



## State of Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday - March 15, 2023

**Time:** 9 – 10 a.m. MST

**Location:** Virtual via Microsoft Teams

### **Participants:**

#### **ISEA Board Members**

Todd Combs, Idaho National Laboratory – Chairman

Eric Anderson, Idaho Public Utilities Commission – Vice Chair

Tim Frost, Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional License

Jared Ellsworth, Idaho Power

Bear Prairie, Idaho Falls Power

Will Hart, Idaho Consumer-Owned Utilities Association

Alan Prouty, Simplot

Richard Stover, Idaho Governor’s Office of Energy and Mineral Resources

#### **Others**

Josh Haver, Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Lynn Ancell, Idaho Power

Marissa Warren, Idaho Governor’s Office of Energy and Mineral Resources

Michael Baskin, former Center for Advanced Energy Studies

Michael Heckler, Clean Energy Opportunities for Idaho

Rebecca Casper, Idaho Falls Mayor

Maija Reed, Idaho Office of Emergency Management

S. M. Shafiul Alam, Idaho National Laboratory

Stephen Goodson, Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Wendolyn Holland, Holland Consulting

Brenna Garro, Idaho Governor’s Office of Energy and Mineral Resources

John Hammond, Idaho Public Utilities Commission

### **Meeting Agenda**

#### **Welcome/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Minutes approved from 2/10/2022.

#### **Update on ISEA Board of Directors Members**

After serving as Idaho’s representative for 15 years, Jim Yost has retired from the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. The Idaho Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (OEMR) and the Governor’s staff are working on selecting a new member. Administrator Richard Stover will serve as the representative for OEMR.

## Task Force Update

### 2021 Resiliency and Reliability Task Force

- Task Force Chair: Dr. Ning Kang, Idaho National Laboratory (INL)
- Objectives: Prepared a report on opportunities and barriers to enhance energy reliability and resiliency in Idaho and completed review and final approval of the 2022 Idaho Energy Security Plan.
- Report was collaborative and went through various review periods through the task force members, the Task Force Chair, and the ISEA Board Chair.
- Reports will be available to the public on OEMR's website and via a press release.

### 2021 Alternative Transportation Fuels Task Force

- Task Force Chair: John Smart, INL
- This report went through a similar process as the Resiliency and Reliability report with task force collaboration and review by the Task Force Chair, and the ISEA Board Chair.

### 2021 Utility-scale Storage Task Force

- Task Force Chair: Dr. Eric Dufek, INL
- This report went through a similar process as the Resiliency and Reliability report with task force collaboration and review by the Task Force Chair, and the ISEA Board Chair.

Moment to remember Dick Fosbury who was a member of the Energy Infrastructure Task Force.

### 2022 Energy Infrastructure Task Force

- Objective: Review provisions of the 2021 Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (BIL) and provide recommendations to OEMR and the state on potential projects and programs to support.
- Grid Hardening and Modernization Working Group
  - Objective: Review provisions of the BIL relating to grid modernization and resilience to identify opportunities for strategic investments to improve energy resilience in Idaho. This required review of the state's electric grid and development of a rubric to identify areas of need and priority grid modernization projects in the state.
  - Deliverables: Developed a survey to give Idaho utilities and other key industry stakeholders the opportunity to identify the greatest needs in terms of resiliency investments, priority reliability projects, and key metrics for measuring grid resiliency and reliability. OEMR collected a master project list from utilities to gauge the demand for these types of funding opportunities. The list consists of approximately 80 projects. The working group used the survey results to develop a grading rubric to select awardees for the 2022 Energy Resiliency Grant program. The rubric will continue to be used in additional funding cycles for energy resiliency grant program funding.
  - Questions and Comments
    - Tim Frost: Interested in the identification of vegetation and fuel load management as a factor of grid resiliency. Regarding competitive grants, there were a couple utility companies that utilized satellite imagery to

identify beetle kills and various frameworks that would increase the risk of wildfires. Interested that wildfire is a factor in grid stability.

- Richard Stover: Generally, the state program is modeled after BIL Section 40101d program which OEMR will be receiving \$25 million over the next 5 years. In terms of identification and prioritization, OEMR had to abide to the general constructs of 40101d. One key component is resiliency efforts to mitigate natural disasters (specifically wildfire). Idaho has more severe wildfires and our grid infrastructure is located in wildfire prone areas. Wildfire mitigation efforts, including vegetation management, became a priority.
- Jared Ellsworth: Wildfire is a critical item for Idaho Power. Idaho Power is working through years of wildfire mitigation plans and received mesh pole wrap funding.
- Lynn Ancell: Received funding for the mesh pole wrap associated with vegetation management and wildfire mitigation. Ran a project for AI and satellite imagery as a pilot program to see how the technology could assist in identifying areas of wildfire risk.
- Tim Frost: Wildfire and drought are interesting topics that will need to be navigated over and over. The grants detailed a couple of items: mesh, vegetation cutbacks, and satellite imagery. Would be interested in any additional information on the topics.
- Energy Efficiency and Alternative Energy Working Group
  - Objective: Review provisions of the BIL relating to energy efficiency and alternative energy to identify opportunities for strategic investment to improve energy affordability in Idaho. This required review of state and local energy needs and development of recommendations for program and project development to support energy affordability throughout the state.
  - Deliverables: Identified three target areas for program development; K-12 schools, rural local communities, and agricultural communities. Target areas were engaged through Association of Idaho Cities (AIC), Idaho Association of Counties (IAC), The State Department of Education (SDE), industry newsletters, etc. Three surveys were developed (one for each target group) to understand the needs of the communities. The surveys are still open.
- Competitive Grants Working Group
  - Objective: Assess state and local energy infrastructure needs and review competitive grant opportunities included in the BIL to assist OEMR in providing an information clearinghouse and technical assistance for Idaho municipalities and businesses seeking to pursue energy improvements. This required reviewing the BIL guidance, distributing funding announcements, and providing technical assistance.
  - Deliverables: Created one-page summaries to distribute directly to eligible stakeholders. Developed a weekly federal grants newsletter that includes RFIs, FOAs, and NOIs for energy related grants through the BIL. OEMR enhanced their social media presence through Twitter and LinkedIn and posted opportunities through those avenues. OEMR will continue to utilize each of these tools moving

forward with the BIL and the IRA opportunities through the Department of Energy (DOE) and the United States Department of Agriculture. (USDA) DOE and USDA.

