

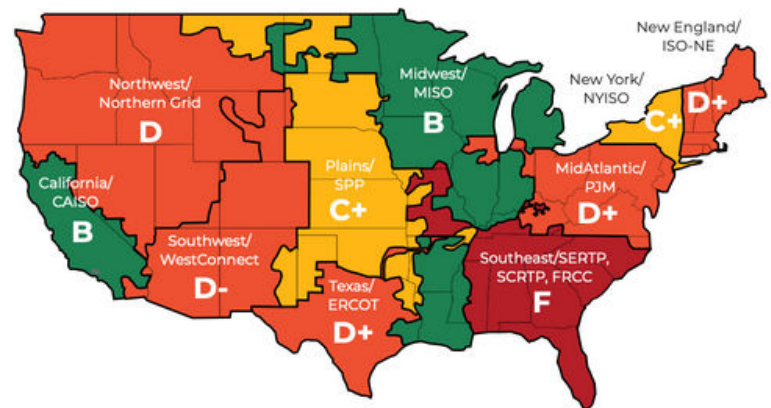
TRANSMISSION PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGIONAL REPORT CARD

Americans for a Clean Energy Grid evaluated transmission planning and development efforts across the country. While no region earned an A – and many have a long way to go – there is growing recognition of the need to proactively and holistically plan new transmission that will facilitate America’s energy transition, safeguard the grid against extreme weather, and lower electricity costs for consumers.

Building transmission incrementally is inefficient and expensive. By contrast, an analysis within the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) found its long-term, comprehensive transmission plan would result in benefits more than twice as large as costs.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is now considering a rule that would improve regional transmission planning, but it has been pending since April 2022. All regions—and the transmission owners and operators within them—can act immediately to improve their planning methods. In fact, every region in this report has adopted innovative practices in at least one category that others can replicate to make progress.

REGIONAL GRADES



METHODOLOGY

65% Use of best practices for proactive transmission planning

- Proactively plan for future generation and load.
- Use a holistic Multi-Value Planning process.
- Address high-stress grid conditions through Scenario-Based Planning.
- Assess projects as a portfolio, not line-by-line.
- Jointly plan interregional transmission across neighboring systems.
- Conduct robust stakeholder engagement.
- Consider all transmission business models.
- Allow for balanced governance of the regional planning process.

20% Miles of transmission built and planned

7.5% Transmission capacity available for new resources

7.5% Congestion



SCORE DETAILS: NORTHWEST

OVERALL SCORE : 63.3%

RANKING : 8 / 10

Who plans transmission in the Northwest? There is no RTO or ISO in the Northwest. The region is defined by NorthernGrid's planning footprint, though individual utilities lead a significant amount of the transmission development.

PLANNING METHODS

GRADE: F

- The Northwest's transmission planning is highly dependent on generation, load, and transmission plans submitted by its members. Utilities have been driving transmission development in the region, with minimal holistic coordination at the regional level.
- The Northwest also includes Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), which owns 80% of the region's high-voltage transmission system but does not conduct proactive and holistic transmission planning.
- There is minimal interregional coordination conducted by the Northwest.

MILES BUILT & PLANNED

GRADE: C

- From 2019-21, the West (which includes the Northwest and Southwest) built 88% of the new high-capacity transmission compared to the best recent period of high-capacity transmission build-out.
- Specific utilities, like PacifiCorp and NV Energy, have planned significant high-capacity transmission lines; however, NorthernGrid's 2020-21 transmission plan did not include any interregional or nonincumbent transmission lines.

CAPACITY AVAILABLE FOR NEW RESOURCES

GRADE: B-

- Available interconnection data combines the Northwest and Southwest into one region, the West. The West is experiencing similar trends in interconnection, with low completion rates and rising wait times. Not all of this can be attributed to transmission capacity, but development of proactive regional transmission plans would likely improve this score.

CONGESTION

GRADE: D

- As it is outside an organized market, there is little data related to congestion. Given congestion is generally rising throughout the country, that trend likely extends to the Northwest.