

## Stakeholder Update

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## Message from the Chair

### Change is Life, Life is Change — Reflections on Agency Leadership

The past few months have been among the PUC's most active since I joined the Commission, full of change and challenge.

This is not new: adapting to change has been the constant during my tenure, and really since the

agency's inception as a regulator of services that once included railroads and transportation. I continue to be impressed by and grateful for the way people across the agency are prepared to carry their commitment to the PUC's mission and core values into new roles, issues, circumstances, and pressures.



*Megan Decker,  
PUC Chair*

On the personnel front, a few of the significant changes include:

- ◆ Welcoming Commissioner Les Perkins, who is rounding the corner on three months as a highly capable and valued new leader and decision maker;
- ◆ Transitioning Mike Grant from the role of Executive Director - one he had held since the role's creation in 2018, following 15 years as Chief Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) and more than 30 exemplary years at the agency - to a part-time role as a leadership advisor;
- ◆ In response, moving Nolan Moser and Alison Lackey into the roles of Acting Executive Director and Acting Chief ALJ;
- ◆ And, finally, welcoming Commissioner Letha Tawney's confirmation to a new four-year term extending from 2024 to 2028.

At the same time, energy regulation is a whirlwind of challenge and complexity. To name just a few of the issues:

- ◆ Four energy general rate cases and significant public, media, and legislative focus on affordability concerns in response to rate increases;
- ◆ A tight and volatile energy market, with growing concerns region-wide about resource adequacy;
- ◆ Increasing awareness of the societal problem of catastrophic wildfire and concerns about electric utility financial health related to liability for ignitions;
- ◆ Managing uncertainty about the state's environmental regulation of gas utility service while both implementing HB 2021 for electric utilities and modernizing corresponding regulatory structures (e.g., planning and procurement, Energy Trust, and the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA).

At this time, as in other moments of change and pressure we have faced as an agency, we at the PUC will challenge ourselves to act in the best interests of the utility customers we serve. As always, my goal as a leader will be to hold the long view--maintaining what is core to the PUC's integrity as an institution to be able to carry out our mission in service of utility customers--while actively adapting our practices, organization, and communication to meet the moment. We thank all of our stakeholders for

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their continuing partnership and commitment to constructive relationships as we face the increasingly complicated challenge of regulating safe, reliable, and fairly priced essential utility services.



## Commissioner Tawney Confirmed

Recently Governor Kotek re-appointed and the Oregon State Senate confirmed Letha Tawney to another four-year term as Commissioner for the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC). First appointed to the Commission in 2018, Commissioner Tawney’s new term expires May 31, 2028.



“I am pleased to continue working with Commissioner Tawney as we face important issues impacting Oregon residents and utilities said PUC Chair Megan Decker. “Our work impacts every Oregon household, a responsibility not taken lightly as the energy landscape continues to evolve.”

Over the last six years, Commissioner Tawney has served Oregon utility customers by playing a leading role in several West-wide organizations that support reliability and efficient use of the existing infrastructure. She has chaired the Body of State Regulators for the Western Energy Imbalance Market and served as Vice-Chair for the Markets+States Committee. She has also served on the Energy Trust of Oregon Board since 2019, ensuring the organization reduces system costs by delivering cost-effective energy efficiency to all customers.

“I am fortunate to continue to serve alongside Chair Decker and Commissioner Les Perkins during this enormous shift in the energy sector, said Commissioner Tawney. “There is extraordinary work ahead of us to manage strong load-growth, rapidly reduce emissions and urgently adapt to a changing climate. I look forward particularly to continuing regional work on efforts such wildfire policy, energy efficiency and grid cooperation to support reliability and lower costs for customers.”

Prior to joining the PUC, Commissioner Tawney served as an expert on electric utility business models, state regulation, clean energy development, and large customer buying strategies for World Resources Institute. There she propelled innovation in business and regulatory models in the power sector.

## Announcing Executive Director Change

### PRESS RELEASE:

The Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) announces changes in its executive leadership team to be effective June 10, 2024. Michael Grant is resigning as the PUC’s Executive Director, a role he has held since 2018. Grant, a veteran PUC leader who also served 15 years as Chief Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) and more than 30 years with the agency, will remain as a part-time advisor to agency leadership.

“Mike Grant has capably led the PUC through a period of significant change. Under his leadership, the agency has taken a proactive role in modernizing utility regulatory processes to better serve vulnerable communities, with an eye on the PUC’s mission of providing safe and reliable power to Oregonians,” Oregon Governor Tina Kotek said. “His depth of knowledge, personal integrity, and keen oversight will be greatly missed.”

PUC Chair Megan Decker named Chief ALJ, Nolan Moser, to the role of Acting Executive Director during recruitment of a permanent replacement. Moser, who has held various public service and leadership roles in the energy sector, began his service with the PUC in 2017. As Chief ALJ since 2019, he has led several agency-wide initiatives, including facilitating expanded stakeholder participation in PUC processes. Decker also named Alison Lackey, a veteran in utility regulation with 15 years of experience in Oregon and Massachusetts commissions, as Acting Chief ALJ to fill Moser’s role.

