may also be Present but Not Voting or Not Present. In advance, NEEA works to draw out any show-stopper questions. The RPAC charter provides for a transparent process to achieving unanimous consent when needed and guidance on next steps.

## RPAC Vote: Advanced Heat Pumps (AHP) “Program Advancement”

(Please refer to [slides](#) 49-60, the [packet](#) p.5-20, or the recording for additional detail)

### Overview

Emily Moore provided context of the program before the Program Advancement vote for AHP. Program Advancement means that NEEA and the RPAC voters are feeling confident and ready to begin market interventions. Emily also went through the program’s savings potential, portfolio risk (measured on a 0-6 scale) and the impact to the portfolio. Suzi Asmus presented on the AHP program’s Market Transformation approach. Interventions are primarily looking to get more savings from improved equipment performance. Suzi also summarized and responded to comments from RPAC members. Suzi also acknowledged that the program name is changing from Variable Speed Heat Pumps to Advanced Heat Pumps to include other heat pumps, including dual stage heat pumps.

**Vote: *Unanimous consent achieved*** by all RPAC members present and/or casting votes electronically. The Advanced Heat Pumps program will proceed into the Market Development phase of NEEA’s Initiative Lifecycle.



## RPAC Vote: ‘Program Advancement’ Milestone

### Advanced Heat Pumps

Name	Organization	Yes	No	Abstain	Present, Not Voting	Not Present
RPAC Voting Members						
Dan Adams	Avista	x				
Phillip Kelsven	BPA	x				
Jim White	Chelan County PUD	x				
Debbie DePetrus	Clark Public Utilities	x				
Fred Gordon	Energy Trust	x				
Quentin Nesbitt	Idaho Power	x				
Danie Williams / Whitney Jurenic	NorthWestern	x				
Kevin Smit	NWPCC	x				
Laura James	Pacific Power	x				
Jake Wise	PGE*					x
Jeff Tripp	PSE	x				
Lori Moen	Seattle City Light	x				
Jeff Feinberg	Snohomish PUD	x				
Bryan Russo	Tacoma Power	x				
Heather Moline	WUTC					x

### Discussion:

**Fred Gordon (Energy Trust):** It's important that we recognize that installation has been an issue for decades. We have gotten mediocre success with enormous effort in training. If we want success, it must be "out of the box." The less responsibility on the contractors, the better.

**Kevin Smit (Northwest Power and Conservation Council):** There is still a need for a larger regional heat pump strategy, especially for strategies that fall outside of the program. Heat pumps are being installed more than ever but the data we have shows they are not fulfilling their theoretical potential.

**Phillip Kelsven (BPA):** BPA is attempting to lead the way on the technical research and will be publishing a document in the coming month.

## RPAC Round Robin

RPAC members shared the latest news and key programmatic updates for their respective organizations; focus topics include big changes (programs/personnel); big changes in programs/personnel, current challenges/lessons learned, and more.

- **Jeff Tripp, Puget Sound Energy:** PSE has a new Senior Vice President, Aaron August, formerly of PG&E. He began on July 27. New Clean Energy Implementation plan was approved on June 5 with a condition to increase Demand Response target and another condition for 30 percent of solar offerings need to be targeted to named communities. Finalized DER public participation plan. Had first ever system-wide DR event. Currently accepting residential thermostat enrollments for ADRA winter season. Working on 2024-25 DCP targets.
- **Fred Gordon, Energy Trust:** In the middle of budget and action planning. Proposing significant investment in community based organizations as a mechanism for outreach for residential savings in markets that there has not been adequate previous penetration. Trying to assess mercury ban in lightbulbs and how that will affect programs. Energy Trust is talking to PUC about how long Energy Trust should stick around in this market. Currently discussing the possible end of the residential solar incentive.
- **Debbie DePetris, Clark PUD:** Matt Babbitts has been promoted to Clean Energy Program Manager. Trevor Frick is now Residential Program Manager. There will be no more involvement from Matt except for End-Use Load Flex. Looking at an easy charger DR pilot next year. An industrial customer also is asking about ramping down at certain hours. Duane Dunn has left Clark PUD and they have taken the opportunity to reevaluate the energy councilor position and relaunching that program. Work for energy councilors has dwindled since COVID.
- **Natasha Houldson, Tacoma Power:** Connor Tompkins has been hired as an engineer in the Business Conservation Group. On the residential side, Colleen Neel and Jon Storvick are also recent hires. Currently on track for energy efficient targets with a margin of about two percent. Conservation potential assessment is being wrapped up. There is a large paper mill that will be closing and that historically has been a large source of conservation. Previously adjusted residential loan offer to increase cost coverage, however, between increased equipment costs and higher interest rates, the revised offer was a greater than anticipated success and so we have paused issuing new conventional loans to restructure the offering. Continuing to monitor Washington state energy code developments.
- **Jeff Feinberg, Snohomish PUD:** In planning stage of CPA update, there is a jump in residential opportunities and potential. Have been working on a residential new construction program and are close to bringing that to our commission. Trying to make sure everything we do is not just EE, but beyond EE and has harmonization with demand response and grid harmonization potential. In budget phase of the cycle and looking at 2024-25. Seeing about a thirty percent jump in achievement needed to perform for Washington State so trying to maximize income qualified work and energy efficiency to get better results.
- **James White, Chelan PUD:** Just completed evaluation of heat pump program. Found over half did not perform as expected. Heat pumps either failed successfully or worked spectacularly. Looking at a revamp or a pause of the heat pump program to evaluate. Doing cold climate heat pump analysis this year via a pilot.

