

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL RELATIONS, ENERGY, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN ALAN OLSON**, on April 8, 2005 at 3:07 P.M., in Room 350 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Alan Olson, Chairman (R)
Rep. Dave Gallik, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. Robyn Driscoll (D)
Rep. Robin Hamilton (D)
Rep. Harry Klock (R)
Rep. Mark E. Noennig (R)
Rep. Diane Rice (R)
Rep. Wayne Stahl (R)
Rep. Karl Waitschies (R)

Members Excused: Rep. George G. Groesbeck (D)
Rep. Dennis Himmelberger, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Hal Jacobson (D)
Rep. John Parker (D)
Rep. Brady Wiseman (D)

Staff Present: Todd Everts, Legislative Branch
Cynthia Peterson, Committee Secretary

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary: Presentation on Wind Generation
Hearing & Date Posted: None.
Executive Action: None.

WIND POWER GENERATION IN MONTANA

(Note: The three presenters attended the meeting at the request of CHAIRMAN OLSON.)

Dr. Edgar A. DeMeo, Renewable Energy, gave a Power Point presentation on integrating wind power into the electric power system.

[EXHIBIT](#)(feh75a01)

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 3.5 - 30.3; Comments: Presentation of Mr. DeMeo continues on Tape 1; Side B.}

Ted Williams, Director of Transmission Operations and Planning, Northwestern Energy (NWE), spoke about variability impacts.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 8.7 - 28.2; Comments: Ted Williams Presentation continues on Tape 2; Side A.}

Ron Rebenitsch, P.E., Basin Electric Cooperative, gave a Power Point presentation on wind generation.

[EXHIBIT](#)(feh75a02)

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 9.4 - 30.3; Comments: Mr. Rebenitsch's presentation continues on Tape 2; Side B.}

Questions from the Committee and Responses:

CHAIRMAN OLSON was curious how power could be scheduled on a system where the wind is blowing 15 mph, and then gusts up to 30 mph. **CHAIRMAN OLSON** pointed out that wind gusts at 50 mph could trip the generators off and on. **Mr. Williams** shared **CHAIRMAN OLSON'S** concern with wind being erratic. **Mr. Williams** hoped there would be enough diversity within a site that not all the turbines would come down at the same time. **Dr. DeMeo** agreed diversity would be important and that all the turbines would not be running at the same time to avoid obvious fluctuations.

CHAIRMAN OLSON asked if the wind generator would be responsible for updating Mr. Williams on what power would be coming down the line. **Dr. DeMeo** explained the wind generator could give the best forecast possible, and then adjustments would be made accordingly. **Mr. Williams** stated a huge swing in power would not be noticed in a matter of minutes, but a major swing could occur within an hour, and that could become problematic.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 21.1 - 28.2; Comments: Questions from the Committee.}

{Tape: 3; Side: A}

Mr. Williams spoke about Montana's need for a transmission system. **Dr. DeMeo** explained the perception of needing to keep Montana's energy in Montana and the resulting hesitation to build transmission lines.

REP. NOENNIG wondered what would happen when wind generation exceeds 30 megawatts. **Mr. Williams** responded that they would slow down the system, but noted that NWE could be subject to sanctions if it failed to comply with established operating criteria. **Mr. Williams** spoke about the need to determine how much power would be required for ancillary services and stated NWE needs operating experience.

REP. STAHL wondered if the cost of regulation in the process would increase as need increases. **Mr. Williams** responded NWE's experience does not indicate that is the case.

REP. STAHL commented that at some point, it would need to be determined how much capacity for transmission would be needed over the next 20 years. **Dr. DeMeo** agreed and stated that other states have had the foresight to undertake that effort.

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ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:15 P.M.

REP. ALAN OLSON, Chairman

CYNTHIA PETERSON, Secretary

AO/cp

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([feh75aad0.PDF](#))