

# Clean Energy Planning Engagement Series for Oregon Tribal Nations

February 2024 Meeting Notes

February 23, 2024, 9:00 – 11:00 am, Pacific Time

*These notes were synthesized and summarized by E Source, Pacific Power’s meeting facilitation partner.*

## Executive Summary

There were 17 individuals in attendance at the Clean Energy Planning Engagement Series for the Oregon Tribal Nations meeting on February 23, 2024. The meeting was hosted in a virtual setting with attendees joining virtually via the ZOOM platform.

The following is a summary of the content and feedback received during the 2-hour public meeting.

AGENDA
Check In & Closing the Loop
Structuring Our Space for 2024
Community Benefit Indicators: Revisit
Community-Based Renewable Energy
Next Steps

Attendee	Organization
<b>Attendees</b>	
Eli Duncan-Gilmour	Clean Energy Innovator Fellow, Energy Liaison, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Department of Energy
Amber Faist,	Northwest Native Chamber
Mike Lofting	Warm Springs Power and Enterprise
Jacob Wallis	Watáy
Olivia Weinber	Convergent Energy and Power
Brian Boswell	Umpqua Indian Utility Cooperative
<b>Presenters</b>	
Kimberly Alejandro	Equity Advisory Analyst, Pacific Power
Ryan Harvey	Community Renewables Program Manager
Laura James	
Christina Medina	Manager, Stakeholder Policy & Engagement, Pacific Power
Tracy Moreland	Tribal Liaison Representative, Pacific Power
Morgan Westberry	Facilitator, E Source

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### Pacific Power Affiliated Attendees

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Stephanie Meeks	Regulatory Manager
Tracy Moreland	Tribal Liaison Representative, Pacific Power
Jeffrey Daigle	E Source, Facilitation Team
Tag Galvin-Darnieder	E Source, Facilitation Team

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## Meeting Notes

### Opening

Pacific Power's Christina Medina welcomed participants to the February Clean Energy Planning Tribal Nations Engagement. Pacific Power is seeking to offer a space for meaningful dialogue and an opportunity to help offer lens on the work that's happening at the utility, as well as anywhere consultation can help to influence that work. Morgan Westberry, from the E Source facilitation team, then opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and letting the group know that people are welcome to come and go throughout the session. The information presented in the meeting will be posted online as a resource. Additional feedback and questions can also be sent to the engagement team offline as well.

### Closing the Loop

E Source's Morgan Westberry recapped the last meeting, including:

- Introducing the new role of Tribal Liaison Representative, Tracy Moreland, to the Clean Energy Plan Tribal Nations Engagement Series participants. The Tribal Liaison will be an active part of this effort and will be a part of the government affairs department at Pacific Power.
- Increased outreach to Tribal Nation partners through the Energy Efficiency Road Show and related activities, including the prospect of on-site workshops and discussion around the desire for an 'Energy 101' to provide all tribal members a level of shared understanding
- An overview of Transportation Electrification to allow for further program development discussions during the 2024 year

### Check In

E Source's Morgan Westberry facilitated the check in question: *Please introduce yourself however you are comfortable – what are you looking to get out of this space? What is a fun fact about yourself?*

- Christina Medina, manager of Stakeholder Policy & Engagement at Pacific Power, works with interested parties that are not part of the utility system, as well as those internal and within the utility system to bring them together to see what opportunities for community benefits can be surfaced. Christina is a big believer in collective impact and bringing more people together for shared understanding. Not only is it really healing to be part of the growth and positivity, but also to be part of the benefit can come out of out of that.
- Tracy Moreland, Pacific Power Tribal Liaison, started this journey several months ago with Pacific Power. Tracy was drawn to this position because of the passion for helping companies and governments understand tribal governments, as well as tribal values and culture. Tracy is a

member of the Grand Ronde tribe here in Oregon, which drives the desire to develop stronger relationships and identify opportunities for tribes.

