WORLD POWER SYSTEMS REVIEW

15 October 2026

1 October 2026

US Senate permitting bill would expand federal role in transmission siting

The legislation gives FERC authority to issue permits for transmission projects when it is in the public interest.

- A bipartisan permitting reform bill introduced in the U.S. Senate on Wednesday would, in most cases, prevent the revocation or suspension of previously issued federal permits for energy projects, and strengthen the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's siting authority for transmission.
- "Right now, we are hearing a lot of enthusiasm about the bill from industry, and we are optimistic this bill can pass the Senate sometime after the November elections," Advanced Energy United spokesperson Adam Winer told Utility Dive in an email. At a Wednesday press conference, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., said that amendments to the bill will be considered when the Senate reconvenes in November.
- Permitting reform talks in Congress stalled in December after President Donald Trump issued stop work orders against five offshore wind projects, but a deal was reached in recent weeks after Trump told Democratic lawmakers that wind and solar energy projects would be given better treatment in the bill, according to reporting from Reuters. The bill creates a right for projects to sue over a pattern of "disparate" federal treatment based on project type.

Along with Whitehouse, the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act is sponsored by Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, and Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va. It builds on the provisions included in the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024 and the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development Act of 2025, both of which stalled out in Congress.

The new legislation aims to ensure that "all Federal agencies shall treat all applications for Federal authorizations or permits fairly and efficiently," and provides for applicants to sue the government if permits are improperly denied or unreasonably delayed due to disparate treatment based on the type of project.

Whitehouse said the question of "returning to regular order for wind and solar projects in the Trump administration" is "still outstanding" and unresolved. "But we have had what I would consider to be a very reasonable opening proposal from the Trump administration," he said. "We need more clarity on that."

The Rhode Island senator said he anticipates that in parallel with the amendment work, there will be negotiations to resolve disputes around the administration's obstruction of renewable energy permits. Whitehouse said that the legislators' previous negotiations with the administration were "not outside the bounds of ordinary legislative disagreement," and the initial proposal that members of the administration made was a signal they want to "land this in good faith."

Whitehouse and Heinrich had in December issued a joint statement saying that permitting reform efforts were "dead in the water" due to "illegal attacks on fully permitted renewable energy projects" after Trump moved to halt work on five offshore wind projects.

Courts eventually ruled against the administration on all five projects, clearing the way for work to resume. In April, U.S. District Judge Denise Casper of the District of Massachusetts granted a preliminary injunction filed by several clean energy organizations which sought relief relief from federal decisions to pause permitting or establish additional levels of review for solar and wind projects.

Increasing federal power over transmission

In addition to provisions aimed at ensuring resource-neutral permitting, the legislation strengthens FERC by eliminating National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors and

expanding the commission's siting authority to "issue one or more permits for the construction or modification of electric transmission facilities," project-by-project, based on circumstances such as the proposed construction being consistent with the public interest.

"If Congress wanted to expand and de-congest the nation's transmission grid, these permitting bill policies are the changes that can get that done," said Rob Gramlich, Grid Strategies' founder and president, in a Wednesday LinkedIn post about the legislation. "The transmission title as well as the impact of the other sections on transmission development are very well-crafted."

The legislation eliminates the federal right of first refusal for incumbent utilities, stripping their automatic right to build new regional lines, and requires FERC to issue a rule requiring "each transmission planning region to file a consolidated interconnection and regional transmission planning process," similar to the process that FERC approved for the Southwest Power Pool in March.

"This is what stakeholders have been working on — permitting and transmission reform — for the last several Congresses," said Devin Hartman, president of the Lighthouse Energy Institute, a think tank, in an interview with Utility Dive.

Hartman noted that the bill will likely undergo changes during the legislative process.

"There's a ton to work with with these bones that would be having major effects on driving speed to power and living up to the billing on energy affordability," he said. "You could see the trajectory of the energy sector take a significant shift potentially, depending on how some of the final language works out here."

The bill states that transmission costs should be fully assigned to the owners and operators of computational loads, or data centers, "so as to minimize or avoid the cost burden on other customers." Specifically for loads equal to or exceeding 20 MW, the legislation mandates exit charges and bars the load's incremental costs from being recovered from any other customer.

Hartman noted that the bill reduces the authority states have under the Clean Water Act's section 401 to block gas pipeline applications, which he said could have implications for gas-constrained regions like the Northeast.

Utility Dive
http://www.utilitydive.com

1 October 2026

CAISO and SPP submit joint report to FERC on Western Market Seams coordination

The California Independent System Operator (CAISO) and Southwest Power Pool (SPP) submitted their joint report to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) outlining a coordinated approach to addressing future market seams issues as organized electricity markets continue to evolve across the Western Interconnection. The report reflects extensive collaboration between the two market operators and input gathered through a series of public workshops involving regulators, transmission providers, balancing authorities, market participants, and other stakeholders throughout the West.

