CLEAN ENERGY SITING COUNCIL SUMMARY

Date: May 13, 2026, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Council Co-leads:
Ecology: Joenne McGerr, Diane Butorac, Alex Shin, Amelia Fujikawa, Marissa Smith
Commerce: Dan Siemann, Nora Hawkins, Talia Mirel, Bill Drumheller, Rebecca Ponzio, Eli King, Monica Bramble, Benjamin Serr, Deanah Watson
Council Members: *DAHP:* Allyson Brooks; *DNR:* Zoe Mullendore, Jim Woodward; *EFSEC*: Lisa McLean, Keith Quinata; *GOV*: Kate Brouns; *UTC*: Heather Moline; *WDFW*: Ben Blank; *WSDOT*: Gretchen Coker
Guests: *Commerce:* Austin Scharff, Anthony Vendetti, Teddy Davenport; *CETI/Evolved Energy:* Jeremy Hargreaves; *PNUCC*: Crystal Ball

Panel: Energy Demand and Supply Forecasting

The Council welcomed Austin Scharff (Commerce), Heather Moline (UTC), Jeremy Hargreaves (Clean Energy Transition Institute/Evolved Energy), and Crystal Ball (Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee) for presentations and a panel discussion about energy demand and supply forecasting.

Austin Scharff provided an overview of the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), which commits Washington's electricity supply to be free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. CETA sets a goal for Washington's electricity system to be clean, affordable, equitable, and reliable. CETA applies to all electric utilities serving retail customers in Washington; it does not regulate power plants.

CETA establishes three compliance steps for Washington's retail electricity portfolio: no coal by 2025, greenhouse gas neutral by 2030, and 100% renewable or non-emitting by 2045. The 2030 greenhouse gas neutrality standard requires portfolios to be 80% renewable or non-emitting. Utilities may use natural gas paired with alternative compliance options to cover the remaining 20% of their retail load. Utilities are not required to increase their clean energy resources prior to 2030. Data suggests that many utilities can already meet the neutrality standard while others anticipate complying. In addition, the compliance window spans four years, so utilities do not need to meet the greenhouse gas standard on Jan. 1, 2030, but instead must comply over the 2030-2034 period.

Utilities must build resource plans to comply with the standard, but utility operations balance a range of considerations when doing so. Consumer-owned utilities submitted their second round of clean energy implementation plans (CEIPs) in January 2026. These CEIPs explain how each utility plans to reach the mandatory clean electricity targets set by CETA and include specific actions that the utility will take over the next four years to show progress toward meeting the clean electricity targets.

Heather Moline discussed UTC's role in resource planning conducted by Washington's investor-owned utilities, specifically how UTC considers and reviews supply and demand forecasts. The supply and demand forecast process generally consists of an economic forecast, a load forecast, portfolio development, a preferred portfolio/supply forecast, and then implementation and reassessment. The UTC engages with resource planning by participating in utility-convened technical advisory groups, providing and requesting formal comments for/from the public, participating as a party in controversial cases, and formally ruling on the implementation of a plan. The UTC and Commerce also co-host resource adequacy meetings to help ensure Washington has a reliable and affordable electricity supply. Utilities are sometimes not able to implement their supply and demand forecasts exactly as written or anticipated for reasons including disagreements around compliance standards; challenges with siting, permitting, procurement, and supply chains; and adapting to conditions that are different than their initial assumptions.

Jeremy Hargreaves shared information about demand and supply modeling used for the recently released Washington Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). CCAP modeling includes changes to energy-related federal incentives and deadlines made by the current administration. To build the model, Evolved Energy first built a picture of load growth, including the wide range of potential data center electricity demand. They then determined how to supply those loads given a range of factors, including federal policy changes, in-state resource development, transmission development, emissions reductions by sector, and decarbonized fuels. Findings from the analysis show that Washington is reliant on near-term clean energy imports from other states, and that greater in-state development can reduce the need for imported clean energy. However, the pace of additions will need to be significantly higher than recent history to meet anticipated load growth.

