

**Northwest Power and Conservation Council**  
**Natural Gas Advisory Committee**  
**December 18, 2019**

Steve Simmons, NWPCC, began the meeting at 9:00 with a review of the agenda and a call for introductions.

**Fuel-Based Emissions Rate Calculations**

Dan Kirschner, NWGA, noted that the EDF study looked at methane leakage from both oil and gas while the EPA's analysis of 1.4% is restricted to the natural gas system production only [Slide 12.] He was very concerned with defaulting to the EDF study as the EPA has been doing this work for decades and the EDF methodology doesn't match up. Simmons offered to follow up about how much of the EDF study looked at oil versus gas. Simmons added that a lot of natural gas comes in alongside oil production and there are also a lot of gas imports from Canada.

Kirschner argued that the EPA study offers a better look at the national average. He then questioned the appropriateness of using a national average given that the Council's natural gas footprint is 60% from BC which has a robust regulatory structure. Kirschner again expresses strong concern with the proposed methodology adding that his organization wants the numbers to be right.

Simmons agreed and stressed that his goal is to be as accurate as possible. He stated that he has reached out to Canada for data and is still working on it. Simmons said he doesn't know of any other studies on BC gas and may propose a separate emission rate for Canada and the US.

Fred Heutte, NW Energy Coalition, voiced strong support for the EDF work. Heutte agreed that the EDF study is a national average that includes a variety of production types, stating that the EPA did the best work they could with the data they had. Heutte reiterated that he is very comfortable with the EDF numbers, calling this an important issue that requires attention.

Kirschner stated that he didn't question the accuracy of the EDF study but was concerned with comparing apples to oranges and wanted to get the right number.

Heutte suggested contacting the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and the Stockholm Environmental Institute for more clarity around Canadian gas. Simmons stated that he reached out to the Canada consulate and didn't find a good apples-to-apples measurement, but offered to look further and follow up.

Mary Moerlins, NW Natural, stated that NW Natural and Williams Pipeline are now members of the ONE Future Program [Slide 13.] Simmons said the rates discussed are at the power plant level but the emission rate will include end-use gas, including NW Natural.

Randy Friedman, NW Natural, stated that Beaver is not a less efficient plant [Slide 16.] Simmons thanked him for the correction.

Heutte commented that everyone wants to see emissions go down but, in his view, is not yet happening [Slide 19.] He agreed that new data shows a limited number of super emitters which might be easier to capture but will still take time to sort. He found it would be difficult to support a declining emission rate. Simmons agreed that the emission rate wouldn't drop over time without any concerted effort.

Massoud Jourabchi, NWPCC, confirmed that these numbers only represent power plants. Simmons confirmed, adding that he is looking at end-use as well. Heutte suggested talking to NW Natural about their efforts, calling them industry leaders in that work. Simmons said NW Natural has spoken to the Council about their plan. Moerlins thanked Heutte for the shout out and offered to engage further about their full body of research.

Tomàs Morrissey, PNUCC, asked which gas units have a heat rate under 6000 btu/kWh [Slide 22.] Simmons answered Carty but wasn't sure about the others. Morrissey called it too good to be true. Heutte said Carty is pretty new and wasn't surprised about the numbers. He suggested talking to the WA Dept of Commerce for more information.

Heutte pointed to mine mouth methane work by the EPA and Australia that may have equipment to capture emissions [Slide 24.] Simmons agreed it can be done, adding that the Australia number is pretty close to 38.7. Heutte stated that the mitigation cost appears to be low.

### **Summary**

Simmons summarized that all NGAC members agree that methane emissions are occurring and should be included in the plan but there is some question about which leakage rate to include: EDF or EPA.

Simmons stated that he may break up leakage rates for Canada and the US or come up with a range.

Heutte again suggested reaching out to EPA and EDF for Rocky Mountain data, which would be helpful for the Council. Simmons stated that they do have San Juan basin information that he can re-examine.

### **RNG & Power Planning**

Heutte asked about data and analytical sources, saying Oregon has a study on this. Simmons said he looked at a lot of studies out of CA including Southern Cal Edison which looks at RNG as a fuel for public transit. He added that OR, WA and PSE have all looked at RNG.

Simmons asked if RNG should be modeled "behind the gate" as part of the distribution system or if it will be on the interstate pipelines for power plants to use.

Moerlins cautioned that bias towards certain feed stocks in the RNG as a potential transportation fuel studies might under-represent potential. She called for a full look at potential which may be broader than the transportation fuel credit market which distorts the view.

Andrew Rector, WA UTC, agreed that there have been WA studies around potential. He stated that the recently passed HB1257 has voluntary and not voluntary provisions for RNG that still need to be sorted out but something should be included in a 20-year-look. Simmons said he's hearing the same thing and is thinking about proposing a scenario analysis to cover the uncertainty.

Simmons asked that additional questions or comments be sent to him. He thanked the NGAC members and closed the meeting at 10:00 AM.

**Attendees via Webinar**

Steve Simmons	NWPCC
Aaron Bush	PPC
Andrew Rector	WA UTC
Dan Kirschner	NWGA
Dan Serres	
Fred Heutte	NW Energy Coalition
Gillian Charles	NWPCC
Greg Nothstein	WA Dept of Commerce
Mike Hopkins	Fortis BC
James Vanden Bos	BPA
Michael Cocks	GasCo
Tom Pardee	
Randy Friedman	NW Natural
Brian Robertson	CNGC
Sibyl Geiselman	AvanGrid
Tomàs Morrissey	PNUCC
Torsten Kieper	BPA
Massoud Jourabchi	NWPCC
Mary Moerlins	NW Natural