CAISO and SPP identified six near-term objectives that reflect their shared prioritization. It includes improving data exchange, enhancing model alignment, expanding education and training efforts, supporting implementation of the Western Interconnection Loading Relief and Enhanced Curtailment Calculator initiatives, developing processes to address for transmission constraints that are affected by multiple market areas, and a commitment to develop and publish a longer-term plan that evaluates opportunities for further enhancements to seams coordination.

Looking ahead, CAISO and SPP intend to formalize many of their shared commitments through a coordination agreement and to continue working closely with each

other and stakeholders across the West to advance the priorities identified in the report. As western electricity markets continue to expand, both organizations remain committed to collaborative solutions that support reliable grid operations, transparent market outcomes, and the long-term success of the Western Interconnection.

There is a thirty-day comment period for the report. CAISO and SPP have scheduled a fourth joint workshop for Oct. 22 with in-person attendance at WECC's headquarters in Salt Lake City.

CAISO
http://www.caiso.com/

1 October 2026

Extended Day-Ahead Market expanded to include Portland General Electric

Participation expands access to affordable, reliable and clean energy for Oregon customers

Portland General Electric (PGE), Oregon's largest electric utility serving nearly one million customers, has officially begun participation in the California Independent System Operator's (ISO) Extended Day-Ahead Market (EDAM), expanding access to affordable, reliable and clean energy resources for its customers and across the West.

EDAM allows participating utilities to buy and sell energy in the day-ahead timeframe, where most electricity transactions occur. EDAM also enables more efficient use of the diverse energy resources available across the West, including hydropower and wind from the Pacific Northwest and solar generation from California and the desert Southwest.

By optimizing supply, demand and transmission across a broader geographic footprint, the market helps lower costs, improves reliability and supports greater use of renewable energy.

"We worked closely with the California ISO and partners throughout the West to design a day-ahead market that delivers real value to customers," said Maria Pope, president and CEO of Portland General Electric. "EDAM gives us access to a broader portfolio of resources across the West, helping us manage costs, enhance reliability and support Oregon's clean energy future."

PGE has participated in the ISO's Western Energy Imbalance Market (WEIM) since 2017, reporting approximately $377 million in cumulative benefits for the company and its customers during that time. Overall, since the market launched in 2014, WEIM has grown to include 24 balancing authorities serving nearly 80 percent of electricity demand in the West and resulting in more than $9 billion in financial savings. EDAM went live in May, generating more than $11 million in initial benefits for participating entities and their customers during the market's first two months of operation.

"PGE's participation reflects the growing momentum behind regional market collaboration in the West," said Elliot Mainzer, president and CEO of the California ISO. "The addition of PGE expands resource diversity and strengthens the market's ability to deliver economic and reliability benefits to participants and their customers."

EDAM launched May 1 with the ISO and PacifiCorp's two balancing authority areas. Since then, PacifiCorp is already delivering value for its customers through its market participation.

"EDAM is already delivering meaningful value for PacifiCorp and its customers, including $5.42 million in gross benefits during the market's first two months," said Ryan Flynn, president of Pacific Power. "We are encouraged by the strong start, and excited about Portland General Electric's participation and what deeper regional partnership can achieve for customers and the communities we serve." Additional utilities are scheduled to join beginning in 2027, including the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the

Balancing Authority of Northern California, the Public Service Company of New Mexico and Turlock Irrigation District. The Imperial Irrigation District, BHE Montana and NV Energy have committed to join in 2028.

CAISO
http://www.caiso.com/

5 October 2026

MISO proposes fast-track large load, generation study process

The 120-day study process would be available for loads larger than 200 MW and new generation that is in the same local resource zone, which generally consists of individual states.

- The Midcontinent Independent System Operator on Friday asked federal regulators to approve a fast-track review process for large loads and the new generation that would supply them.
- The proposed 120-day Large Load Addition Resource Study process would be offered to loads larger than 200 MW and generation that is within the same local resource zone, according to the proposal at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. There are 10 local resource zones in MISO's footprint, generally aligning with state boundaries.
- "LARS provides MISO with a targeted tool to address the intersection of significant large load additions, optimized network upgrades with generation and load, generation development, and supports resource adequacy," MISO said. It asked FERC to issue a decision by Dec. 2 so the grid operator could open the first study period early next year.

Like other grid operators, potential data centers and manufacturing facilities are driving MISO's demand forecasts. The grid operator told FERC it expects its load will grow by 1% to 3% a year through 2044.

MISO's LARS process is partly in response to FERC's mid-June finding that its rules related to large loads are inadequate, including for integrating "proximate" loads and generation onto the grid, according to the grid operator's application.

Under MISO's proposal, the grid operator will study up to 10 LARS applications during three annual study periods. Applicants face various requirements, such as non-refundable deposits, that aim to weed out speculative projects.

Running parallel large load and generation interconnection studies will produce more efficient network upgrade solutions, according to MISO, which operates the grid and wholesale power markets in 15 states from Louisiana to Minnesota.

