

SUMMARY:
Request for Information (RFI) Question and Answer Webinar
February 15, 2013

The Western Interstate Energy Board (WIEB) and the State-Provincial Steering Committee (SPSC) issued a Request for Information (RFI) on February 1, 2013 with the title, “Western Natural Gas-Electric Assessment.” Pursuant to the RFI (page 4), WIEB staff hosted an Informational Meeting via webinar-conference call on Friday, February 15, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. MST. The meeting was in a question and answer format where potential respondents asked questions about the RFI and staff provided answers to those questions. This document summarizes the questions and answers of the February 15 call.

This is a summary of the February 15 webinar. It is not intended to be a transcript or a presentation of the questions and answers verbatim or in full. A complete recording of the webinar is available at the following link: [RFI Question Answer Webinar - Recording](#).

There were 36 people on the call. WIEB was represented by Alaine Ginocchio, Steve Ellenbecker, and Tom Carr (staff).

Alaine Ginocchio provided introductions, background information on the gas-electric topic for the State-Provincial Steering Committee (SPSC) and Committee on Regional Electric Power Cooperation (CREPC), the steps leading to the RFI and an overview of the RFI. See [Presentation Material](#). She then opened it up for questions from the participants.

Question 1:

Q1: Could you please explain the purpose of the 9 month timeframe for the proposed study?

A1: The project would be funded from SPSC consulting funds which came from the Department of Energy under ARRA funding. There is a hard stop deadline to use these funds by the end of 2014. We want to finish the project and have time for presentations and discussion among the SPSC membership. There may be some flexibility on the specific dates for the project. Our hope is to complete the project in 9 months. If RFI responses indicate there is an issue addressing certain aspects of the study because of time limitations, this would be useful information.

Question 2:

Q2: Are you looking for the project to continue on an on-going basis or for it to be a one-time report?

A2: We prefer for the project to continue on an on-going basis. The initial idea was to build a model for future continued use. We did not know if this was practical. We also considered the possibility of a contractor delivering a one-time report. Additionally, we considered the option of a contractor iterating back and forth between modeling completed by the gas industry and the electric industry. We realized that we needed to better understand what is practical; this is one of the motivations for the RFI.

Question 3:

Q3: You make reference to building a sustainable process. Can you elaborate and explain your expectations on long term and short term analyses?

A3: Ideally we would like to build better collaboration between the gas industry and the electric industry. We want to build a process that both industries and the respective regulators sustain over time. We do not want to create a one-time report. We hope that this current project sets a foundation for a longer term sustainable process. The RFP will be shaped by the information we get from the RFI. We appreciate your participation in the RFI and are confident that the RFP will be better with the information we get from the RFI responses.

Question 4:

Q4: If it is not possible for a potential contractor to respond to the RFI, will it hurt them in a negative manner if the same potential contractor responds to the RFP?

A4: No. We are asking for feedback on the RFI to help develop the RFP. We are looking for some sense of the cost to perform the study, and if possible, a breakdown of costs for different parts of the study. There are a number of options on the table as to how we could propose the study be implemented. We want the RFI to improve the RFP. If an entity does not respond to the RFI, it will not harm them in consideration of a future RFP.

Question 5:

Q5: On the cost information, if we give you a range of costs on what we could do and relative figures so you can judge the level of effort to do different things, would that be helpful?

A5: Yes; very helpful.

Question 6

Q6: We want be helpful. Please help us understand how information we provide will become available in the public domain?

A6: We will not post responses from the RFI on our website. We will take the RFI responses and share it with our Work Group members who are from the SPSC, electric industry or gas industry. The Work Group will synthesize that information and pass it along to the full Task Force. The Task Force will also report back to the full SPSC. In this context, we do not provide any guarantees that information will not enter the public domain. We cannot guarantee confidentiality of information provided in the RFI. For this reason, we recommend that you do not file anything that would be sensitive or confidential.

Question 7:

Q7: How do you plan to operate on this project after 2014? Will there be a group or team to act on this topic after 2014?

A7: The project is funded through the SPSC. We are not certain if SPSC will continue beyond the current ARRA grant. CREPC has been around for more than 25 years. We have high hopes that this process will continue on because it is of high interest to the states/provinces and the two industries.

Question 8:

Q8: Which pipeline companies have been participating on the Task Force?

A8: The participating pipeline companies to date are:

- Northwest Natural
- Williams Northwest Pipeline
- Transwestern Pipeline
- Southern California Gas
- PG&E

We have had excellent participation from the gas pipeline companies.

Question 9:

Q9: How much are you planning to budget for this project?

A9: SPSC has a budget for consulting funds. We don't know right now how much the SPSC will decide to allocate to this project. We suspect the SPSC would be willing to allocate in the range of \$300,000 to this project; there is a possibility of more. Any funding is subject to SPSC approval. There is also a possibility of partnering with other entities to fund the project. We believe a stronger project proposal could influence the SPSC to support funding for the project. That is why it is important to issue the RFI and solicit your input, which will enable us to develop a better and more informed RPF to bring to the SPSC. We would like to find out what level of funding will be required for each phase of the work.

There were no further questions and the webinar meeting was concluded.