

Uncommon Dialogue for Hydropower Phase II

March Steering Committee Update

This document describes updates on the recent and upcoming activities within the Uncommon Dialogue (UCD) for Hydropower Phase II process.

Steering Committee and Planning Group

March Steering Committee Meeting, Charter and Membership

The Steering Committee (SC) last met on March 2nd. The meeting focused on providing updates on the SC, Planning Group (PG) and Working Group (WG) processes, including membership, recent meetings, and next steps. The SC also reviewed the draft SC Charter, which outlines membership, responsibilities, scope, and processes for internal and external communications. Following the March 2nd meeting, the Facilitation Team (FT) and Dan Reicher, Convener with Stanford University, revised the SC Charter and circulated to the SC for review. The hope is to incorporate SC edits and further discuss and finalize the Charter at the next SC meeting. The Charter can be revisited in the future, as needed, based on Phase II progress.

Please welcome the following new participants to the Steering Committee:

- Julia Anastasio (Association of Clean Water Administrators)
- Lori Spragens (Association of State Dam Safety Officials)
- Eric Van Deuren (PG&E)
- Representatives from NOAA Fisheries, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US National Park Service, and US Forest Service who will participate as Observers.

The FT is in the process of reaching out to engage an additional tribal representative as well.

Planning Group Membership and Process

The PG is a group of 6 people along with the Convener and FT who represent a cross-section of interests from the broader SC and who provide guidance on the process overall and on SC meeting agendas, topics, timing of meetings, etc. The PG currently includes Shannon Ames (Low Impact Hydropower Institute), Brian Graber (American Rivers), Mary Pavel (Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry), Dave Steindorf (American Whitewater/Hydro Reform Coalition), Eric Van Deuren (Pacific Gas & Electric), and Malcolm Woolf (National Hydropower Association), along with Dan Reicher, Stanford, and the Kearns & West team.

Working Groups

Working Group Co-Chairs

The FT, in coordination with Dan and the PG, identified potential Co-Chairs for each of the WGs. SC members were encouraged to reach out to the FT if they were interested in chairing. Following a recommendation from some participants and with the agreement of the Co-Chairs, WGs #3 and #5 have been combined into a single WG. Once this WG begins to meet, they can determine its WG's name, scope, etc. The following Co-Chairs have been confirmed, while the some are still in progress:

1. Accelerate Development of Hydropower Technologies and Practices to Improve Generation Efficiency, Environmental Performance, and Solar and Wind Integration
 - Jose Zayas, Eagle Creek Renewable Energy
 - TBD
2. Advocate for Improved U.S. Dam Safety
 - Brian Graber, American Rivers
 - Thomas Fitzgerald, Schnabel Engineering
 - TBD
- 3 & 5. Increase Basin-Scale Decision-Making and Access to River-Related Data and Advance Effective River Restoration Through Improved Off-Site Mitigation Strategies
 - Jeff Opperman, World Wildlife Fund
 - Chuck Sensiba, Troutman Pepper
 - TBD
4. Improve the Measurement, Valuation of and Compensation for Hydropower Flexibility and Reliability Services and Support for Enhanced Environmental Performance
 - Shannon Ames, Low Impact Hydropower Institute
 - Malcolm Woolf, National Hydropower Association
 - 4a. Power Evaluation Tool Subcommittee:
 - Dave Steindorf, American Whitewater
 - Sharon White, Rock Creek Partners
 - 4b. Enhanced Environmental Performance Subcommittee:
 - Shannon Ames, Low Impact Hydropower Institute
 - Scott Hall, Great River Hydro
 - Malcolm Woolf, National Hydropower Association
 - 4c. Grid Valuation Subcommittee:
 - Mike Jacobs, Union of Concerned Scientists
 - Alan Michaels, New York Power Authority
6. Improve Federal Hydropower Licensing, Relicensing, and License Surrender Processes
 - Richard Roos-Collins, Water Power Law Group
 - Chris Shutes, California Sport Fishing Alliance
 - Malcolm Woolf, National Hydropower Association
7. Policy, Strategy and Implementation of U.S. Dam Rehabilitation, Retrofits and Removals
 - Brian Graber, American Rivers
 - Shannon Ames, Low Impact Hydropower Institute
 - Malcolm Woolf, National Hydropower Association