"The goal of LARS is not necessarily to find the lowest cost solution for either the load or generation but to identify the solution that best fits both the generation and load needs at the lowest cost," the grid operator said. "MISO expects LARS to produce more cost-effective solutions that are more efficient for the grid overall."

Under the proposal, the commercial operation date for the generating facility and the in-service date for the associated large load must be within three years from the date the LARS application is submitted, according to MISO.

The load can begin receiving service in phases, but must start service for the full amount of transmission service requested in the LARS application by the time the generating facility begins operating. Under certain conditions, the load can be served by multiple generating facilities.

The proposal requires that the generation and load remain paired for at least 15 years.

The LARS process won't affect generating projects that are in MISO's standard generation interconnection queue, according to the grid operator. Also, the LARS process will evaluate proposed load and generation to the same standards as MISO's other interconnection processes, the grid operator said.

Utility Dive
http://www.utilitydive.com

7 October 2026

Vattenfall helps reduce pressure on the electricity grid in Flevopolder, Gelderland and Utrecht

Flexible capacity at the existing production site should help relieve the electricity grid during peak moments.

Absorbing peak moments

Implementation of package of measures

At Tennet's request, Vattenfall is developing a flexible energy installation on the site of its existing production location in the municipality of Almere. The large battery and gas turbine can be deployed at times when regional demand for electricity exceeds the capacity of the grid. In this way, the installation helps absorb peaks in electricity demand in Flevopolder, Gelderland and Utrecht as part of a broader package of measures by the grid operators, together with the provinces of Flevoland, Gelderland and Utrecht, municipalities, the national government and the business community.

Collaboration needed for a reliable electricity grid

Area-based approach in Flevoland, Gelderland and Utrecht

The electricity grid in Flevopolder, Gelderland and Utrecht (the FGU region) entered a new phase earlier this year. To keep the grid reliable and prevent large-scale disruptions and power outages, firm interventions and additional measures are needed. The flexible energy installation in Almere is one of those measures. The installation can quickly step in when the electricity grid is at risk of becoming overloaded, helping to absorb peak demand in the region. This solution does not stand alone, but is part of a broader area-based approach involving grid operators, provinces, municipalities and the national government. In Flevoland, TenneT, Vattenfall, the province of Flevoland and the municipality of Almere are working closely together on this. The province of Flevoland played an important role in exploring the possibilities for flexible capacity in Almere and in bringing the parties involved together. Because Flevoland, Gelderland and Utrecht are closely connected within the electricity grid, the installation contributes to a reliable and stable electricity grid across the entire FGU region. At the same time, expansion of the electricity grid remains necessary as part of the broader approach.

Flexible hybrid energy installation

Battery and gas turbine

The planned flexible energy installation is explicitly intended to absorb peak moments and not for structural use. The installation is hybrid and consists of a large battery of around 50 megawatts (MW) and a 60 MW gas turbine. The battery can supply electricity for four hours and will be used first as much as possible when the grid is at risk of becoming overloaded. Only if congestion lasts longer than the battery can supply power will the gas turbine, which runs on green gas, also be deployed. This gas turbine uses natural gas as fuel, for which green gas certificates will be purchased.

Expansion of existing production location

Expected to be operational from 2029

The new energy installation will be located at Vattenfall's existing district heating site on Markerkant in Almere. A gas connection and high-voltage connection are already present

at this location, which means this flexible capacity can be realised relatively quickly. Subject to the necessary permits, the installation is expected to be operational from 2029 and to remain available as a temporary installation through 2033.

TenneT
http://www.tennet.eu

7 October 2026

South Africa prioritises gas and battery storage

Government will prioritise gas-to-power and battery energy storage systems (BESS) to strengthen reliable electricity supply.

This is according to Electricity and Energy Minister, Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, who announced the new Section 34 Determination for additional generation capacity over the 2026-2037 planning horizon at a media briefing on Wednesday.

“This determination advances the seventh administration’s inclusive growth and employment and reduction of the cost-of-living impact on our people.

“This intervention must be read together with the three apex priorities of the seventh administration. The first one is about growing the South African economy and creating jobs. The second is to address the cost of living and also address poverty.

“I’m confident that this presents a new way, a blueprint of how we are addressing an immediate problem…technology gives us an opportunity to resolve that,” Ramokgopa explained.

He added that the prioritisation will respond to the electricity system’s “immediate requirements for storage, flexibility and dispatchable supply”.

“We are sitting with a new problem that…on the back of the clinical implementation of the Generation Recovery Plan by Eskom, we are sitting with surplus electricity on the system. That itself presents a major risk to the system.

“This intervention is to ensure that we avert the possibility of market failure…undermining our future ambition to procure new generation capacity from the private sector because financing will be very expensive as a result of this curtailment arrangement.