- Amber Fiast, enrolled member of the Coquille Tribe and Programs Director for the Northwest Native Chamber, which is a nonprofit serving native businesses in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. For the past three years the organization has been working in clean energy work, specifically in contractor development to get small businesses ready to work in the industry. One of the things that the Northwest Native Chamber has heard is that it can be difficult for folks to navigate feelings of participating in and a lot of these types of projects, and an easy way to bring this work to communities is to use less energy overall and make the homes healthier, as well as workforce development partnerships. Hoping to get more information on what Pacific Power is doing in the tribal space and if there are interactions around tribal communities and tribal people.
- Mike Lofting, Warm Springs Power & Enterprise, manages the tribe's interests in power, as well as the tribe's ownership of the generating facility. Warm Springs was recently awarded a \$250 million grant in partnership with PGE to perform upgrades. The reservation overall has low potential for solar development and is charged with identifying other development opportunities.
- Brian Boswell, general manager for the Umpqua Indian Utility Cooperative, hopes to generate input on future policies for Pacific Power. Affordable energy is very critical for tribes, one of the elders recently expressed that even though energy usage went down that the bill was higher overall. A lot of community members have this concern and would like to give a voice to the policy decisions and be a resource to members.
- Olivia Weinber, Convergent Energy and Power is trying to figure out how to develop energy more affordably and equitably while engaging with the communities.
- Eli Duncan-Gilmour, Clean Energy Innovator Fellow - Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Department of Energy, is here to listen and learn from this space and is excited to be a participant.

### [Pacific Power Overview](#)

Pacific Power's Kimberly Alejandro covered the overview of the utility and the customers that are served by Pacific Power. Pacific Power is the largest rural electric services provider in Oregon, as well as serving two of the largest metropolitan areas: Medford and portions of Portland. The geographical service is diverse and spans the entire state, which contributes to Pacific Power's drive to seek new opportunities to grow and collaborators to partner with.

### [Structuring our Space for 2024](#)

Pacific Power's Kimberly Alejandro recognized the time of participants and the meaningful input provided that it yields benefits to the system as a whole and the people who are using the system. To that end, Pacific Power seeks to provide compensation for time and travel to allow and encourage meaningful participation. As the space is formalized, PAC hopes to have consistency where possible, noting that there are an immense amount of flexibility and people can opt in or out as needed.

Pacific Power's Christina Medina noted the intentionality of this engagement space, which is rooted in HB2021, and is aimed at helping PAC navigate the trajectory and planning portions as the system moves towards clean energy implementation plans in a way that is thoughtful and causes less harm to people that are vulnerable populations or communities that haven't necessarily been parts of planning processes in the past. This offers the opportunity to surface conversations that haven't taken place historically around communities and the experience felt in those communities.

What this means in this engagement space, is that the utility is exploring paths to achieve the targets set by HB2021 and build that cleaner mix of energy, while bringing benefits to communities to ensure that everybody is benefitting from the system changes.

Christina Medina continued by discussing the [PacifiCorp 2023 Oregon Clean Energy Plan](#), and the commitments that PAC has made to tribal nations engagements. This encompasses some preliminary discussions that fed into the Plan but also in formalizing this engagement to run parallel to other groups. In fact, this engagement was created based on feedback from tribal representatives that didn't feel it was appropriate to be bundled in with other engagement spaces more broadly that didn't capture the sovereignty of the tribes.