- **Quentin Nesbitt, Idaho Power:** Ended small business direct install due to lighting standards no longer making them cost effective. Same with multifamily direct install for the same reasons. Energy house calls program has ended based on penetration dwindling year after year. SEM program has added a campus cohort. The DR program changes made last year had a dramatic effect on participation, leading to decreases. Now marketing all three DR programs to try and get participation back. Still evaluating if there is a new value proposition for DR if it would be cost-effective and affordable through IRP process. In annual prudency review filing with Idaho commission on all DR and EE activities. Included in that was a third-party evaluation of NEEA savings that was required.
- **Phillip Kelsven, BPA:** Resuming roundtables with customer utilities. Trying to get conservation voltage reduction and demand voltage reduction. Trying to get utilities interested in that but there has not yet been a lot of uptake. Interested in savings in the residential sector due to the IRA. Developed some tax credit fact sheets. There is an interesting opportunity in behavioral reports for customers. Trying to ramp up low-income work via the IRA.
- **Kevin Smit, NWPPC:** Regional Conservation Progress report underway and ready in October. The RTF this fall will update and review all heat pump measures and is reaching out to the utilities and NEEA. Finished a congressional staff tour with all senators and representatives from the Northwest.
- **Roger Kainu, ODOE:** ODOE has put together a summary of everything related to energy from recent legislation to help customers understand how to get incentives and make choices. A Community Navigator position is now in place that can help customers navigate energy efficiency and carbon. A goal was set by the legislation to reach 500,000 heat pumps installed by 2030. Applying for the HOMES and HERA program. Workforce development is broad and there is a lot of money involved. Solar for All will be huge, uplifting solar installations throughout the state. Grid resilience is also underway and there should be a lot of money involved. ODOE is hiring twenty-two people to help handle increased workload. Have a new residential energy code coming out October 1, 2023 with complete adoption by April 1, 2024. Commercial energy code is due January 1, 2024.
- **Peter Kernan, OPUC:** OPUC is actively reviewing IRPs for PGE, Pacific Power, Avista, and Cascade. There has been increased staffing and hiring in the Energy Resources and Planning team.
- **Laura James:** Working on biennial conservation plan to be filed. Working on continuing to push CPA plan through a settlement process and then work with the regulators to get that acknowledged. Looking to continuously refine and update the actions and CBIs including building out more equity focused activities. Have had a few EV pilots approved in Washington. For DR, have had residential DR programs approved in both Washington and Oregon.
- **Alexa Bouvier:** Looking at expanding grid resiliency program with federal funds. Federal funding for K-12 schools to address energy efficiency via retrofit has come through recently.

## Work Groups Update

(Please refer to [slides](#) 69-73, the [packet](#) p.21, or the recording for additional detail)

### Overview

Alisyn Maggiora briefed the group on the Northwest Federal Funding Coordination Work Group in place of Jonathan Belais. This work group is prioritizing workforce issues related to the new federal opportunities and coordination of messaging to customers; they've met twice to-date and will reconvene in September to discuss the recently released DOE guidelines for state-run home rebate programs. Peter Christeleit presented on the Dual Fuel Work Group. The Dual Fuel Work Group is focused on sharing what gas funders are working on and avoiding duplication of efforts. The currently scheduled frequency is three to four times a year and kicked off on July 24. Ryan Brown discussed the Dual Fuel Measurement Workgroup. The purpose of the Measurement Workgroup is to develop guidelines calculating and

reporting savings, peak load reductions, and avoid emissions. This is a Cost Effectiveness Advisory Committee-based workgroup. Currently scoped for three to five meetings. The first meeting is August 31.

**Discussion:**

**Fred Gordon:** How do you think NEEA will work to provide value in environments (States) that have different guidelines for value?

**Ryan Brown:** These guidelines will be focused on regional impacts and values, and then there will be some customization of reports that deliver on the needs of each of our funders to fit into the appropriate context. The workgroup is exploring what makes sense for NEEA to calculate impacts and how we might report out on those.

**Fred Gordon:** It is helpful to standardize inputs and having clarity around what those inputs are.

## Meeting Wrap Up

- Action Item Summary
  - **ACTION: Alisyn to send the BPA Tax Credit Fact Sheet to all RPAC members.**
- Public comment - None
- Meeting feedback - None
- Next meetings
  - October 26 – Draft Operations Plan Webinar
  - November 2 – Q4 Meeting (Virtual)