We are going to increase the risk of these projects failing, so it’s important that we are able to make an intervention in relation to how we deal with curtailment. It also undermines the South African economy to benefit from this excess generation capacity, so we want to provide for storage,” the Minister said.

In a statement, the department said BESS is central to mitigating curtailment.

“Batteries can charge from electricity that would otherwise be curtailed and discharge during evening peaks or other periods of need. This will help convert surplus generation into usable electricity, while providing rapid balancing and grid support.

“Storage must be located and operated where it can access surplus electricity and discharge without reproducing the network constraint. Procurement will therefore be aligned with the charging and discharge requirements of the System Operator, supported by enforceable availability and performance obligations,” the statement explained.

The department noted that the country “already has a foundation for expanding this programme”.

By June last year, all five projects in the first battery storage bid window had “reached commercial close and entered construction, attracting R15.4 billion in investment”.

“The proposed 4,600 MW allocation will substantially expand the procurement of storage services,” the statement read.

Regarding gas-to-power, the proposed 5000MW allocation will complement storage by “providing dispatchable electricity when renewable output falls, or demand rises”.

"Gas generation does not absorb surplus electricity. Its contribution depends on flexible operation that allows renewable generation to serve demand during high-output periods and supplies the remaining requirement when that output declines.

"Procurement design will address start-up times, ramping capability and minimum operating levels. Fuel availability, delivered gas prices, supporting port and pipeline infrastructure, grid connections and commissioning schedules will be assessed together. Affordability must be evaluated against the expected operating profile of the plants.

Both storage and gas procurement will form part of government's programme of transmission expansion, new industrial electricity demand and regional electricity trade.

"BESS can mitigate curtailment, but sustained progress also requires delivery of the grid infrastructure needed to move electricity to consumers.

SA News
http://www.sanews.gov.za

7 October 2026

Finland orders halt to work on Google data centre sites

Finnish opposition has called for measures to prevent power shortages, soaring energy prices caused by data centres.

A Finnish government authority has ordered work on two Google data centre sites to stop until compulsory environmental impact assessments have been completed.

The United States tech giant announced in September a 13 billion euro ($14.6bn) investment in digital infrastructure in Finland over the next two years to power its artificial intelligence ambitions.

Google has called the data centre projects in the municipalities of Muhos, Vaala, Kajaani and Hamina its single biggest investment in Europe.

But the Finnish Supervisory Agency (LVV), which is responsible for environmental issues, said it had demanded that Tuike Finland, the company representing Google, "immediately suspend, and no later than 23 October 2026, all preparatory measures that would significantly alter the environment in connection with the planned data centre projects in Muhos and Kajaani".

The agency has been investigating whether Tuike Finland cleared hundreds of hectares of forest in Muhos and Kajaani without a mandatory environmental impact assessment.

The head of LVV's environment department, Tommi Muilu, said trees have been removed, topsoil stripped, site roads and storage areas constructed and ditches altered.

Hanna Halmeenpaa, chair of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, told the AFP news agency that "nature sites which should be preserved" had been logged in a deforested area of more than 300 hectares (741 acres).

Tuike Finland must provide an explanation and detail how it intends to proceed. It could face "enforcement proceedings" if it fails to comply, LVV said.

Google spokesman Sondre Ronander acknowledged in a statement to AFP the company's shortcomings and said it would "study the LVV's findings and follow their guidance".

Ronander said Google was "advancing" its landscaping and biodiversity plans, which included tree planting across 130 hectares (53 acres) at Muhos.

The Nordic region has for years been a magnet for data centres due to its cool climate, abundant low-carbon electricity and reliable power grids, but AI builders are now facing greater scrutiny from consumers and politicians.

Opposition parties last month called for a national permit system to prevent power shortages and soaring energy prices.

While data centres are welcome in Finland, the country must make sure there is enough electricity and transmission capacity to power them, Centre Party leader Antti Kaikkonen told the Reuters news agency at the time.

The Social Democratic Party said that while it welcomed data centre investments, it too remains concerned about the implications for power demand.

Google's deal included a 22-year purchase agreement for up to 50 percent of the energy output from Finland's Loviisa nuclear plant, helping to extend the expected life of the plant until 2050, from a previous shutdown date in 2030.

Aljazeera
http://www.aljazeera.com

8 October 2026

Eryri hydropower approval withdrawn following legal challenge

Welsh park authority will reconsider scheme following challenge over protected site planning policy. Eryri National Park Authority in Wales has agreed to withdraw planning approval for a proposed hydropower scheme near Llan Ffestiniog following a legal challenge by Cymdeithas Eryri (Snowdonia Society).

The authority accepted one ground of the group's judicial review claim concerning planning policy for development affecting a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The application will now be reconsidered.

The proposed scheme would involve constructing an intake weir on the Afon Cynfal and an underground pipeline to divert water for electricity generation. At certain times, the scheme could divert up to 70% of the water away from Rhaedr y Cwm waterfall.