WG 7: Policy, Strategy, and Implementation of the 3 R's (Rehabilitation, Retrofit and Removal)

With major pending infrastructure, stimulus and budget reconciliation discussions underway in Congress and the Biden Administration, WG 7 has moved quickly to develop an Infrastructure Document outlining concepts that can be brought into discussions in Washington, D.C The WG7 Co-Chairs and WG members include representatives from river conservation NGOs, industry, climate, tribal, and dam safety interests and the Low Impact Hydropower Institute (LIHI). The final WG 7 Infrastructure Document, including a list of supporting organizations, will be complete by April 12th.

WG 4: Improve the Measurement, Valuation of and Compensation for Hydropower Flexibility and Reliability Services and Support for Enhanced Environmental Performance

The three Subcommittees of the WG 4 have begun meeting.

- *WG 4a: Power Evaluation Tool.* The objectives of this Subcommittee include:
 - Shaping water resource values (river and water resource valuation to go with power flexibility and capacity valuation).
 - Model enables users to determine how to preserve project capacity needs of the grid while enhancing river flows and values to create a "win/win" situation in relicensing.
 - PET tool: To apply to an individual project for now; ultimately a valuation tool for the hydropower fleet.
 - Open Access to the Tool: Expand access to the valuation tool so that multiple stakeholder groups can access; ultimately to be able to have all stakeholders develop a real-time understanding of the value using universal language to effectively discuss hydropower across hydropower community sectors.
 - Expand upon and adapt existing models of production simulation to forecast resource planning and relicensing process.
- *WG 4b: Enhanced Environmental Performance (EEP).* In the first two meetings of the EEP Subcommittee, the group brainstormed a list of potential policy topics worthy of further exploration. During the March Subcommittee meetings, the group developed and finalized its Charter, prioritized the list of policy topics, began fleshing out more detailed aspects of their Platform, and laid out the process next steps. Outputs of the Subcommittee, in particular the Platform document, were shared with WG 7. Topics the Subcommittee is exploring include ITC, Federal Procurement, Farm Bill, Conservation Grants and Clean Energy Standards.
- *WG 4c: Grid Valuation.* The Subcommittee discussion focused on two main questions: (a) Should this group only focus on valuing hydro in RTO-ISO markets, or should it consider vertically integrated areas as well? (b) What is the end product for this group? A set of principles for valuing hydro? The Subcommittee discussed defining the value of hydropower, looking at the current fleet and identifying what is not being optimized (i.e., understanding where we are, where are going and what do we need to get us there). The Subcommittee also acknowledged the importance of incorporating new resources/new stream reach into the Subcommittee's work as well. The Subcommittee navigated the question of RTOs by emphasizing how the RTO arena allows for more transparency and granularity that is useful for engagement with grid operators.

WG 6: Improve Federal Hydropower Licensing, Relicensing, and License Surrender Processes

The first meeting of WG 6 was held in early April. WG #6 members include representatives from NGOs, industry, tribes, and federal agencies. The group discussed both the near-term process to develop issue statements and suggested legislative and regulatory solutions, focusing on bringing legislative recommendations to Congress in May. The longer term process will continue these discussions, and likely will have more of a regulatory focus. Another meeting is planned for mid-April. A summary and documents will be available for SC review in April.

Internal and External Communications

- *UCD Database:* The UCD Database can be found on the SharePoint site here: <https://kearnswest.sharepoint.com/sites/UncommonDialogue/Database>. The Database is included as a Read-Only document so please reach out to the FT if you have any questions or recommended contacts. The FT maintains the Database and will upload updated versions periodically.
- *SharePoint Site:* The UCD SharePoint site can be accessed here: <https://kearnswest.sharepoint.com/sites/UncommonDialogue>. The SC already has been invited to access the site. The FT is also establishing access for WGs as the process evolves. SC members can only access SC-related materials and WG materials for those WGs they participate in. WG members can only access the WG materials for those WGs they participate in. Please reach out to [Caisey Hoffman](#) or [Mark Sebarrotin](#) with any questions.

Please feel free to reach out to the FT with any questions or topics you'd like to address on this effort.