



Regional  
Technical  
Forum

# The Role of the Regional Technical Forum in PNW Energy Efficiency Programs

May 14, 2008

# What You're About to Hear

- Who Are Those Guys?
- What's Their Role?
- How Do They Make Decisions?

# RTF - Origin and Function

- 1996 Congress charged Council and Bonneville with formation of a *Regional Technical Forum (RTF)* on conservation evaluation and verification
- Northwest Governor's Comprehensive Review Expanded RTF's Mission
  - Task 1 - *Track regional progress* toward conservation and renewable resource goals
  - Task 2 - *Provide feedback and suggestions* for improving conservation and renewable resource development programs in the region
  - Task 3- *Conduct periodic reviews* of the region's progress
  - Task 4 - *Communicate recommendations* to appropriate decision-makers

# Council Action

- **Formed** Regional Technical Forum in July of 1999
  - Advisory Committee to Council
- **Members:**
  - Appointed by Council Power Division Director
  - Technical expertise/experience required, not “constituent based”
  - Utilities, State Energy Office, energy service companies, consultants and public interest groups, and Bonneville
- **Staffing:** Council staff support the work of Forum (under Council budget)
- **Technical Support:** RTF retains outside consultant services when special expertise is required (under RTF sponsorship)
- **Public Involvement:** All meetings noticed w/ agenda & work products available on Web:  
*(<http://www.nwcouncil.org/energy/rtf/Default.htm>)*

# How the RTF Performs Its Technical Work

- Staff support
  - Council staff serve as Chair & Co-Chair & provide majority of technical support
    - » Staff time covered by Council budget
  - Bonneville provides limited technical staff support
  - RTF recently approved contract for consultant technical and management support (approx. 0.5 FTE)
- RTF members are volunteers
  - Some members receive “honoraria” for time spent on RTF tasks (meetings, special assignments) if not otherwise compensated by employer
- RTF retains outside consultant services when special expertise is required
- RTF approves annual work plan & budget and authorizes all expenditures

# RTF's Role in Bonneville Programs

- In late 1999 Bonneville asked Council to charge RTF with task of providing specific recommendations regarding the implementation of its rate discount program

- List of “eligible” measures
- Savings
- Value to Bonneville
- Etc.

(To view BPA's complete request see: <http://www.nwcouncil.org/energy/rtf/charter.htm>)

- Bonneville has subsequently relied on the RTF to:
  - Review and maintain a database of cost-effective energy efficiency measures for use in its programs
  - Screen new energy efficiency measures/practices for technical viability and cost-effectiveness
  - Maintain technical program specifications
  - Assist in developing technology assessments and program evaluation designs

# RTF's Regional Role

- ***Provides regional cost-effectiveness methodology and software***
  - Incorporates Council Plan results
- ***Maintains a comprehensive database of cost-effective conservation measures and programs*** that contains estimated:
  - Incremental cost
  - Savings (kWh & KW)
  - Benefit/Cost Ratios
    - » Wholesale and retail utility perspectives
    - » Regional perspective
  - Carbon reduction (lbs over life of savings)

## RTF's Regional Role (2)

- ***Provides standardized protocols*** for estimating savings and regional power system value for measures/programs not in the database
- ***Maintains a “petition process”*** through which utilities/vendors can propose new measures or savings verification protocols or request modification to the cost and savings assumed for existing measures or savings verification protocols
- ***Performs ongoing updates*** of database as technology and standard practices change

# RTF's Regional Role (3)

- ***Develops and Maintains Program Technical Specifications and Quality*** control criteria
- ***Internet-based System for Planning, Tracking and Reporting regional conservation progress*** including both savings and expenditures
  - RTF maintains technical database
  - BPA paid for development and ongoing maintenance
  - Now used for many BPA “back-office” functions, e.g., custom project review and approval, invoicing, etc.
  - Will be used by Washington utilities covered by I-937 to report conservation savings to state auditor/CTED

# What the RTF Does Not Do

- Perform any regulatory function
- Set measure credit/reimbursement levels for Bonneville or any other utility programs
- Establish Bonneville program reporting requirements and/or schedules
- Restrict which measures utilities can install
- Require the use of specific program designs
  - except for technical and quality control requirements

## 5th Plan Set Forth Two Tasks Related to Regional Technical Forum

- “. . . establish a mechanism and funding to track and report regional conservation investments and accomplishments annually.”
- “. . . define the role, funding, and structure of the Regional Technical Forum.”

# Progress to Date

- After public review Council determined RTF should maintain its original role and structure
- RTF secured stable external funding of approximately \$300,000/yr for three year period (2007-09) through sponsorship system by Bonneville, the region's large utilities & Energy Trust of Oregon

## Progress to Date (2)

- RTF Online Planning, Tracking and Reporting (PTR) System has been modified to permit tracking of “utility funded” conservation activities and well as Bonneville funded activities
- PTR System has now been moved to a dedicated “server” at Council to permit additional system enhancements and facilitate data analysis

## Regional Technical Forum 2008 Budget

Task/Work Element	Estimated Budget	Share of Total
Review of Regional and Extra-Regional Impact Evaluations of Existing or Potential Deemed Measures	\$35,000	11%
Ductless Heat Pump Savings Impact Evaluation - SOW Development	\$29,000	9%
Commercial Packaged Roof Top Air Conditioning - Scoping Phase III	\$25,000	8%
Vending Machine Market Characterization Research	\$30,000	9%
SEEM User Interface Programming	\$12,000	4%
Emerging Technology Review	\$30,000	9%
Manufactured Housing Baseline Field Evaluation	\$10,000	3%
Technical Support Contracts	\$50,000	15%
Member Contract Support	\$75,000	23%
Regional Conservation Progress Tracking Support	\$15,000	5%
Meetings	\$15,000	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$326,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Work elements highlighted in yellow are underway

# Regional Technical Forum Annual Sponsorships

2007 - 2009

Organization	Sponsorship	Status
Bonneville Power Administration	\$125,000	\$125,000
Energy Trust of Oregon	\$35,000	\$35,000
Puget Sound Energy	\$30,000	\$30,000
Idaho Power Company	\$25,000	\$25,000
Seattle City Light	\$20,000	\$20,000
Avista	\$15,000	\$15,000
PacifiCorp (Outside Oregon)	\$15,000	\$15,000
Snohomish PUD	\$15,000	\$15,000
Tacoma Power	\$10,000	Pending
NorthWestern	\$5,000	Pending
Eugene Water and Electric Board	\$5,000	\$5,000
Total	\$300,000	\$285,000

# Value of RTF to Region

- Leverages utility investments in technology evaluation
- Provides centralized source of “peer reviewed” cost and savings assessments
  - Reduces “regulatory” debates/costs
- Serves as “clearinghouse” for vendors of new technologies
- Expands region’s technical assessment capabilities and knowledge base