The authority's Planning & Access Committee voted to approve the development in June 2026, with planning permission formally granted in July. Around 1,590 objections were submitted during consultation, while Ffestiniog Town Council also opposed the plans.

Cymdeithas Eryri filed its judicial review claim with the High Court in September. The authority subsequently confirmed that it would consent to the court quashing its approval decision. It accepted the group's argument that it had unlawfully failed to advise the planning committee that the scheme did not comply with planning policy on development affecting an SSSI.

Part of the proposed development lies within an SSSI. Cymdeithas Eryri argues that the scheme does not adequately mitigate potential environmental damage and that its effects on the waterfall's appearance and sound have been understated.

The group also raised concerns about potential harm to rare bryophyte populations, permanent landscape scarring from a vehicle access track, erosion and sediment pollution. It disputes the authority's assessment that there was an overriding public need for the development.

International Water Power
http://www.waterpowermagazine.com

8 October 2026

New ENTSO-E reports map how transmission costs are recovered across Europe

Transparent and efficient network charges are essential for affordable and competitive electricity markets. As Europe works to make electricity the most attractive energy choice, ENTSO-E's latest overview of transmission tariffs 2024 and 2025 provides valuable transparency on how transmission costs are recovered across Europe. Because future-proof electricity bills and future-proof grids must go hand in hand.

The reports highlight the common principles applicable based on the EU framework, while helping stakeholders to better understand the different approaches reflecting national

specificities. The reports go into an in-depth analysis of the design, structure and level of transmission tariffs across more than 36 European countries. They offer stakeholders a comprehensive and accessible overview of the components that form transmission tariffs and the diverse methodologies used across Europe.

The overview highlights that transmission tariffs remain a fundamental element of the Internal Electricity Market and that there is no single approach to recovering electricity transmission costs. To support comparability despite the diversity of national tariff structures, ENTSO-E calculates an artificial "Unit Transmission Tariff" (UTT) for each participating country based on a standardised grid-user pattern.

The analysis covers both Transmission System Operators (TSOs) related costs, including infrastructure, system services and losses, and, where relevant, non-TSO-related regulated costs such as contributions to support schemes, regulatory levies and stranded costs. It also presents the absolute value and relative ratio of these components, alongside country-specific observations.

However, this overview does not directly compare individual tariffs in place, and any extrapolation and conclusion must take national specificities into account.

The reports serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, regulators, TSOs and market participants seeking to better understand transmission tariff structures across Europe. By increasing transparency and improving understanding of national approaches, the reports support informed discussions on the continued development of an efficient, resilient and competitive Internal Electricity Market.

ENTSO-E Overview of Transmission Tariffs in Europe: Synthesis 2025.
ENTSO-E Overview of Transmission Tariffs in Europe: Synthesis 2024.

ENTSO-E
http://www.entsoe.eu

8 October 2026

DOE presses PJM on ratepayer protections from large load costs

"A capability to continuously track whether a project enters into service ... can help assign costs for new generation to the customers responsible for those investments," DOE said in a rare filing.

- The U.S. Department of Energy on Wednesday urged the PJM Interconnection to revise its reliability backstop procurement plan to prevent cost shifts onto existing utility customers from data centers and other large loads.
- PJM should file a proposal by Oct. 29 in response to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's decision last month that the grid operator's backstop procurement plan needed changes, including to address flaws in its cost-allocation framework, according to the DOE's "statement of position" filed with FERC on Wednesday.
- "PJM should implement the cost allocation and other reforms identified by the Commission to ensure that the costs of serving new data centers or other large electric energy loads are not unfairly shifted to PJM's existing ratepayers," DOE said in its position statement, which appears to be the first one it has filed at FERC in at least five years.

Instead of waiting for a five-month hearing process to play out, PJM intends to file a proposal at FERC to revise its backstop procurement plan by Oct. 29, Jeffrey Shields, a spokesman for the grid operator, said in an email to Utility Dive on Thursday.

PJM plans to hold a special Members Committee meeting on Oct. 22 to consult with its members on the substance of the upcoming filing, according to Shields. Also, PJM will schedule a special Transmission Owners Agreement–Administrative Committee meeting, he said.

The PJM's reliability backstop procurement proposal grew out of a fast-track stakeholder process and aims to address a pending capacity shortfall, largely driven by data center demand forecasts. PJM failed to acquire enough capacity in its last two base capacity auctions to meet its reserve margin targets.

The grid operator intends to acquire 6.8 GW of new capacity to make up for a shortfall from the capacity auction for the 2028/29 delivery year, according to a fact sheet on the auction process. PJM may reduce the target to account for new supply that is expected to be added to its system, which spans 13 Mid-Atlantic and Midwest states and the District of Columbia.

However, the backstop procurement originally slated to begin Sept. 30 was put on hold at the last minute after FERC said that parts of PJM's proposal — those dealing with cost allocation, transmission owner exit rules and load-serving entity collateral requirements — may be unjust and unreasonable.