### **Task Force Discussion**

Todd Combs motions to close existing Task Forces and publish reports. Alan Prouty seconds the motion.

- Approve: Todd Combs, Eric Anderson, Tim Frost, Jared Ellsworth, Will Hart, Alan Prouty, Richard Stover
- Opposed: None.
- Marissa Warren will reach out to the board members not present during the vote to ensure they have no objections to closing the task forces and publishing the reports.

### **Round Table Discussion on Topics of Interest**

2023 options for establishing new Task Forces include:

- State Energy Plan
  - Marissa Warren: The last Idaho Energy Plan was published in 2012. It is time to update the plan.
    - Eric Anderson: Highly recommends developing this task force. Believes it would be helpful for the PUC to understand what statutes are concurrent and what the legislature's intent is. Utilities need to know what the energy plan would require of them. Would be timely to get this done as soon as we can. Nominates Administrator Richard Stover as Chair of this Task Force if established.
    - Jared Ellsworth: Important part of the energy plan would be the state's energy independence or dependence. The Lava Ridge Project has received push back and Idaho Power believes the impacts should be addressed with the project. The project is getting negative press and it may lead to other projects not developed in Idaho. Wind projects are critical to meeting Idaho's need for energy in the future. Idaho is open for business and wind and solar development needs to occur throughout the state.
    - Alan Prouty: Echoes the comments of others and supports the development of an updated State Energy Plan.
    - Richard Stover: Important to set the backdrop on broad issues facing Idaho in terms of regional planning requirements and energy markets in general. There is a broad range of efforts occurring that OEMR has identified as areas of concern for the State. Because our current plan is outdated, it leaves Idaho in a position of weakness in terms of negotiating for strength on a regional level. In addition to addressing project development, there are broader regional topics and efforts to understand how to weigh in on.
- Geothermal
  - Marissa Warren: There is a lot of geothermal potential in Idaho (7<sup>th</sup> greatest in the US), and it represents a baseload power resource. Geothermal is geographically constrained across the state.
  - Richard Stover: Should consider other regional efforts. The Western Governors Association is leading the Heat Beneath Our Feet effort. Duplication of efforts and bandwidth of OEMR and Task Force members should be considered.

- Tim Frost: Knowing where the Governor’s priorities are would be beneficial to choosing a topic.
- Eric Anderson: The geographic location shouldn’t discount the potential to create a geothermal task force.
- Jared Ellsworth: Idaho Power supports geothermal and has been looking into it internally. It is a resource that gives Idaho a strategic advantage.
- Advanced Nuclear | Critical Minerals | Hydrogen
  - Marissa Warren: In the interest of time the last three topics of conversation will be combined. The LINE Commission shows the Governor’s support for INL and promoting commercial development for nuclear resources throughout the state. There is a federal emphasis towards the promotion of advancing critical minerals in Idaho. Idaho has key resources that could use additional analysis to help the state promote critical minerals that are accessible. Hydrogen is included and promoted in the BIL and has been on the national scene of growing interest. Hydrogen offers a baseload power resource and other direct uses that could be of interest to Idaho.
  - Todd Combs: These areas are where billion dollars of investment are occurring in the DOE. There are a significant number of demonstrations on the timeline for INL. It was interesting to see an Australian company come to Idaho to mine the cobalt and send it to Brazil for processing. Got the impression that there were not a large number of jobs created for Idahoans through the Jervois cobalt project. What does the state want in terms of mineral resources and rare earths? Wants to explore critical minerals in an environmentally friendly way.
  - Alan Prouty: Great interest in critical minerals. Could start consolidating and cataloging what we know about resources and looking at the processing step. A lot of minerals leave the country for processing. Determining how to process the materials in Idaho is important to note.
  - Eric Anderson: Administrator Stover and Eric are on the NASEO/NARUC Advanced Nuclear State Collaborative. Advanced nuclear is important for more firm power generation (baseload power). Consider combining advanced nuclear with hydrogen.
  - Richard Stover: These all represent areas of interest from conversations with the Governor’s staff. The State Energy Plan is a high priority. As well as determining the path for commercial nuclear and critical mineral deployment. Anticipates that the State Energy Plan would have a component of geothermal and hydrogen.
  - Eric Anderson: Should consider a committee on wildfire.
  - Marissa Warren: Will work with board members via email to schedule a meeting in the next few weeks to continue discussions on new Task Forces.

### **Public Comment Period**

- Michael Baskin: Looks forward to reading the Task Force reports. The reports are important to site for grant applications to the federal government.
- Michael Heckler: Appreciates the comprehensive review. If there is a Task Force established for reviewing the State Energy Plan, please consider the ability for non-governmental organizations to participate in them. If that is allowed, Clean Energy Opportunities for Idaho would like to participate.
- Wendolyn Holland: The Idaho Geothermal Alliance is working on a significant study of

Idaho's geothermal resources. With respect to critical minerals, the newly expanded 48C Advanced Energy Manufacturing Tax Credit encompasses processing critical minerals.

**Wrap up and Adjournment**

Meeting formally adjourns at approximately 10:00 am.