

RES / CES Technical Analysis: Minutes from August 31 Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) Meeting #3

Attendees:

Sustainable Energy Advantage (SEA): Jason Gifford, Stephan Wollenburg, Po-Yu Yuen, Mary McMahon

VT Public Service Department (PSD): TJ Poor, Anne Margolis, Adam Jacobs, Claire McIlvennie, Cameron Berube

SAG: Amber Widmayer, Anna Bowler, Annette Smith, Billy Coster, Casey Lamont, Danielle Laberge, Dan Potter, Doug Smith, Heather D'Arcy, Jess Neubelt, Jim Hall, Jonathan Dowds, Larry Satcowitz, Sam Lash, Steve Crowley

Agenda:

- Comparing SAG responses to survey with a statewide sample of Vermonters.
- Scenario Definitions
- Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) Methodology and Data sources
- Next steps

Meeting Minutes:

Item 1: Comparing SAG Responses to Statewide Survey

PSD asked the same questions of the Stakeholder Advisory Group as it did a random sample of 700 Vermonters, and briefly presented on high level results.

Observations (PSD):

Importance of various characteristics:

- **Statewide:** Higher priority on reliability and affordability
- **SAG:** Higher priority on emissions reductions

Single Most Important Factor:

- **Statewide:** Affordability
- **SAG:** Emissions

Questions:

- Steve Crowley:
 - Inquired about the statewide sample origin and development.

- Answer: 700 Vermonters and oversampling of people of color through random digit dialing. Full methodology to be included in the report to be published in September
- Jonathan Dowds:
 - Commented that "affordability" is a nebulous term, suggesting a potential discrepancy in understanding what "affordability" means to various stakeholders.
 - Response: All terms have some potential variance in definition. Full methodology of Report to be published.

Item 2: Scenario Definitions

SEA Presented on results from survey of Stakeholder Advisory Group and facilitated SAG discussion on scenario definitions.

Overview:

- Little consensus among SAG members on scenario preferences in survey results
- Customizable scenario options were heavily utilized; details and differences of those will try to be addressed using sensitivities
 - 7 of 11 members created custom scenarios, ranking them in their top 3

Proposed PSD Scenarios, influenced by SAG and Polling Preferences:

- BAU - Current RES
- S1 = 100% RES
- S2 = 100% RES, include Regional Tier
- S3 = 100% CES
- S4 = 100% CES, include Regional Tier

➔ Further scenario details available in the PowerPoint circulated for the meeting

Questions & Discussions:

- Numerous questions and concerns were raised, including but not limited to:
 - Eligibility of Regional resources beginning in 2010; where it was described that such eligibility would allow for significant, largely projects in Vermont to have their RECs retired in Vermont (otherwise current practice of selling them for utility compliance in other New England States would continue).
 - Flexibility of variables such as requirements % increase schedule by year
 - Challenge of siting issues and the incorporation of siting considerations into the analysis, including impacts on community and environment. If there is good data out there on cost of siting as penetration increases, that could be considered for inclusion after the scenarios are modeled as an additional component that can affect policy conversation.
 - National-scoped study raised as potential data source, PSD requested it be sent to them for consideration of incorporation <https://robertbryce.com/renewable-rejection-database/>

- Regional tier systems and how to handle existing hydro, including eligibility of local hydro (definition tbd).
- Higher Tier 2 target technical feasibility – is it even possible to double or triple the pace of deployment? Some SAG members were concerned about impact/feasibility, others expressed sentiment that it is important to look at a high target and understand what needs to be put in place to meet it.
- Tier 2/regional tier combination scenarios – clarification that this doesn't mean that in-state renewables couldn't be supported with other programs.
- Discussion of whether Lifecycle Analysis will be considered when looking at emissions impact – clarification that this can be looked at after scenarios are modeled by applying different emissions factors from ANR analysis currently underway, but that the work will not be done by SEA in this current effort.
- Clarification that batteries' CapEx cost will be considered.
- Members reflected on some of their preferences related to the above
- Key contributors to this discussion included Jonathan Dowds, Jason Gifford, Sam Lash, Annette Smith, TJ Poor, Doug Smith, Heather D'Arcy, Billy Coster, Steve Crowley.
- SAG members were asked to provide their "votes" on additional scenarios to be modeled, with context as appropriate, to PSD and SEA by 9/1

Item 3: Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) Methodology and Data Sources

- SEA Provided an overview of benefit cost analysis (BCA) methodology and data sources
 - Presentation planned to continue into Meeting #4
- Focus on public, rigorous, and non-anecdotal data
- Discussion of costs & benefits considered began with discussion of Grid integration Costs

Questions & Discussions:

- Doug Smith asked if SEA would look at cluster studies or grid upgrade studies. Stephan answered no.
- Danielle Laberge questioned how to avoid overattributing transmission upgrade costs to renewables. Stephan said specific data isn't available, but the impact could be gauged by comparing various scenarios.
- Stephan mentioned that incremental cost assumptions would incorporate available federal funding.

Item 4: Next Steps

- Feedback on SAG scenario preference (top 2 out of the 4) is due by end of day 9/1 by email to TJ Poor and Jason Gifford
- SEA will share the BCA presentation slides
- The next meeting is scheduled for 9/11 from 2 pm - 4 pm

Additional Notes:

Comments or questions were solicited from non-SAG members. Phil from Burlington noted that current 100% renewable utility exemptions from Tier II were problematic and biomass emissions are not properly accounted for.

