



Flexible Load Management Working Group

Thursday, June 27, 2024
11:00 am – 11:40 a m

Attendees

Betsy Bloomer (VELCO), Bill Powell (WEC), Cyril Brunner (VEC), Jeffrey Cram (GF Power), Dan Kopin (VELCO), David Westman (EVT), Drew Clayson (VPPSA), Garth Dunkel (VPPSA), Jasmine Rivest (EVT), JJ Vandette (WEC), Jonathan Dowds (REV), Marc Allen (VELCO), Anne Margolis (PSD), Michael Lazorchak (SED), Morgan Casella (Dynamic Organics), Paul Lambert (EVT), Philip Picotte (PSD), Sarah Braese (VPPSA), Tom Lyle (BED), Cam Twarog (GMP)

Review of Flex Load Inventory Spreadsheet

Philip Picotte introduced the Excel spreadsheet template intended to create an inventory of existing flexible load programs, a first step recommended during the last meeting as part of quantifying benefits and estimating potential. The inventory is meant to be wide-ranging, including non-traditional flex load programs such as special contracts that use price signals or calls for curtailment. It also captures which benefits programs are trying to achieve, such as RNS or FCM cost avoidance, or load shifting for price arbitrage.

Sarah Braese asked to include eligibility requirements for customer participation and said that the communication protocol is a core element of any program. There is also value in understanding if it's a voluntary (behavioral) response or its directly controlled. David Westman suggested asking if there is a device required to be added on, or if the base equipment is sufficient to participate.

JJ Vandette mentioned that there are manufacturer-specific limitations or requirements, depending on the device. He also suggested including flex load programs that have been tried but abandoned by distribution utilities (DUs) or energy efficiency utilities (EEUs) because they just didn't work well enough. Finally, JJ suggested including the savings achieved per-participant or per-device to gauge flex load magnitude (kW per device).

David asked if the inventory is meant to cover all past pilots. Philip said it is up to the user's judgement which pilots are relevant and worth including; this will be helpful for the next step of quantifying benefits and assessing potential. Dave suggested adding a column for lessons learned, and gave an example that one lesson is phasing event calls to carefully modulate event starts and the bounce-back effect of resuming loads. Finally, Sarah suggested asking whether devices are utility-owned or customer-owned.

Charter Document

Philip gave a brief update on the charter, which he will circulate for feedback. This includes elements to add or leave out, including any call-out of sensitive topics such as data privacy or security. He does not expect this working group will get into the details of customer data privacy terms and conditions given the big topics before it.

Relationship with Technical Working Group

Sarah asked to have reports from the VSPC Technical Working Group and their areas of focus. Dave said that the Technical Working Group and the Department's lead, Lou Cecere, are working closely with VELCO on issues from the Long Range Transmission Plan that are being explored for applicability of solving. This Working Group's scope of work is different, based on the three pillars of this group approved by the Public Utility Commission (potential study, avoided costs, roles and responsibilities of actors) which are largely not location-dependent.

Anne Margolis said that load flexibility is one of the main responses to some of the issues raised in the Long Range Transmission Plan. The Technical Working Group is well suited to a long-list of topics—especially communications and control, visibility, integration of DERs—many of which fall in the flexible load bucket. VELCO's Transmission Plan identified specific problems to be solved separate from the broader landscape of flex load. There could be a fruitful feedback loop between the Geotargeting Subcommittee, the Technical Working Group, and this working group. We would benefit hearing from others about whether it makes sense to continue the FLM here and in the Technical Working Group, or it makes sense to pause that in the Technical Working Group until the Geotargeting Subcommittee has more concrete tasks to advise on. The value of flexible load management is the trickiest area. Anne said that a generic value will be hard to come up with. We are looking for a fruitful, sequential way to address this challenge.