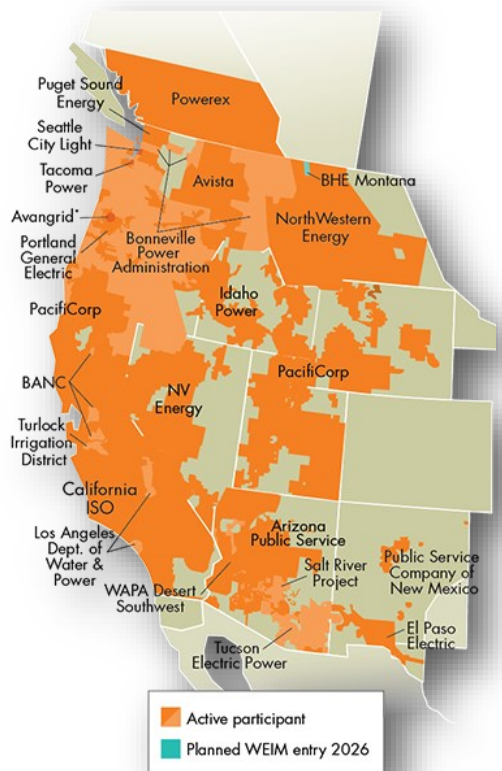
"We are fortunate to have a strong bench to carry on the work of the agency," said Chair Decker. "We are grateful to Nolan and Alison for stepping up to serve in these important roles at a critical time for the PUC and the utility customers we serve."

## Regional Day-Ahead Market(s) Gaining Momentum

### By Zach Baker

Over the last few months there have been several developments around regional day-ahead electricity markets in the West. These include two options reaching market development milestones, announcements regarding intended market participation from Oregon’s investor-owned utilities and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), as well as a proposal to facilitate a single market that matches the current Western Energy Imbalance Market (Western EIM) footprint.

A day-ahead market enables transactions a day in advance to ensure the system operator has adequate resources available in real-time. This added level of coordination is expected to support reliability and cost savings beyond what real-time markets currently provide. Two regional day-ahead markets are currently under development – California Independent System Operator’s [\(CAISO’s\) Extended Day Ahead Market \(EDAM\)](#) and [Southwest Power Pool’s \(SPP\) Markets+ \(Markets+\)](#). In December 2023, CAISO’s EDAM tariff was approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). [On March 29, 2024, SPP](#)



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[Markets+ submitted its tariff to FERC for approval. EDAM is scheduled to launch in spring 2026, and subject to FERC approval, Markets+ is scheduled to launch in early 2027.](#)

While details continue to be hammered out on the implementation of these day-ahead markets, some utilities are expressing their participation intentions. All three of Oregon’s electric investor-owned utilities have now signaled that they intend or are leaning towards joining EDAM. [PGE and Idaho Power](#) made their announcements on March 21, 2024. PacifiCorp became the first entity in the Western United States [to formally commit](#) by signing an implementation agreement on April 25, 2024, with CAISO for EDAM participation. On the other hand, BPA, which is running [a public process to inform its day-ahead market decision](#), announced on April 4, 2024, that it is leaning towards joining Markets+.

At the same time, the [West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative](#) (Pathways Initiative) has been working since last July on an effort led by a group of stakeholders from the eleven western states including Oregon, to create a new entity with an independent governance that can offer an expansive suite of West-wide Regional Transmission Organization functions across the largest possible footprint. On April 10, 2024, the Pathways Initiative released its straw proposal, which includes steps to achieving regional independent governance over EDAM.

## BizApps Replacement Project Update

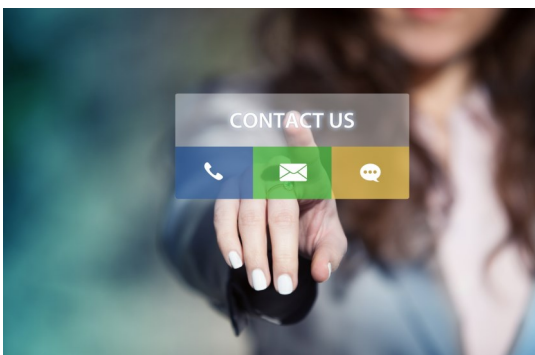
For the past 24 years, the PUC has utilized a custom built and maintained software program called ‘BizApps’ to handle docketing internally and externally. After an extensive solicitation process and discovery phase to determine stakeholder needs, the PUC selected a vendor to replace this system. Unfortunately, work with that first vendor, which was working to develop a new custom solution, failed.



In our last project update, we communicated that we were working with the state on a new procurement to replace our aging system and that we requested the state allow us to move on an accelerated timetable. We noted that we would be permitted to utilize “Software as a Service” or SAS solution, to avoid building a custom solution, and allowing us to work with software providers that have successfully deployed docketing systems elsewhere in the country.

### Update on steps towards implementation of a new system

We have selected a qualified vendor and are now working to develop security and other state-required documentation before a contract is signed. To accomplish this, the PUC is contracting with a licensed and certified project manager. Following finalization of the contract, we will kick off the project with our selected contractor. Further updates and timelines for the project will be provided as we move forward.



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