



Center for
Public Utilities
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CURRENT ISSUES 2024

APRIL 14-17, 2024
ELDORADO HOTEL ♦ SANTA FE, NM

Hear Industry Leaders and Commissioners
Discuss Important Issues Facing the
Electric, Natural Gas, Water and
Telecommunications
Industries

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

HON. JULIE FEDORCHAK,
NARUC President;
Commissioner,
North Dakota
Public Service Commission

JEREMY BRIES,
Director of Nuclear Projects,
PacifiCorp

TOM DEITRICH,
President and CEO,
ITRON

JASON GRUMET,
CEO,
American Clean Power

NATHAN HANSON,
President, LS Power;
EPSA Board Chair

JIM KERR,
President and CEO,
Southern Company Gas

MARY KIPP,
President and CEO,
Puget Sound Energy
Energy

ROB MACLEAN,
President and CEO,
Southwest Water

TOM MEISSNER,
Chairman, President, and CEO,
Utili Corporation

PEDRO PIZARRO,
President and CEO,
Edison International;
EEI Chair

FREEMAN SHAHEEN,
President,
Chevron Global Gas;
NGSA Chair

HON. TIM SCHRAM,
Chair, NARUC
Telecommunications Committee;
Commissioner, Nebraska
Public Service Commission

Numerous State
Commissioners

TOPICS INCLUDE:

♦ Can Artificial Intelligence Really Beat Human Intelligence?

♦ De-risking the Energy Transition

♦ It's a Brave New World – Natural Gas as a Foundation Fuel – Will it Remain or Need to Evolve?

♦ Telecom Broadband: On the Way to Universal Service

♦ Technology and Our Energy Future: A Review of the Landscape of R&D and the Promise of Technology?

♦ Virtual Power Plants on the Horizon: Identifying Strengths While Addressing Potential Vulnerabilities

COMMISSIONERS' GRILL

Commissioners Answer Your Questions about Utility and Telecommunications Issues

Register now at nmsu.link/Current-Issues ♦ Registration is limited

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2024

6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Registration and Reception

MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024

8:00 – 8:15 am Welcome and Introductions
Pamela Sherwood, CPU Chair; Vice President Broadband Office; Brightspeed
Cindy Blume, Director, CPU

8:15 – 10:00 am CEO and Industry Leaders Panel
MODERATOR: *Hon. Julie Fedorchak*, President, NARUC; Commissioner, North Dakota Public Service Commission
PANELISTS: *Nathan Hanson*, President, LS Power; EPSA Board Chair
Tom Meissner, Chairman, President, and CEO, Until Corporation
Pedro Pizarro, President and CEO, Edison International; EEI Chair
Freeman Shaheen, President, Chevron Global Gas; NGSA Chair

10:15 – 12:00 pm
CEO and Industry Leader Panel Continued

PANELISTS: *Tom Deitrich*, President and CEO, ITRON
Jason Grumet, CEO, American Clean Power
Rob MacLean, President and CEO, Southwest Water
Hon. Tim Schram, Chair, NARUC Telecommunications Committee; Commissioner, Nebraska Public Service Commission

1:30 – 3:00 pm
De-risking the Energy Transition Let's be honest about the barriers that are hampering the energy transition. It's time to bring to center stage the new risks the industry is facing, discuss how existing risk profiles have changed, understand the evolving expectations of risk management, explore how innovative solutions impact risk, and align on the customer value of risk mitigation. This expert panel will share real-world examples of the evolving risk profiles they face, point out their broad implications, and offer advice for where regulators should be looking in the future.

MODERATOR: *Paul Kjellander*, CEO, KJEL LLC Consulting Services
PANELISTS: *Chris Ayers*, Executive Director, North Carolina Public Staff, North Carolina Utilities Commission
Jeremy Bries, Director of Nuclear Projects, PacifiCorp
Mary Kipp, President and CEO, Puget Sound Energy
Josh Parker, Director of Business Development, BWXT Advanced Technologies LLC
James Schaefer, Senior Managing Director, Guggenheim Partners

RESPONDERS: *Hon. James Ellison*, Commissioner, New Mexico Public Regulation Commission
Hon. Jehmal Hudson, Chair, Virginia State Corporation Commission
Hon. Eric Skrmetta, Commissioner, Louisiana Public Service Commission

3:30 – 5:00 pm
Virtual Power Plants on the Horizon: Identifying Strengths While Addressing Potential Vulnerabilities Virtual Power Plants (VPPs) are a portfolio of distributed energy resources (DERs) owned or leased by customers but optimized by the utility or a third party. Such resources include rooftop solar PV, electric vehicles (EVs), distributed batteries, smart water heaters, smart thermostats, and commercial building automation systems. Together with DER management systems and other tools, these assets have the ability to flexibly manage load and perform as reliably as conventional resources, contributing to resource adequacy at a similar scale. This panel will discuss the opportunities VPPs present for the grid, as well as the challenges for implementation. Specifically, how will utilities, regulators, grid operators, and markets encourage or allow the participation and proliferation of these assets, and address new vulnerabilities, such as cyber risks? Further, as major US automakers are now committed to EV manufacturing, will this include support for batteries capable of bidirectional charging that would contribute to VPP capacity?