Crystal Ball then shared information about the PNUCC Northwest Regional Forecast. PNUCC asks utilities and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) to respond to an information request and then aggregates and validates the responses. A key takeaway is that the Pacific Northwest has entered a new era of electricity demand. The report provides key findings, including that the regional load forecast could increase by approximately 30% over the next 10 years, which is in line with recent projections; there is still a substantial regional gap between the projected future demand for electricity and the ability to supply it, especially during times of summer and winter peak demand; reductions in firm generation resources must be replaced; and strategic investment and regional coordination is needed. In addition, the summer electricity demand peak is forecast to grow more quickly due to hotter weather and increasing use of air conditioning. The presentation highlighted that significant new energy resources have been built across the four Northwest states (WA, OR, ID and MT), emphasizing the importance of the regional transmission system. A coalition of utilities developed a report with E3 that focused on resource adequacy and also identified a substantial capacity gap. While PNUCC's NW Regional Forecast and the E3 study have similar findings, they are separate and independent assessments.

Governor's Office Update

Kate Brouns (Governor's Office) informed the Council about a range of recent engagements by Governor Ferguson related to climate issues. Governor Ferguson was recently named co-chair of the United States Climate Alliance, participated in a meeting with Governor Kotek of Oregon, Climate Solutions, and others, and met with utilities and labor organizations that included discussion of energy development.

Governor's Executive Order 25-11

Dan Siemann (Commerce) shared an update on the Joint Clean Energy Acceleration Team (JCEAT), which most recently met in April. An updated project list and summary of agency actions from January 30 are now available on the JCEAT website.

Energy Mapping

Dan Siemann provided an overview of existing energy mapping efforts, including the Washington Compatible Energy Siting Assessment, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) Responsible Energy Siting Pilot, and WaTech energy mapping pilot. Dan also shared additional mapping examples, including the Clean Energy Transition Institute's Northwest Clean Energy Atlas, the Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment (ORESA), and Ecology's Site Hazard Assessment and Ranking Process (SHARP) Dashboard. Heather Moline (UTC) also shared the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPCC) map of power generation in the Northwest.

Teddy Davenport (Commerce) discussed the Washington State Zoning Atlas (WAZA). The WAZA was created to help answer basic land use and policy questions at the state level. It includes allowed uses and development standards, and it also translates each local jurisdiction's zoning designations into standardized categories. Since local governments change zoning over time, the WAZA will be updated on a rolling basis.

Anthony Vendetti (Commerce) then presented on energy mapping coordination led by Commerce's Energy Resilience and Emergency Management Office (EREMO). EREMO uses an internal tool to track outages, energy infrastructure, and hazards across the state. Maps like the Washington State Utility Outage Map can address misinformation by sharing accurate data with the public. Furthermore, data security for critical energy infrastructure information is of growing importance in order to protect energy supply continuity.

The Council then discussed ideas for new clean energy mapping development.

Recap of Tribal and Interested Parties Workshops

Talia Mirel (Commerce) presented a summary of the Council's tribal and interested parties workshops held on April 28 and April 30. Workshop participants included over 11 tribes and tribal organizations; energy developers; federal, state, and local government; utilities; non-profits and advocacy organizations; and interested citizens. Participants shared their

perspectives on the most critical problems holding back clean energy development and suggestions for improving the siting and permitting of clean energy and transmission.

The Council then engaged in a group discussion about the workshops. Insights from the workshop are informing Council priorities and the upcoming annual legislative report.

Legislative Report

Dan Siemann updated the Council about the status of the annual legislative report, which is currently in development. He shared the most current versions of the report outline, draft recommendations, and report development schedule. Council members then discussed topics to include in the report, sections that Council agencies will contribute, and the draft recommendations.

Geothermal Collaborative Process Update

Alex Shin shared updates about the geothermal energy collaborative process. Ecology released a draft legislative update that summarizes community and tribal engagement to date and includes preliminary recommendations. A 30-day comment period on the draft closes on May 15. The legislative update is due June 30, 2026, and a final legislative report is due June 30, 2027.

Agency Updates

On May 27, EFSEC will hold a public comment hearing about the Cascade Renewable Transmission project. On June 22, Commerce and the UTC will host a meeting about resource adequacy in Washington.

ACTION ITEMS			
Responsible	**Action**	**Start Date**	**Due Date**
All	Provide information for the annual legislative report using the agency templates	March 19	June 11