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## INDUSTRY & COUNCIL UPDATES

### SAVE THE DATE – SIEZE THE DAY November 15, 2023

The REC's semi-annual meeting will be held on November 15 and will consist of a full day meetings including a workshop. The Council wants to establish an inaugural session in a series to discuss the most practical pathways to the future of locomotive electrification. Moreover, the meeting will also have speakers and panels on electrical transmission siting and permitting process, the future of fuels, and sustainability.

America is transitioning to a transportation future that is increasingly electrified. While highway vehicle electrification is at the forefront of this trend, railroads must be part of these discussions and not left on the platform! We urge our members and friends to attend in person at the headquarters of the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Arlington Virginia.

### Reflections and Trends in Rail Electrification By Steve Griffith

When the Rail Electrification Council was launched four years ago it sparked the journey to promote the electrification of domestic railroad (freight and/or passengers) and how the railroads could serve as enablers of electric grid integration and innovation. Recent developments suggest that the conversations the Council started four years ago are making an impact. [Find out more.](#)



## REC PUSHING FOR EXPEDITED TRANSMISSION DEVELOPMENT ON RAIL ROWs

In three separate proceedings, the Council has been campaigning to persuade federal policy makers to capitalize on the unique opportunities under the Inflation Reduction Act to strengthen the nation's electric infrastructure. The Council primarily supports creative ways to advance grid expansion through utilization of existing transportation rights-of-way ("ROWs") as co-locations for electric transmission. The U.S. has 140,000 miles of railroads, which cut across state and bulk power market boundaries and run through the best wind and solar resources in North America and converge in major load centers. These offer the best location to deploy high voltage transmission. Three comments by [The Council](#) are summarized [here](#).

### FERC's New Transmission Interconnection Procedures & Agreements [[FERC Order 2023](#)]

At its July 27 meeting the Commission addressed the immense logjam of renewable energy (wind and solar) projects that had become captive in long queues while RTOs and other planners studied efficient ways to connect highly desirable generation projects to the grid. [*Improvements to Electric Generator Interconnection Procedures and Agreements*, Docket No. RM22-14-000] This could free the nearly 800 GW of projects awaiting approval and interconnection by (1) implementing a time-sensitive first-ready, first-served cluster study process, (2) adopting a speedier study process and rewarding timeliness, (3) including studying clusters of projects at once and consideration of advanced technology to accelerate the process, including better modeling and performance standards, and (4) requiring compliance filings to begin in 90 days. In sum, the new regulations should ramp up the influx of renewables on the system and therefore the demand for the siting and construction of more transmission.

### RAILWAY AGE OP-ED—ELECTRIC POWER BASICS FOR RAILROADERS

Jim Hoecker, REC's Co-founder and Counsel, offered his views on the state of the electricity industry as it might look from the railroad perspective. The piece was written as a response to comments heard at the May Council meeting about the need for railroaders to know more about the critical electric power industry, especially how electrification and decarbonization will impact the "railroads of the future." Read his commentary in [Railway Age](#).

Contact Jim Hoecker ([james.hoecker@huschblackwell.com](mailto:james.hoecker@huschblackwell.com)) and Steve Griffith ([Steve.Griffith@nema.org](mailto:Steve.Griffith@nema.org)) to discuss further.

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