

The monthly WESTAR Council call began at 1:00 pm PDT/2:00 pm MDT/3:00 pm CDT. Council members and delegates present included:

AK-Alice Edwards, Jason Olds  
AZ-Daniel Czecholinski  
CA-Rebekka Fine  
CO-  
HI-Marianne Rossio  
ID-Tiffany Floyd  
MT-Liz Ulrich, Bo Wilkins  
NV-Danilo Dragoni  
NM-  
ND-Jim Semerad  
OR-Ali Mirzakhilili  
SD-Kyrik Rombough  
UT-Bryce Bird  
WA-Rob Dengel  
WY-Nancy Vehr  
WESTAR-Mary Uhl, Jeff Gabler, Jay Baker

Agenda:

1. Review draft agenda for fall business meeting, attached (Mary Uhl)
2. EPA's pre-award certification audit: changes to WESTAR procurement policy for review and approval, attached (Mary Uhl)
3. update on hiring process to fill WRAP manager position (Mary Uhl)
4. WESTAR funding: update to Council on call with Peter Tsirigotis/discussion of next steps (all)
5. WVPPI update (Jay Baker)
6. SCOTUS decisions-West Virginia v EPA and Oklahoma v Castro-Huerta--discussion, questions, fall business meeting speakers? (all)
7. other items as time and interest permit

Minutes:

1. Review draft agenda for fall business meeting, attached (Mary Uhl)

Mary reviewed the fall business meeting agenda. The meeting will conclude with a field trip to the Missoula Fire Lab, which is close to the airport.

2. EPA's pre-award certification audit: changes to WESTAR procurement policy for review and approval, attached (Mary Uhl)

Mary explained that EPA's pre-award certification audit examined WESTAR's policies and procedures. A few procedures needed minor updates to citations that have changed the federal register. EPA recommended a number of changes to the procurement policy, most of which reinforce parts of the policy. EPA has reviewed a draft of the revised WESTAR procurement policy and has said that the revision will meet the requirements for certification. Ali asked if we should put the federal thresholds in the policy; Mary said if we do, we'll need to change the policy each time the federal thresholds change. WESTAR receives notification when thresholds change, but it is also easy to remember the thresholds. Alice Edwards motioned approval of the revised procurement policy, Tiffany Floyd seconded. All on the call were in favor. Mary will get Ali to sign the revised policy electronically and submit to EPA for final determination.

3. update on hiring process to fill WRAP manager position (Mary Uhl)

Mary shared that WESTAR will conclude the interviews for the WRAP manager position on Thursday, July 14. There may be a second round of interviews conducted the last week of July, but an offer will be made in any case on or before August 1.

4. WESTAR funding: update to Council on call with Peter Tsirigotis/discussion of next steps (all)

Ali summarized the call with Peter Tsirigotis. Mike Koerber and Chet Wayland listened; Peter was late to the call. No commitment was made, but there did seem to be more interest when Mary relayed the amounts of money annually that WESTAR needs to provide more services to members. We can't be sure how EPA will respond, so Ali recommended that Mary draft a thank you letter and ask for response. Danilo mentioned that ECOS has told EPA that the MJOs need additional funding support. Mary asked for confirmation that the Council approved the inclusion of the dues increase contemplated for various tiers of service. There was no opposition. Mary will draft a letter for Council review next week.

5. WVPPI update (Jay Baker)

Jay noted that Ross Strategic has begun conducting interviews with state regional haze planners, EPA, tribes and FLMs. A planning group has been formed to work with WESTAR to review information and guide phase I. Phase II will include an in-person meeting in San Diego in November and development of recommendations. Ali asked what was to be gleaned from the interviews—planner experience or state policy positions. Jay responded that the interviews are intended to delve into individual experience, but state air directors may want to discuss with planners prior to their interviews. Tiffany asked if there is a guide for questions. Jay said that there is, and the planning group was asked for comment and input.

6. SCOTUS decisions-West Virginia v EPA and Oklahoma v Castro-Huerta--discussion, questions, fall business meeting speakers (all)

Mary noted that there was an excellent Resources for the Future webinar with Jeff Holmstead, Lisa Heinzerling and Nathan Richardson earlier in the week where each offered their perspective on what the decision might mean for future EPA regulation. Mary agreed to send the link. Ali indicated that maybe states can do more if EPA is limited. The group discussed possible speakers for the fall meeting on the W VA v EPA decision, including state AGs and representatives of the utility industry.

7. Other items as time and interest permit

Jeff Gabler has compiled an e-learning training course catalog for 2022-2023. This will be emailed to the air directors, Jeff asked that it be distributed to staff.

The call duration was 50 minutes.