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

MODERATOR: *Hon. Ann Rendahl*, 2nd Vice President, NARUC; Commissioner, Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission

PANELISTS: *Jennifer Downing*, Senior Advisor, Loan Programs Office, US Department of Energy
Kiran Malone, Vice President, Government & Industry Affairs, Anterix
Michael Moody, Division Chief, Special Litigation Division, Michigan Department of Attorney General
Paul Suskie, Executive Vice President, Southwest Power Pool
Brooke Trammell, Regional Vice President, Regulatory & Pricing, Xcel Energy

RESPONDERS: *Hon. Eric Blank*, Chairman, Colorado Public Utilities Commission
Hon. Floyd McKissick Jr., Chair, NARUC Committee on Consumers and the Public Interest; Commissioner, North Carolina Utilities Commission
Hon. Patrick Scully, Commissioner, Maine Public Utilities Commission

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024

8:30 – 10:00 am

Can Artificial Intelligence Really Beat Human Intelligence? This panel will discuss how to get value into an artificial agent and does it pose serious threats to systems control. Can we trust A.I. to make good-value decisions, or is it only as good as, or manipulated by, any preconceived direction? Where can A.I. be useful in the Utility space, other than friendlier, automated customer relations? Is it yet another vulnerability to cyber risk, or can that risk be mitigated?

MODERATOR: *Hon. Mary-Anna Holden*, Commissioner Emeritus, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

PANELISTS: *Christopher Kyriacou*, IT Security Manager, Middlesex Water Company
David Larson, Technical Leader, Grid Ops & Planning, EPRI
Thomas O'Brien, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, PJM Interconnection
Andy Ott, Head of Technical and Partner Operations, Tapestry X- The Moonshot Factory
Paul N. Stockton, PhD., recognized national cybersecurity Homeland Security expert
Catherine Tomasi, Director, Chief Privacy Officer, Con Edison

RESPONDERS: *Hon. Katie Anderson*, Commissioner, Arkansas Public Service Commission
Hon. John "Jack" Beikoski, Vice Chairman, Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
Hon. Stephen DeFrank, Chairman, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

10:30 - 12:00 pm

Telecom Broadband: On the Way to Universal Service. Two years ago, we started a lively discussion about all the billions in federal funding that would be flowing to the states for distribution to providers to facilitate broadband deployment. Over the last 2 years, a significant amount of the \$10B in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars have been awarded under deployment grants while the federal rules for disbursing \$42.45B in funds under the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) have been finalized and all state ISP BEAD award recommendations to NTIA s must be finalized by the end of 2024. This panel will revisit the guiding principles for the wise use of broadband deployment funds; the impact of all of this funding for new investment on legacy networks, new technologies, and carrier of last resort obligations; the interaction between federal and state agencies as they work toward a common goal, and how the concepts of universal service support for high-cost areas, sustainability, and affordability are changing.

MODERATOR: *Hon. Chris Nelson*, Commissioner, South Dakota Public Service Commission

SPEAKERS: *Diana Eisner*, Vice President, Policy & Advocacy, USTelecom – The Broadband Association
Jefferson England, Vice President and CFO, Silver Star Communications
Tim Goodwin, Vice President, State Regulatory Affairs, Charter Communications
Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D, Director, Office of Broadband , Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
Jill Springer, Senior Policy Advisor, Chief Environmental Review and Permitting Officer, Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, NTIA

RESPONDERS: *Hon. Maida Coleman*, Commissioner, Missouri Public Service Commission
Hon. Michael Caron, Commissioner, Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
Hon. Sarah Freeman, Commissioner, Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

1:30 – 3:00 pm

It's a Brave New World – Natural Gas as a Foundation Fuel – Will it Remain or Need to Evolve? Over the last two decades, natural gas has been foundational to customer affordability and grid reliability. Meanwhile the electric, heating, and transportation industries are implementing initiatives to decarbonize, aiming to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. This panel will explore the following questions: What kind of regulatory signals to the investment community are needed to ensure a reliable supply portfolio during the transition to net-zero? What is the projected deployment timeline for potential transformational technologies like renewable natural gas, hydrogen, and carbon capture and will they be timely and viable solutions? To the extent the deployment of renewable generation and battery storage displaces older fossil fuel generation, what role can natural gas play to address the challenge of the intermittency of renewables while supporting the pursuit of net-zero? What is the natural gas value chain doing to de-carbonize and lower emissions? Where do customers fit in this scenario as policymakers consider significant changes that are likely to have cost and lifestyle impacts? These questions loom large for regulators and stakeholders facing the challenge of determining the most cost-effective and optimal paths to decarbonize the energy sectors while maintaining reliability and affordability for all Americans

