

**Date:** October 3, 2001  
**To:** RTO West Regional Representatives and Other Interested Parties  
**From:** TransConnect Applicants  
**Subject:** Revised TransConnect *Pro Forma* Planning and Expansion Protocol

Please find attached the October 3, 2001 draft of the TransConnect *Pro Forma* Planning and Expansion Protocol. This version replaces the previous version posted on August 31, 2001.

The October 3, 2001 draft has been substantially revised in large part to address the many substantive and helpful comments received on the prior version. The TransConnect companies look forward to continuing the dialogue that began with the prior version. Undertaking this collaboration, with a goal of reaching agreement on this important issue, is consistent with the FERC's April 26, 2001, and July 12, 2001 orders, which permitted the sharing of this function between RTO West and TransConnect.

Please provide any comments to Paul Mohler at 202-912-2153, or via e-mail at pmohler@hewm.com. The TransConnect members also anticipate discussing this draft in future planning content and RRG meetings.

Thank you.

**TransConnect *Pro Forma* Planning  
and Expansion Protocol**

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# TransConnect *Pro Forma* Planning and Expansion Protocol

## 1.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Definitions

Capitalized terms used in this *pro forma* Planning and Expansion Protocol shall have the meanings specified in Exhibit A.

### 1.2 Purpose

The Commission has indicated that responsibility for certain functions required of a Regional Transmission Organization (“RTO”) in Order No. 2000, including transmission planning and expansion, could be shared in specified circumstances. TransConnect plans to operate as an independent transmission owning company, owning or managing assets in one or more RTOs.

This *pro forma* Planning and Expansion Protocol (“Protocol”) describes the framework and processes that will be followed for planning and expanding the TransConnect Transmission System. This Protocol is intended to work in tandem with an RTO planning and expansion protocol to ensure a meaningful and well-coordinated sharing of the planning and expansion function.

## 2.0 TRANSMISSION COORDINATION PROCESS

TransConnect will coordinate its planning and expansion processes with the RTO. This coordination process is designed to ensure that TransConnect’s planning and expansion needs will be met, and that overall interconnected system needs will be satisfied.

### 2.1 Planning Alternatives

TransConnect will work with the RTO and other applicable regulatory authorities that may have specific least cost planning requirements, and will fully comply with any applicable laws or regulations governing such requirements. As a for-profit independent transmission company, TransConnect will pursue and propose transmission solutions where requested, or where TransConnect believes such projects would be economic. Transmission solutions are often high cost, high lead-time solutions that require significant and careful advance planning. If TransConnect fails to consider least cost alternatives, it may find it has uneconomic or under-performing assets. However, TransConnect’s governance limits it to transmission-related projects; thus TransConnect cannot implement alternative, non-transmission solutions that may be considered as part of a least cost planning process.

### 2.2 Procedures

To accomplish a coordinated interface for the region, the RTO will receive all generation interconnection and transmission service requests.

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Any request received by the RTO for transmission service within a TransConnect zone or related to TransConnect facilities shall be forwarded to TransConnect to conduct appropriate studies and analyses in accordance with the policies and procedures contained in the RTO OATT and this Protocol. The results of the studies and analyses will be provided to the RTO, as appropriate, for review. TransConnect will also be provided an opportunity to consider requests in other zones to the extent the transmission owner in that zone declines to consider such a request.

Should a request received by the RTO impact other facilities in addition to TransConnect's, the RTO shall, unless requested otherwise, coordinate a joint study with TransConnect and the other transmission owner(s). The joint study will be completed in accordance with the timeframe established in the RTO OATT and submitted to the RTO for review.

The RTO shall, within sixty (60) days following submission of a project proposed by TransConnect, make a determination as to whether the project will adversely affect system reliability, and whether there are system-wide benefits, unless a longer review period is mutually agreed upon.

If the project involves more than one RTO, an *ad hoc* committee will be formed within 15 days by the RTOs to make a determination as to whether the project will adversely affect regional or RTO system reliability, and whether there are system-wide benefits to the RTOs. Such committee shall act within sixty (60) days of formation, unless a longer review period is agreed upon.

Approval of requests for system additions, modifications and expansions of the TransConnect Transmission System that do not impair reliability or bulk transmission capability of the RTO transmission system shall not be unreasonably delayed or withheld.

## **2.3 Dispute Resolution**

If TransConnect is unable to reach agreement with the RTO on matters covered by this Protocol, TransConnect may request dispute resolution in accordance with the RTO's dispute resolution procedures.

## **3.0 TRANSMISSION PLANNING**

### **3.1 Local Area Planning**

TransConnect shall assume the Local Area Planning function for the Load Serving Entities ("LSEs") served by the TransConnect Transmission System. Local Area Planning is the planning for facilities that are within the TransConnect footprint necessary to satisfy the needs of LSEs served by the TransConnect Transmission System. TransConnect will coordinate with the LSEs to consider least cost alternatives, including non-transmission solutions. Such planning may include the identification of candidate projects to reduce or eliminate congestion within the TransConnect footprint. Specific Local Area Planning activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A) Assess and subsequently develop expansion plans associated with local area Transmission Systems in the proximate area of where power exits the

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Transmission System to service LSEs. The Local Area Planning Process shall be conducted in accordance with NERC standards.

- B) Perform studies with participation and coordination from each LSE served by TransConnect in order to determine potential reliability problems and identify solutions to such problems to meet the needs of the LSEs. The results of these studies shall be documented and presented by TransConnect to the LSEs.
- C) Provide study findings, including potential solutions, to LSE if the studies performed pursuant to the Local Area Planning Process indicate a need for incremental transmission facilities. TransConnect will have the primary responsibility for recommending and implementing the necessary facility additions to accommodate the connections of new load and generation to the TransConnect Transmission System, in addition to the requirements to relieve system constraints identified by either the RTO or another transmission owner.

