

Western Power Pool Approves Nominees for New Independent Board of Directors

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PORTLAND, Ore. – The Western Power Pool (WPP) Board of Directors on Wednesday approved the slate of nominees who would serve on the group’s new Independent Board of Directors.

WPP Board Chairperson **Bill Drummond** is the current board member selected to serve with four new members. Two other current board members – Treasurer **Mary Ann Pease** and Secretary **Scott Waples** – will hold non-voting advisory seats.

The four new board members selected are **Michelle Bertolino**, Former Executive Utility Director at Roseville Electric Utility; **Doug Howe**, Consultant for the Western Public Utility Commission Joint Action Framework on Climate Change; **Andrew Ott**, former CEO of PJM; and **Susan Ackerman**, Former Chief Energy Officer at Eugene Water and Electric Board.

The Power Pool’s proposed Western Resource Adequacy Program, which would exist under Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) jurisdiction if approved, required a new board that would meet FERC’s independence requirements.

The WPP Nominating Committee has worked since March along with executive search firm ZRG on a rigorous, continent-wide selection process. The Nominating Committee included 14 members representing 12 different sectors of the energy industry, such as utilities, independent power producers, load serving entities, public interest groups, customer advocacy groups and state regulators. The committee’s stated criteria for candidates included electric industry, regulatory, general management, Western electric system, or organized market experience; geographic diversity so no region was over-represented; diversity of perspectives including professional background, gender, ethnicity, and life experience; and strong collaboration skills.

“The Nominating Committee worked hard and collaborated effectively to reach consensus on a slate of directors that would best fulfill the position requirements and meet the criteria for independence and diversity,” said Bonneville Power Administration’s **Eric King**, a current WPP Board member and member of the Nomination Committee.

Added Drummond, “I commend and thank the members of the Nominating Committee on a thoughtful and thorough process. This is a significant and positive development for the Western Power Pool, its members, and the region. It will be my honor to continue to serve alongside this highly qualified group of nominees.”

“This is an important step in the path toward WRAP implementation,” Pease said. “I look forward to the continued development of a sustainable resource adequacy program, with the incredible benefits it will bring to participants, while ensuring we continue to deliver the benefits and cost savings the Western Power Pool has long provided our members and our region.”

“The varied backgrounds and expertise the new board members bring are first class,” Waples said. “The Western region, and the customers who rely on a reliable source of electricity, are in very good hands.”

The new board would take effect pending [FERC approval of the WRAP tariff](#) and a requisite number of committed WRAP participants.

Additional information on the board nominees:

Michelle Bertolino, Former Executive Utility Director at Roseville Electric Utility

Michelle retired from Roseville in 2022 after serving as Director for 12 years. She was the first woman named to the Director position of the utility in its nearly 100 years of existence. Prior to Roseville, she worked for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and KPMG Peat Marwick. In addition, she is past President of the Northwest Public Power Association, past President of the California Municipal Utilities Association, past Chair and Commissioner of the Balancing Authority of Northern California, past Chair and Commissioner of the Transmission Agency of Northern California, and former board member of the Northern California Power Agency and Western Energy Institute. Michelle will bring utility operations expertise, financial expertise, past board experience and a collaborative leadership style to the WPP board.

Doug Howe, Consultant for the Western Public Utility Commission Joint Action Framework on Climate Change

Doug has served as a consultant and advisor to the global power industry, as a state utility regulator, and as a utility executive, with expertise in energy policy, regulation, energy economics, renewables, and energy efficiency. He is a former member of the Board of Directors of the New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority; former Chairman of the Western Energy Imbalance Market Governing Body, and a former member of the Western Energy Imbalance Market Governance Review Committee. In 2011, Doug was appointed to serve on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. Previously, he led the Global Power consulting group for international consultancy IHS CERA (now called IHS Markit); was Vice President of Regulatory Policy for GPU Inc., a multinational utility company; and was Vice President for Customer Operations at Jersey Central Power & Light, Metropolitan Edison, and Pennsylvania Electric Companies.