MODERATOR: *Dena Wiggins*, President and CEO, Natural Gas Supply Association

PANELISTS: *Dawn Constantin*, Vice President Regulatory Affairs, Partnerships & Low Carbon, BP Energy Company
Robert Kenney, President, Xcel Energy, Colorado
Jim Kerr, President and CEO, Southern Company Gas
David Springe, Executive Director, NASUCA

RESPONDERS: *Hon. Ron Gerwatowski*, Chairman, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Hon. Dwight Keen, Commissioner, Kansas Corporation Commission
Hon. Lea Marquez Peterson, Commissioner, Arizona Corporation Commission

3:30 – 5:00 pm

Technology and Our Energy Future: A Review of the Landscape of R&D and the Promise of Technology

The energy future will rely on emerging technologies that are still in the formative stages and some that have a renaissance; grid edge devices with inverters, DERMS, grid forming technologies, energy storage, carbon sequestration, power electronics, and zero carbon generation are being evaluated and tested. With huge investments from DOE the national labs are leading numerous efforts, the electric sector is looking to organizations like EPRI, and the gas industry looks to its researchers at its technology institute. During this session you will hear about the work ongoing across the landscape at the national labs, EPRI, GTI, Water Research Foundation and from energy company representatives on how the industry makes decisions to implement and invest in these technologies.

MODERATOR: *Richard Mroz*, Managing Director, Resolute Strategies, LLC

PANELISTS: *John Albert*, Chief Research Officer, Water Research Foundation
Gil Bindewald, Principal Assistant Secretary, USDOE Office of Electricity
Rob Chapman, Senior Vice President, Delivery and Customer Solutions, EPRI
Harsha Jasti, Director of Energy Delivery Strategy, Exelon Utilities
Kristine Wiley, Vice President, Low Carbon Energy Solutions, GTI Hydrogen Technology Center

RESPONDERS: *Hon. Dennis Deters*, Commissioner, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
Hon. Edward Lodge, Commissioner, Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Hon. Mary Throne, Chairman, Wyoming Public Service Commission

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024

8:30 - 11:00 am

Commissioner Grill - Conference participants submit questions to moderators – open to

all MODERATORS: *Hon. Tricia Pridemore*, Commissioner, Georgia Public Service Commission
Nick Wagner, VP CO Regulatory Affairs and Policy, Black Hills Corporation

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Hon. Gabriel Aguilera,
New Mexico Public Regulation
Commission

Hon. Katie Anderson,
Arkansas Public Service Commission

Hon. John Betkoski,
Connecticut Public Utilities
Regulatory Authority

Hon. Michael Caron,
Connecticut Public Utilities
Regulatory Authority

Hon. Maida Coleman,
Missouri Public Service Commission

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CHUCK HARDER, Deputy Attorney General, Office of Arkansas Attorney General
JERROLD OPPENHEIM, Principal, Democracy and Regulation
DAVID SPRINGE, Executive Director, NASUCA

GENERAL INFORMATION

LOCATION: The conference will be held at the **Eldorado Hotel, 309 W. San Francisco, Santa Fe, New Mexico.**

RESERVATIONS: A block of rooms has been reserved at a special rate of \$219 per night, single or double. To ensure the special rate, each participant should make his/her own reservations by **March 22, 2024.**

Online: [CLICK HERE](#) or use **Group Code 2404NMSUG** at www.eldoradohotel.com

Phone: Call **505-836-6700** and mention the **NMSU Public Utilities conference** or **Group Code 2404NMSUG**

TRAVEL: Travel time to Santa Fe from the Albuquerque Airport ("ABQ") is 60 minutes by car or 75 minutes by shuttle. Groome Transportation provides transportation between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Call **505.474.5696** for schedule or see their website at <https://groometransportation.com/santa-fe/>. Shuttle is approximately \$43 plus tax one way.

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EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT IF REGISTRATION IS MADE BY MARCH 22, 2024

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- \$1,395 Company Representative
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*Fee does not include travel or hotel accommodations

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Choose one of the following:

- Online <https://cpunmsu.irisregistration.com/Form/2024currentissues>
- Mail completed registration form to address on registration form
- E-mail registration form to jeawalte@nmsu.edu
- Call **Jeanette Walter** at **575-649-4812**

CANCELLATIONS: Cancellations will be accepted in writing by **COB April 8, 2024.** Cancellations after **April 8, 2024,** will be subject to a \$200 cancellation fee. Substitutions can be made in writing at any time

CLE CREDITS: CLE Credits are awarded for this conference in most states. We do not apply to each state; therefore, you must apply as an individual. Please contact Jeanette Walter at jeawalte@nmsu.edu or **575.649.4812** for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Center for Public Utilities MSC 3MPD New Mexico State University Box 30001 Dept. 3MPD Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-8001

- **Jeanette Walter:** Call: **575-649-4812** • E-Mail: jeawalte@nmsu.edu

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