E Source's Jeffrey Daigle covered the outline for the Biennial Report and what Section 6 of HB 2021 asks for the utility, with consultation from the CBIAG, to file a biennial report that assesses the community benefits and impacts of the electric company. The report must include a description of the following categories:

- Energy burden and disconnections for residential customers and disconnections for small commercial customers
- Opportunities to increase contracting with businesses owned by women, veterans or Black, Indigenous, or People of Color
- Actions within environmental justice communities within the electric company's service territory intended to improve resilience during adverse conditions or facilitate investments in the distribution system including investments in facilities that generate non emitting electricity
- Distribution of infrastructure or grid investments and upgrades in environmental justice communities in the electric company's service territory, including infrastructure or grid investments that facilitate the electric company's compliance with the clean energy targets set forth in section 3 of this 2021 Act
- Social, economic, or environmental justice co-benefits that result from the electric company's investments, contracts, or internal practices;
- Customer experience, including a review of annual customer satisfaction surveys;
- Actions to encourage customer engagement
- Other items as determined by the electric company and the electric company's Community Benefits and Impacts Advisory Group.

***Meeting Discussion:***

- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise brought up the rate increase recently and that the bills don't currently have the cost of renewable generation compared against the cost of historical generation. The actual cost of going green doesn't seem to be discussed in legislation and policy

making, which means Oregon is being pushed to cleaner energy but there is nothing that assigns a cost to making those changes. Rural areas are especially impacted by this, and the justification isn't always sound.

- The feedback was noted as important and that the loop will be closed in the next meeting, which will feature an agenda item that will speak to the process and the contributors, as well as subject matter experts who will speak to the modeling and behind the scenes view.

E Source's Morgan Westberry brought back the survey results on the topics that participants would like to hear in this space, one of which is on the agenda for later in the meeting. Morgan continued that there will be a similar conversation held today, which is intended to broaden the input and validate that the group is anchored.

Pacific Power's Christina Medina touched on the importance of finding ways to surface what is helpful to participants and organizations, by ways of forming partnerships. As the group moves forward feedback will be documented and will be brought back in a way that closes the loop and ultimately results in positive impacts to communities. This may mean shifts in schedules, as needed, and PAC is flexible. Those who were not able to make the meeting will also be followed up with offline to make sure everybody is heard from.

E Source's Morgan Westberry facilitated discussion on timing, format, and topics.

#### ***Meeting Discussion:***

#### ***Meeting Timing:***

- Umpqua Indian Utility Cooperative is in favor of a two-hour meeting, as anything beyond that can take over a day. Friday mornings work well and is open to increasing meeting frequency to achieve goals of the group.
- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise confirms that Friday mornings and the two-hour format is great. Moving to monthly would also be workable and Warm Springs is open to increasing form every other month to monthly.
- Northwest Native Chamber agrees that monthly two-hour meetings are fine, so long as there is a formalized process and there are clear requests of what is expected from participants (goals and intentions of feedback). Getting materials ahead of time would be a huge help to structure discussion. Touched on the difference between consultation and engagement, and knowing what perspectives are being sought.
- Umpqua Indian Utility Cooperative agreed that resources ahead of time would be helpful but emphasized that the hope is to go beyond high-level discussions to really talk about what PAC is doing and anchor on the work that can be done.

#### ***Meeting Format:***

- Umpqua Indian Utility Cooperative stated that the format works great for now, but may need to be amended to meet the needs of the group moving forward.
- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise would like to know PAC's end goal so it goes beyond saying 'participate because we're required to do this'. Past experiences in similar meetings weren't helpful to the tribe because nothing of substance comes out of it. At Warm Springs, 80-85% of the residents are PAC customers, and the reservation has had conversations with PAC on projects

that didn't provide the details needed. These things should be to clearly define what PAC is looking at, the role of tribal participants, and what the end goal is, which would provide a clear picture. Answering 'what will ultimately be eligible for tribal nations?'

- Convergent Energy and Power agreed with other participants and is flexible.
- Jacob Willis emphasized that the group should be action oriented and that anything longer than two hours can get belabored and lose attention of the participants.
- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise volunteered to host a hybrid setting.