The agency established a hearing process set to run through February to address those issues, but said PJM could propose its own fixes using guidance FERC included in its order.

In its filing, the DOE supported FERC's decision, particularly on the agency's concerns about how the proposal would allocate costs.

"Under the Ratepayer Protection Pledge, large electric energy loads — not American households or other business ratepayers — must fund the electric energy generation and related infrastructure that such new large load projects require," the DOE said.

Companies committing to the pledge agreed to protect consumers from price hikes driven by large load energy demand and related infrastructure requirements, the department said. Utility companies in PJM's footprint that signed the voluntary pledge include American Electric Power, AES, CenterPoint Energy, Dominion Energy, Exelon, FirstEnergy and PPL.

The DOE said PJM should adopt FERC's recommended revisions to its backstop procurement plan to advance the Ratepayer Protection Pledge's principles.

"DOE shares the Commission's concerns that PJM's proposed [reliability backstop procurement] cost allocation model may be unjust and unreasonable," the department said, noting that FERC found it may not allocate costs to the consumers who caused them.

DOE agreed with FERC that PJM should allocate the backstop procurement's costs based on updated load forecasts. "A capability to continuously track whether a project enters into service — and therefore benefits from the capacity and system investments procured to serve it — or is delayed, reduced, or cancelled, can help assign costs for new generation to the customers responsible for those investments," the DOE said.

Without up-to-date and project-level information, PJM cannot "reliably reconcile its base forecast with Load Adjustments, avoid omissions and double counting, revise the [reliability backstop procurement] target when forecast load fails to materialize, or attribute demand growth to the appropriate zone and load-serving entity," the DOE said.

PJM's tariff may omit large loads already included in the grid operator's baseline demand forecast, leading to flawed cost allocation, according to the DOE.

PJM needs adequate data to identify the large load projects reflected in its forecasts and to monitor their development, the DOE said.

Utility Dive
http://www.utilitydive.com

8 October 2026

PJM Accepts First Expedited Interconnection Track Projects

PJM has accepted the first three projects in a new, temporary process designed to get large generation resources online quickly to address the urgent growth in demand for

electricity. The projects are two battery storage projects and one natural gas generator upgrade with more than 2,100 MW in combined nameplate capacity. Nameplate capacity refers to a generator's capability at full output.

The application window for the Expedited Interconnection Track (EIT) opened on July 31 for projects that are backed by a primary siting authority and can begin operation within three years.

On Wednesday, PJM published the accepted proposals on its new EIT page. The projects, slated to come online in mid-2029, are:

- Two battery storage projects from ENGIE IR Holdings LLC with a total of 1,660 MW of nameplate capacity
  - Wayne 345 kV is a storage project to be sited in Crawford, Pennsylvania, in the PENELEC zone, with 860 MW of nameplate capacity.
  - Galion 345 kV is a storage project in Morrow, Ohio, in the ATSI zone, with 800 MW of nameplate capacity.
- Hunterstown 500 kV is an upgrade to an existing natural gas facility in Adams, Pennsylvania, in the Met-Ed zone, adding 455 MW of nameplate capacity.

The projects in the PJM database are referenced by their planned point of interconnection onto the PJM transmission system.

In addition to getting generation online quickly, the EIT enables individual states to accelerate select projects based on their resource adequacy needs.

Through the EIT, PJM will approve up to 10 interconnection requests per calendar year in 2026 and 2027 for large new or uprated capacity resources. To qualify, these resources must have, among other requirements, a commitment from a relevant state authority to help expedite site permitting – one of the hurdles many projects face after receiving PJM's permission to connect with the grid.

A project must also offer at least 250 MW of unforced capacity, the amount credited for reliability purposes.

PJM expects the projects to execute a Generation Interconnection Agreement within 10 months of submission. Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis until the limit is reached for that calendar year. The EIT process will sunset at the end of 2027.

The EIT is one element of a multifaceted approach to address supply/demand challenges in the PJM region resulting from significant growth in the demand for electricity, particularly from data centers and other so-called "Large Load" customers.

PJM Inside Lines
http://insidelines.pjm.com

12 October 2026

PJM Reviews September Hot Weather Operations

PJM and the PJM generation and transmission owners coordinated closely during two unseasonably warm September periods to reliably serve demand while managing tightening generation and transmission system constraints, PJM told the Operating Committee Thursday.

Challenges common to two hot weather periods, Aug. 31 to Sept. 4 and Sept. 15–18, included the need to balance reliability against planned transmission and generation limitations, as well as exports to neighboring systems.

Both occasions also required targeted deployment of Demand Response resources. DOE emergency orders were also used to allow resources that were eligible to continue operating beyond normal operating limits.

