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FERC Accepts California's Revised Transmission Planning, Generator Interconnection Proposals

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) today accepted the California Independent System Operator Corporation's (CAISO) revised transmission planning process designed to support development of new transmission facilities so the state can meet its renewable energy targets and other public policy goals.

The CAISO tariff revisions create a new category of policy-driven transmission facilities considered necessary to meet state and federal policy requirements and directives. The planning process also will encourage statewide participation in transmission planning; feature a competitive solicitation that allows all transmission developers to compete to build policy- and economics-driven projects; and comply with the openness, transparency, and other transmission planning principles that FERC established in 2007 in Order No. 890.

In a separate order approved today, FERC conditionally accepted a proposal by CAISO to merge its small and large generator interconnection procedures into one unified set of procedures. CAISO developed these new measures in view of the increasing volume of small generator interconnection requests and increasing delays in its completion of studies of those requests.

Under the new process, CAISO will review both small and large projects using an integrated cluster approach, modeled after the existing large generator interconnection procedures, and will retain certain features that benefit small generators. To monitor implementation, FERC directed CAISO to include in already required quarterly reports information on its fast track and independent study processes for eligible small generator interconnection requests.

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