Andrew Ott, former CEO of PJM

Andrew leads the Technical Services functions for Tapestry, which is X - The Moonshot Factory’s “moonshot” for the electric grid. As the Head of Power System Engineering, he is responsible for setting technical strategy and execution of technical solutions to accelerate the decarbonization of the electric grid. Andrew serves as Co-Chairman of the Energy Transition Forum and as a non-executive director on several corporate boards. Previously, he was President and CEO of PJM Interconnection, the largest power grid in North America and the largest electricity market in the world. Andrew is internationally recognized as an expert in electricity market design and power system operation, has testified as an expert in the U.S. Congress and in legislative and regulatory proceedings. He has extensive experience in power system engineering, transmission planning, applied mathematics, and electricity market design and implementation.

Susan Ackerman, Former Chief Energy Officer at Eugene Water and Electric Board

Susan retired from the Eugene Water and Electric Board in 2021. Her deep utility industry experience also includes serving as an attorney for the Bonneville Power Administration, an attorney and regulatory manager for Northwest Natural Gas, and as a Commissioner and Chair of the Oregon Public Utilities Commission from 2010 to 2016. Additionally, she was chair of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' Electric Committee, served on the Electric Power Research Institute's Advisory Committee and was a NARUC representative on the NARUC-U.S. Department of Energy Smart Grid Working Group. Susan will bring expertise in energy regulation, government, smart grid, policy, and legislative relations to the WPP board.

Bill Drummond, WPP Board Chairperson

Bill has been Chair of the Western Power Pool Board of Directors since 2018. Prior to that, he led the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association for six years after serving as Deputy Administrator and then Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration. Earlier in his career, Bill was manager of the Western Montana Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative for 16 years; created and managed Prairie Power Limited, Canada’s first generation and transmission cooperative; and worked for the Public Power Council in the Pacific Northwest and the Idaho Public Utilities Commission. Bill brings to the board an unparalleled understanding of Western power grid issues and deep institutional knowledge of the region’s operations and resource adequacy challenges.

Mary Ann Pease, Owner, MAP Consulting LLC

Mary Ann specializes in energy-related consulting with experience in infrastructure financing and business development, utility acquisition strategy, telecommunications, oil, gas and utility operations, governmental relations, financial management, legislative and regulatory issues, community outreach and shareholder/investor relations. She has been a member of the WPP board since 2018. Mary Ann also has served on the board at USTA (while she was a Vice President for Alaska Communications), and had Chair positions on boards for CommonWealth North, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, and AEDC. Mary Ann has been a strategic energy advisor to four of Alaska’s governors and served as CFO for Municipal Light & Power. Under her leadership, the utility took the unprecedented step of acquiring a working interest in Shell’s gas field, providing low-cost, stable energy for Anchorage for over two decades. She also has held a number of advisory and consulting roles related to energy and utilities with government and industry, including leading an international consortium of utilities and Japanese companies in advancing energy security for Japan and Asian markets.

Scott Waples, Founder and Board Chair at Waples PicoGrid

Scott has served on the board of the Western Power Pool/Northwest Power Pool since 1999. He was the initial Chair and is a past Vice Chair. In addition to a long career at Avista prior to joining WPP, Scott has extensive experience in Western regional leadership and regional organization formation. This includes serving on the WECC Member Advisory Committee, Planning Coordinating Committee (Chair), Reliability Assessment Committee, Technical Studies Subcommittee, and the Reliability Subcommittee (Chair), as well as work with IndeGO (Chair), GridWest, RTO West, and Northwest Regional Transmission Organization. Scott runs a non-profit in Montana whose primary function is to provide both a technical and a physical platform for developing emerging engineering talent.

About the WRAP: WPP is launching the WRAP, which is the first region-wide reliability planning and compliance program in the history of the West. With coordination and visibility across participants, the WRAP paints a more accurate, regional picture of resource needs and supply. It delivers a region-wide approach for assessing and addressing resource adequacy, taking advantage of operating efficiencies, diversity, and sharing of pooled resources. So far, [26 utilities](#) from the northwest, parts of the desert southwest, Canada and northern California have joined WRAP’s non-binding phase.

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