During both hot weather periods, PJM also closely coordinated operations and utilized emergency procedures to cover "net load" in the hours immediately after sunset,

when the output of solar resources falls faster than electricity use. During these times, generation was also bottled in certain areas because of transmission limitations, particularly resources to serve congested zones in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

Shoulder Season Start

Fall shoulder season commences in mid-September when, typically, mild temperatures allow for required, scheduled maintenance and upgrades by generation and transmission owners. As new generation additions continue to be outpaced by rising overall demand, system conditions are tightening.

As a result, PJM operators must coordinate closely with generation and transmission owners and precisely manage those necessary equipment outages during shoulder season in combination with targeted emergency procedures that allow the vital maintenance and construction work to proceed.

"Ultimately, we have to take these transmission and generation outages, and we can't simply defer them indefinitely," Paul Dajewski, PJM Sr. Manager – Dispatch, said Thursday.

Generation and transmission outages must occur during the shoulder season to ensure equipment can reliably operate during winter and summer months when electricity demand is high.

Early September Heat

The first hot-spell activity commenced Aug. 31 with a PJM-wide Hot Weather Alert extended through Sept. 4. Peak temperatures in the low to mid 90s affected PJM load areas, even as PJM exports served even hotter conditions in neighboring grids to the south and west.

Effective Sept. 2–8, PJM sought and received a 202c Emergency Order from DOE to allow for the operation of generation subject to operating restrictions. The same order authorized PJM to direct Large Loads to run on emergency backup generation if necessary.

As the event unfolded – just prior to the beginning of the traditional fall maintenance season – generation and transmission outages for this period were at a high of 15,502 MW, or 8.47%, of system capacity on Aug. 31. Peak energy usage during this hot weather event was about 152,800 MW at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 1.

In addition to the high demand related to hot temperatures,the need for Emergency Procedures was driven by energy exports to neighboring grids (which were also experiencing extreme heat) and transmission and generation constraints.

To handle system stress on Sept. 1, Demand Response resources were called on to reduce electricity demand through the net load peak. This helped to manage transmission constraints that were bottling generation in certain areas.

Demand Response customers are paid in advance to reduce their electricity use during times of system stress.

Late September Hot Weather

Unlike the prior warm weather in September, the heat event Sept. 15–18 arrived as routine transmission and generation maintenance outages were well underway in the shoulder season.

PJM recorded a system peak on Sept. 17 at 4:50 p.m. just shy of 127,000 MW. "There was a lot of customer demand to serve given system conditions," Dajewski said. He noted system outages of 20.7% of system capacity, or 37,916 MW, on Sept. 18.

For this period, PJM called on Demand Response resources earlier in the operating day. Again, PJM exports helped neighboring grid operators in the South experiencing warmer conditions.

PJM Inside Lines
http://insidelines.pjm.com

12 October 2026

US Energy Secretary Secures Mid-Atlantic Grid Ahead of Anticipated Stressed System Conditions

U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright issued an emergency order to mitigate blackout risks in the mid-Atlantic ahead of a period of elevated demand, a high rate of planned generator outages during the autumn maintenance season, and numerous planned transmission outages. The order directs PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. (PJM) to dispatch specified units and to order their operation as needed to maintain reliability and authorizes PJM to direct backup generation resources to operate as a last resort before declaring an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) 3 or during an EEA 3.

PJM is authorized to call upon its Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to implement the order as needed. The order was issued pursuant to an application from PJM submitted on October 11, 2026.

"This order will help ensure millions of American families and businesses across the mid-Atlantic have access to affordable, reliable, and secure electricity by making additional power generation, including backup power, available to use as needed," said **U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright**. "While past leaders' energy subtraction policies have made the grid more vulnerable to the risk of blackouts when the sun doesn't shine or the wind doesn't blow, this administration remains committed to using every available tool to prevent blackouts."

DOE estimates more than 35 GW of unused backup generation remains available nationwide.

The order is effective October 13, 2026, through October 16, 2026.

DOE
http://www.energy.gov

13 October 2026

A Nepali Lesson for Rogun

111 groups urge the World Bank to freeze funding for high-mountain dams after Nepal's deadly flood, naming Tajikistan's Rogun among projects to drop

A Himalayan disaster that killed thousands has prompted a tough demand from environmentalists to the World Bank: 111 non-governmental organizations from around the world have urged it to impose a moratorium on financing large high-mountain hydropower plants. Among the projects the bank should stop supporting, they explicitly named Tajikistan's Rogun hydropower plant, according to Rivers.Help!, a portal that publishes news about rivers and dams in Central Asia.

The letter, dated October 12, is addressed to World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, International Finance Corporation (IFC) Managing Director Makhtar Diop and the Board of Executive Directors. Its signatories include International Rivers, the Rivers without Boundaries coalition, CEE Bankwatch Network and the Bretton Woods Project, as well as the Tajik environmental group Medvezhiy Ugol (Bear's Corner) and the Russian organizations Dront and the Wildlife Conservation Center.