The results and recommendations of such Local Area Planning performed by TransConnect shall be subject to review and approval by the RTO and would be used in the regional planning process performed by the RTO. However, projects funded in accordance with a participant funding process that do not adversely impact the reliability standards of the RTO are not subject to RTO overview. Results and recommendations developed for such projects are not subject to RTO approval.

Analysis performed pursuant to the Local Area Planning Process (including potential solutions) will be provided to the LSE and included in the sub regional and regional processes. All completed studies and the results will be posted on OASIS and will be available (except for data designated as confidential pursuant to this Protocol) upon request.

Entities providing information to TransConnect may designate such data as being confidential commercial information, consistent with FERC policy regarding the confidentiality of commercial information. TransConnect shall not make such data available to third parties without the agreement of the providing entity unless required to do so by a court or regulatory agency with jurisdiction over TransConnect.

## **3.2 System Impact Studies**

TransConnect will perform system impact studies necessary to evaluate requests for transmission service on TransConnect facilities. A request for service is submitted to the RTO and forwarded to TransConnect. TransConnect will perform the study in accordance with NERC standards and the processes and procedures contained in the RTO OATT. The results of the impact study will be provided to the RTO for use in evaluating the transmission requests and developing expansion plans.

Should a request received by the RTO impact other facilities in addition to TransConnect's, the RTO shall, unless requested otherwise, coordinate a joint study with TransConnect and the other transmission owner(s). The joint study will be completed in accordance with the timeframe established in the RTO OATT and submitted to the RTO for review. This will ensure there are no seams issues resulting from sharing the planning function, and that requests for service are addressed in a timely manner through one rather than two or more separate studies. Approval of

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requests for system additions, modifications and expansions of the TransConnect Transmission System that do not impair reliability or bulk transmission capability of the RTO transmission system shall not be unreasonably delayed or withheld.

### **3.3 Interconnection Studies**

TransConnect will be delegated authority to perform interconnection studies. All requests for interconnection within the TransConnect footprint will be submitted to the RTO and forwarded to TransConnect. TransConnect will have the responsibility to evaluate any requests to interconnect to TransConnect transmission facilities. TransConnect will perform the study in conformance with NERC standards and generation interconnection procedures that have been established by the RTO and approved by the Commission. Once the study is completed, the results will be provided to the RTO for review and approval.

Generation interconnection planning activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A) Determine whether there is capability to provide the generation interconnection service at the requested point of receipt consistent with the specifics of the request (i.e. megawatt capability of generators, etc.) and, if not, whether incremental transmission facilities are required. TransConnect may propose alternative plans for physical connection and additional system reinforcements to accommodate connection of the generator. The results of the study shall be documented and provided to the entity requesting generation interconnection.
- B) Provide requestor with findings, including potential solutions, if the studies performed pursuant to the generation interconnection planning process indicate a need for incremental transmission facilities. Once the study is completed, the availability of non-confidential studies will be posted on OASIS.

Entities providing information to TransConnect may designate such data as being confidential commercial information, consistent with FERC policy regarding the confidentiality of commercial information. TransConnect shall not make such data available to third parties without the agreement of the providing entity unless required to do so by a court or regulatory agency with jurisdiction over TransConnect.

Should a request received by the RTO impact other facilities in addition to TransConnect's, the RTO shall, unless requested otherwise, coordinate a joint study with TransConnect and the other transmission owner(s). The joint study will be completed in accordance with the timeframe established in the RTO OATT and submitted to the RTO for review. This will ensure there are no seams issues resulting from sharing the planning function and that requests for service are addressed timely through one rather than two or more separate studies. Approval of requests for system additions, modifications and expansions of the TransConnect Transmission System that do not impair reliability or bulk transmission capability of the RTO transmission system shall not be unreasonably delayed or withheld.

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## **3.4 Other Studies**

TransConnect may perform additional studies as appropriate to support the objectives of the RTO planning process, and to meet the Order No. 2000 principle of encouraging market-motivated operating and investment actions for preventing and relieving congestion. These other studies may include, but are not limited to, analysis of cost-effective solutions to identified system problems, studies for other market participants performed at their request, operating, maintenance, and outage planning studies.

## **4.0 TRANSMISSION EXPANSION BY TRANSCONNECT**

TransConnect may engage in expansion projects that may include, but are not limited to: (i) changing of network resources; (ii) elimination of load pockets; (iii) upgrades for point-to-point customers or generators; (iv) deliverability of network resources; and (v) export or import-related upgrades. Approval of transmission expansion projects that do not impair reliability or bulk transmission capability of the RTO transmission system shall not be unreasonably delayed or withheld.

Expansion projects may include those proposed through an open season for all market participants, projects financed by TransConnect, projects with direct assignment facilities or projects with system-wide benefits. To the extent that new power supply options require transmission expansion, TransConnect will evaluate upgrades and expansions to accommodate such requests in a non-discriminatory manner in accordance with Commission policy

Subject to procedures detailed in section 2.0 above, TransConnect shall have a right of first refusal to construct and own transmission projects proposed by TransConnect. Additionally, TransConnect expects to participate in a competitive bidding process for projects proposed by the RTO or other entities.

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## EXHIBIT A: Definitions

**NERC** – North American Electric Reliability Council

**OASIS** – Open Access Same-time Information System

**OATT** – Open Access Transmission Tariff

**TransConnect** – TransConnect, L.L.C. is a for-profit limited liability company created to own or manage transmission assets.

**TransConnect Transmission System** – The collective transmission assets contributed to TransConnect for operation and planning.