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WIRAB Advice to WECC
On Proposed Changes to WECC's Information Sharing Policy

August 20, 2026

Introduction:

The Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB) appreciates the opportunity to provide advice on WECC's proposal to reclassify projected peak demand, projected energy forecasts, and scheduled peak-hour generation outages for years 1–3 from "Market Sensitive" to "Public."

Background:

WECC's Information Sharing Policy establishes how information collected or maintained by WECC is categorized and shared. The policy distinguishes among Public Information, Confidential Information, Market Sensitive Information, and information subject to other sharing restrictions. These categories are intended to support the appropriate protection of sensitive reliability, security, and market information while allowing WECC to share information that can benefit the Western Interconnection.

Under the current policy, projected peak demand, projected energy forecasts, and scheduled peak-hour generation outages for years 1–3 are categorized as Market Sensitive Information. Consistent with Section 3.11 of the Information Sharing Policy, WECC is proposing to reclassify these three Loads and Resources datasets as Public Information.[1]

WECC states that its experience indicates these forecasts contain sufficient uncertainty that their publication would pose little or no risk to efficient market operations. WECC also notes that similar information is increasingly available through other forums and that greater transparency would help stakeholders address emerging Western Interconnection challenges. Reclassification would allow WECC to use the full Loads and Resources dataset in its public reliability assessments and other products. Absent significant opposition, WECC has proposed that the change become effective August 20, 2026.

WIRAB Advice:

WIRAB supports WECC's proposal to reclassify the identified Loads and Resources data as Public Information and recommends that WECC make the proposed change. The proposed change is consistent with WIRAB's longstanding position that WECC should share Western Interconnection data as broadly as possible while maintaining appropriate protections for information that presents legitimate reliability, security, or market concerns.

[1] WECC, Proposed Change to Information Sharing Policy, July 30, 2026; WECC Information Sharing Policy, Section 3.11

In 2016, WIRAB staff specifically recommended that WECC categorize projected and forecasted information for years 1–3 as public. WIRAB staff concluded that information within this planning horizon was not sufficiently near-term to warrant protection as market-sensitive information, particularly when similar information was already publicly available from other sources.[2] WECC was previously concerned that nearer term forecasted data may be seen as market sensitive, but in WECC's experience since that time these forecasts contain sufficient uncertainty to pose little or no risk to efficient market operations.

WIRAB also supports WECC's goal of using the complete Loads and Resources dataset in its public reliability assessments and other products. State and provincial energy offices, utility regulators, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders rely on WECC's assessments to understand emerging reliability risks and make informed decisions affecting the Western Interconnection. Public access to these data will improve the usefulness and transparency of WECC's analyses and allow stakeholders to better understand and evaluate WECC's findings.

The proposal is also consistent with principles WIRAB previously advanced in comments to Peak Reliability and WECC. WIRAB has consistently advised that information should be shared as broadly as possible unless its release presents a demonstrable reliability, security, or market risk; information available from public sources generally should not be treated as sensitive; information should be categorized using clear, consistently applied criteria; and WECC should serve as a trusted, centralized repository for reliable information about the Western Interconnection.[3]

In its 2018 and 2020 Advice, WIRAB further emphasized the value of making planning data publicly available. WIRAB noted that access to these data supports universities, national laboratories, governmental entities, and other industry partners conducting research and analysis that can improve reliability. WIRAB also cautioned that overly broad confidentiality restrictions can be detrimental to planning, research, and innovation.[4]

Accordingly, WIRAB supports reclassifying the identified Loads and Resources data as Public Information. WIRAB encourages WECC to continue periodically reviewing its information categories and identifying additional datasets that can be made publicly available without creating legitimate reliability, security, or market risks. WIRAB also continues to encourage WECC to use clear and consistently applied criteria when making future information-categorization decisions.[5]

WIRAB appreciates WECC's efforts to improve the transparency and usefulness of its reliability information through the Planning Information Data Portal Advisory Group.

[2] WIRAB Staff, Comments on WECC Information Sharing Policy, October 27, 2016, pp. 2–3.
[3] WIRAB et al., Alternative Data Sharing Initial Review Criteria, September 21, 2015; WIRAB, Comments on the Final Draft Universal Data Sharing Agreement, December 4, 2015; WIRAB Staff, Comments on WECC Information Sharing Policy, October 27, 2016.
[4] WIRAB, Advice on WECC's Information Sharing Policy, August 22, 2018, pp. 1–2; WIRAB, Advice to WECC Regarding WECC Information Reporting and Sharing Policies, January 17, 2020, pp. 1–2.
[5] WIRAB, Advice on WECC's Information Sharing Policy, August 22, 2018, p. 2; WIRAB, Advice to WECC Regarding WECC Information Reporting and Sharing Policies, January 17, 2020, p. 3.