The trigger was a rock-and-ice avalanche on August 26, 2026, in the Himalayas on the border between Nepal and China's Tibet Autonomous Region, which unleashed a devastating flood in the Bhotekoshi–Trishuli corridor. According to Nepal's government figures as of late September, cited by the letter's authors, 1,450 people died and another 5,285 are still missing.

Among the missing are about 500 workers at the $650 million Upper Trishuli-1 hydropower plant, which is under construction and financed by a consortium of lenders led

by the World Bank Group, with the participation of the Asian Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The government's damage assessment attributes nearly $1 billion in losses to the destruction of 13 hydropower plants, a third of all physical and economic damage. Kathmandu is requesting $2.5 billion to rebuild its energy sector, or 54% of all the funds the country needs to recover from the disaster.

The authors call the tragedy «entirely predictable» and place responsibility on the World Bank's approach to financing risky infrastructure.

As early as 2017, civil society groups warned of dangers at Upper Trishuli-1: a history of glacial lake outburst floods on the Trishuli River, high seismicity underscored by the 2015 earthquake, and a design that did not account for the impact of climate change on river flow. Nevertheless, in 2018 the IFC judged the risk of glacial lake outbursts in the basin to be low, and a separate climate risk assessment deemed such risks insignificant.

An independent expert panel established by the Asian Development Bank in 2023 found that a flood in September 2024 had threatened the workers' camp near the powerhouse, and that a glacial lake outburst in 2025 damaged construction facilities. In May 2025, the experts recommended assessing the project's climate resilience with disaster risks taken into account. That assessment was never carried out.

«The financiers knew the project faced repeated floods and lake outbursts and urgently needed safety measures, but construction continued without them,» the letter says.

Environmentalists see this not as an isolated failure but as a systemic problem: the bank's weakened safeguard policies allow deals to reach financial close before environmental risk assessments are complete and realistic mitigation plans are in place. The letter cites several projects that were damaged or redesigned, with cost and schedule overruns: Pakistan's Dasu, Tarbela 5 and hydropower plants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, India's Vishnugad Pipalkoti, Nepal's Upper Bhotekoshi, and Tajikistan's Rogun hydropower plant.

The authors also recall a string of recent disasters. In February 2021, a rock-and-ice avalanche in India's Chamoli destroyed two hydropower plants and killed more than 200 people. In October 2023, the outburst of South Lhonak Lake in Sikkim destroyed the newly built 1,200-megawatt Teesta-III dam. In September 2024, floods in Nepal damaged about 20 plants. In July 2025, a glacial lake outburst affected 11 more projects in the Bhotekoshi–Trishuli corridor.

The coalition makes five demands. The World Bank should declare rivers in hazardous mountain regions, starting with High Mountain Asia, which the authors define as including the Himalayas, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Pamirs, Tien Shan and Kunlun, off-limits to large-scale infrastructure. It should also impose an immediate moratorium on financing large and cascade hydropower projects across its entire portfolio until independent reviews and basin-wide risk assessments are completed.

The bank is urged to close loopholes in its environmental and social standards by barring financial close and disbursements until all safeguard documents are approved, including dam-break risk assessments and emergency action plans agreed with local communities and downstream countries. In the authors' view, Nepal's recovery should be funded through grants and reparations rather than recreate past vulnerabilities.

The fifth demand directly concerns Central Asia. The authors call on the bank to help hydropower-dependent countries diversify their energy systems, from Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Nepal and Tajikistan, and to channel funds into distributed solar and wind generation, small hydropower plants, energy storage, grid resilience and regional interconnections.

The signatories say new giant projects, including Mphanda Nkuwa on the Zambezi, Inga 3 on the Congo and Tajikistan's Rogun, only «deepen the very dependence that makes these countries vulnerable.» The World Bank, they argue, should therefore end its support for such projects through financing, guarantees, equity participation and technical assistance.

«The mountains have sent a clear warning: if the World Bank Group continues to finance hydropower on autopilot in these fragile regions, it will share responsibility for the next disaster,» the authors conclude.

The Rogun hydropower plant on the Vakhsh River in the Amu Darya basin is set to become the world's tallest embankment dam, at 335 meters. As Rivers.Help! notes, the project faces vulnerabilities similar to Nepal's, including rapid glacier melt and the threat of mudflows and earthquakes. Yet the World Bank continues to support it. Its total funding has reached $650 million, its board approved the latest $300 million grant in the summer of 2026, and Tajikistan's parliament ratified it in early October.

At the same time, a pool of international donors is forming around Rogun and is expected to raise about $3 billion more. Construction is proceeding alongside power generation: the dam has reached 190 meters, and two units are operating. The portal notes that the region's rivers are transboundary and that large dams such as Rogun or Kyrgyzstan's Kambarata-1 directly affect neighbors' water supplies, threaten ecosystems, including UNESCO World Heritage sites, and could intensify water disputes amid climate change.

The letter to the World Bank does not mention the Kyrgyz project, but the principle the environmentalists have declared, no mega-dams in unstable high-mountain valleys, applies to the Tien Shan as well.

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