

DISCUSSION DRAFT

**RTO WEST FILING UTILITIES' STRAW PROPOSAL ON
PROCESS FOR FURTHER WORK
ON REGIONAL TRANSMISSION SOLUTIONS**

Initial Steps (to be completed before proceeding to Next Steps)

Subject to a clearly specified time limit, the RRG works collaboratively to define the problems and opportunities related to provision of transmission service in the region, as well as to identify those that are willing to develop a solution.

Through the process described on page 2 of this document, each member of the RRG works to enable the RRG to answer the questions listed below. The process described on page 2 of this document is the filing utilities' proposal **solely** for purposes of developing answers to questions listed below. The process for further work on solutions would be identified after completing the initial steps.

- What are the region's transmission problems and opportunities?
- What are the problems and opportunities that warrant action?
- Is an independent regional transmission entity the vehicle to solve the problems and capitalize on the opportunities?
- Is RTO West the vehicle to solve the problems and capitalize on the opportunities?
- Is the RTO West Stage 2 filing the framework for further work?

Next Steps (to be undertaken only after work on Initial Steps is completed)

At the end of the time allotted for work on the questions listed above (or sooner if the work is completed before the end of the allotted time), the next steps would be:

- Develop the process to be used for further work on proposed solutions
- Use the process as developed to complete work on solutions to address the region's transmission problems and opportunities

**PROPOSED PROCESS FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS
LISTED UNDER “INITIAL STEPS”**

- Work from the basic consensus-seeking approach previously carried out through the RRG process (using the Stage 1 process as the model)¹
- Designate *ex officio* seats for representatives of each of the states within the RTO West “footprint”
- Establish up front what “consensus” means in a general sense and how to assess whether there is consensus
 - Proposed working definition of consensus: “judgment arrived at by most of those concerned” (the filing utilities believe this would need to be greater than a simple majority)
 - Rely on the judgment of the RRG to assess whether there is consensus – this does not mean that there are no dissenters, but the general recognition that dissenters are relatively few and that the view of the RRG is that a consensus exists (this is a “we know it when we see it” test)
- If the RRG does not agree that there is consensus on a particular question,
 - The RRG would first discuss further the reasons for the perceived lack of consensus
 - If there is still no agreement that the RRG has reached consensus, the RRG would assess whether it believes further discussions are likely to lead to consensus
- If reasonable efforts to reach consensus are not successful, the issue will be written up as one on which consensus was not reached, and the RRG moves on to the next question
- The filing utilities are not obligated to conform the elements of their regulatory filings to the consensus positions developed through the RRG process (nor are they disabled from acting with respect to areas in which the RRG does not reach consensus), but the RRG’s consensus reports are made available to the public
- The state representatives can participate in discussions of the questions and, to the extent they are comfortable, the discussions about whether a consensus exists on any question. They can also signal their support for the consensus reached on regional transmission problems, opportunities, and a solution framework by agreeing that the development process should move ahead and that they will participate in the process.

¹ There is a general description of the role of the RRG in the Stage 1 RTO West development process in the May 23, 2000 document entitled *Roles, Responsibilities and Process for Regional Representatives Group (RRG) and Work Groups*: “The role of the RRG is to serve as a high-level collaborative forum for discussion of RTO development issues with a goal of finding consensus on those issues and to provide advice to the RTO Filing Utilities as they make decisions on their RTO proposal for FERC filing.” The complete May 23, 2000 document is available on the RTO West Website at: http://www.rto west.com/doc/Work_Group_Responsibilities%20.pdf