#### ***Meeting Topics:***

- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise shared that some of the concerns of tribal members include programs that could reduce the bills, as most often reservations are in a depressed economic status and have lower wages making these increases hard for members. Additionally, these areas are generally rural and don't have public transportation, meaning people have to go a long way to go to the doctors or other errands. Other areas include tribal energy projects that can reduce the bills for the entire reservation via net metering, grants opportunities, and cost sharing assistance. Also, it would be helpful to have Pacific Power develop something with tribal input on to go to the state and Energy Trust of Oregon to address some issues that have been experienced and obstacles that are felt by tribes.
- Tracy Moreland added that this feedback is instrumental to helping the company work in this landscape. These insights validate that there may need to be a brain dump of all the reasons why tribal customers are unique and what resources are available, as well as what resources are lacking. This candor is helpful in planning.
- Christina Medina acknowledged the intentionality of formalizing the space to provide that structure and provide additional input on the elements that need to be included. The generous feedback is critical to developing the work being done.
- Northwest Native Chamber stated that there won't be a silver bullet for all the challenges that Indian country is facing but there is an opportunity to feel heard and to have a better understanding of how policies and the decisions can really affect that change moving forward and what adjust transition and what economic justice can look like.

#### **Community-Based Renewable Energy (CBRE)**

Pacific Power's Ryan Harvey provided a detailed discussion around community-based renewable energy starting with a definition and overview.

Community-Based Renewable Energy projects are defined as one or more energy systems, and may be combined with microgrids, storage systems, demand response measures, or energy-related infrastructure that promotes climate resiliency. A CBRE project just directly benefit communities through community-benefit agreements or direct ownership by local government, nonprofit entities, or federally recognized Indian tribes. Additionally, CBRE projects must increase resiliency or community stability, local jobs, economic development, or direct energy cost savings to families and small businesses.

In Oregon, CBRE projects have the following Components:

1. Renewable Energy Resources

2. Connections to the Grid
3. Benefits the Community

### **Meeting Discussion:**

- Warm Springs Power & Enterprise shared that talks are underway on a solar project and a big part of the obstacle is the capacity to manage grants and projects. There is tremendous interest in these types of projects, but the tribes don't have the ability currently. That is the top priority.
- Northwest Native Chamber agreed with capacity comments and encouraged information on partnerships with nonprofits that may be able to assist. There is a lot of money for tribes with the Inflation Reduction Act, but not all tribes are at the same level meaning some aren't getting access to the funding out there.

Pacific Power's Ryan Harvey continued with the CBRE Pilot approach:

- Pursue opportunities to elevate (and finance) the battery storage component of planned and existing projects to provide grid-enabled, system-wide benefits and learning outcomes
- Support additional communities to better understand costs and technical requirements of increased resilience by providing feasibility studies to critical facilities
- Establish a mechanism to provide matching funds for communities seeking external grant awards for resilience at critical facilities

E Source's Morgan Westberry facilitated the discussion questions: *How can PacifiCorp best reach out to tribal governments, representatives, or other interested parties about these pilot offerings once approval is granted?*

- Northwest Native Chamber shared that some tribes have an official process for consultation, which is one way to reach out, however recommend meeting people where they are – be it a conference or on-site. Also noted that interest doesn't always mean actions will occur.

## Meeting Close & Next Steps

Christina Media said anyone is welcome to use the chat to indicate if something surfaced in today's meeting that they want to note or be aware of as a key topic, item for the future, or get more follow up on. Christina also touched on the rate increase, which will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

### Upcoming Meetings

Oregon Tribal Nations Engagement Series – meeting details will be formatted based on what was heard in the activity on structuring the 2024 engagement spaces.

### Resources

Pacific Power's Christina Medina shared a slide of resource links and closed the meeting.

- Email comments to: [TribalRelations@PacifiCorp.com](mailto:TribalRelations@PacifiCorp.com)

- For more information: [Oregon Clean Energy Plan Updated Engagement Strategy](#)
- Clean Energy Plan Engagement Series for Oregon Tribal Nations - 2023 Meeting: [Join Zoom Meeting](#)