



Accelerating Transmission Development

Lessons from Western State Infrastructure Authorities

September 24-25, 2026 | [Limelight](#) | Denver, CO

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

A reliable, affordable electric grid is fundamental to the economic vitality, energy security, and long-term competitiveness of the American West. Yet the region's aging transmission system is struggling to keep pace with surging demand from electrification, population growth, industrial and mining expansion, and data centers. Meeting this need is no simple task; transmission development in the West is uniquely difficult. Projects must align diverse utility and market structures, navigate local, state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions, and overcome financing and cost-allocation barriers, among other complexities.

As a result, high-value regional transmission projects are often delayed—or fail to advance at all—despite clear public benefits. In response, several states have created state authorities to plan, finance, coordinate, and develop transmission.

This workshop will examine how these state authorities are working to advance timely transmission development that is in the public interest. It will convene leaders from western state infrastructure authorities, policymakers, regulators, and practitioners to examine what is working, what is proving difficult, and what lessons are emerging.

OBJECTIVES

By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will:

- Understand the powers, duties, governance structures, and priorities of the Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming transmission authorities;
- Identify practical insights applicable to their own state policy, regulatory, or transmission development efforts; and
- Build relationships with peers across western states through structured cohort interactions and facilitated discussions.

AGENDA		
Thursday, Sept. 24, 2026		
Location	Time (MT)	Topic
Copper Foyer	7:45-8:30am	Continental Breakfast
Copper Ballroom	8:30-8:45am	Welcome, Cathy Boies, Gridworks
Copper Ballroom	8:45-9:30am	Keynote Speaker: Chris Hansen, CEO, La Plata Electric, and former Colorado State Senator As the sponsor and principal architect of Colorado's transmission authority legislation, Chris Hansen will share his vision for why a state transmission authority is needed and the strategic role it can play in accelerating transmission development in the West. Includes 10 minutes of audience Q&A.
Copper Ballroom	9:30-10:15am	Panel: Foundations of State Transmission Authorities—Structure, Powers, and Public Purpose Leaders from Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming will discuss why their authorities were created and the statutory powers that underpin their work. The panel will examine the missions, governance structures, legislative tools, and implications of operating as quasi-governmental entities—balancing public accountability with commercial development flexibility. • Cathy Boies, Gridworks, moderating • Erik Aaboe, Deputy Director, New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority • Maury Galbraith, Executive Director, Colorado Electric Transmission Authority • John Jenks, Director of Energy Markets Development, Wyoming Energy Authority
Copper Ballroom	10:15-10:30am	Coffee Break
Copper Ballroom	10:30-11:15am	Panel: Building the Project Pipeline—Planning, Identification, and Project Prioritization

		How do state transmission authorities move from statutory authority to a defined project pipeline? This panel will focus on the planning processes and decision frameworks used to identify, evaluate, and prioritize projects. Panelists will examine the core inputs that shape project selection, including statewide and regional transmission studies, solicitations, utility planning data, and other analytical tools. • Steve Black, Gridworks, moderating • Lynn Mostoller, Executive Director, New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority • Keegan Moyer, Principal, Energy Strategies • Kathleen Staks, Executive Director, Western Freedom
Copper Ballroom	11:15-11:30am	Introduce Cohorts and Move to Cohort Roundtables
Cohort Tables	11:30-12:30pm	Cohort Roundtables —Participants will move into cohorts to reflect on the morning panels, engage directly with panelists, and process learnings.
Copper Foyer	12:30-1:45pm	Lunch
Copper Ballroom	1:45-2:30pm	Presentation: Revenue Bond Financing—Tools and Tradeoffs for State Transmission Authorities Experts will examine the financing tools available to state transmission authorities, with a focus on revenue-backed bonds—how they work, where they create strategic advantage, and how they have been used to advance transmission development. The session will also explore the opportunities and limitations of revenue-backed financing and whether these tools can meaningfully improve the affordability of large-scale transmission investments. • Cathy Boies, Gridworks, introducing • Rob Gramlich, President, Grid Strategies • Ron Williams, Executive Director, Idaho Energy Resources Authority
Copper Ballroom	2:30-3:30pm	Panel: Testing the Model—Developer Experiences with State Transmission Authorities How does the state transmission authority model hold up from a

		developer’s perspective? Developers will discuss what they look for in a public-sector partner, what conditions are necessary to attract private capital, and how authorities influence project risk, financing, and timelines. The conversation will examine where the model creates real value, where it introduces complexity, and what transmission authorities must demonstrate to become credible and investable counterparts. • Steve Black, Gridworks, moderating • David Alger, Project Director Development, NextEra Energy Transmission • Loralee Hunt, Commercial Strategy Manager, SouthWestern Power Group • Kevin Wetzel, Vice President, U.S. Development, Pattern Energy
Copper Foyer	3:30-3:45pm	Snack Break and Move to Cohort Roundtables
Cohort Tables	3:45-4:30pm	Cohort Roundtables —Participants will continue discussions in small cohorts with facilitators and panelists, reflecting on the afternoon sessions and identifying key takeaways.
Copper Ballroom	4:30-5:00pm	Reflections from the Day • Cathy Boies, Gridworks
The Kitchen	6:00-8:00pm	Dinner, The Kitchen American Bistro, Wine Room 1560 Wazee St., Denver

AGENDA		
Friday, Sept. 25, 2026		
Location	Time (MT)	Topic
Copper Foyer	7:45-8:30am	Continental Breakfast
Copper Ballroom	8:30-8:40am	Welcome, Cathy Boies, Gridworks
Copper Ballroom	8:40-9:30am	Panel: Navigating Siting and Permitting—The Role of State Transmission Authorities Transmission siting and permitting often present one of the most complex hurdles for new infrastructure. This panel will discuss how state transmission authorities participate in route planning, consultation with land managers, and the sequencing of studies and approvals needed to advance projects. The discussion will also explore where statutory authority can help streamline permitting and where constraints remain. • Steve Black, Gridworks, moderating • Jan Andersen, CEO, Jubilee Energy • Brant Johnson, Senior Vice President of Development, Grid United • John Ryan, Executive Director, SouthWestern Power Group
Cohort Tables	9:30-10:15am	Cohort Roundtables —Participants will continue discussions in small cohorts with facilitators and panelists, reflecting on the morning panel and prioritizing workshop takeaways.
Copper Foyer	10:15-10:30am	Coffee Break

Copper Ballroom	10:30-11:30am	Panel: Looking Ahead—Lessons from State Transmission Authority Leaders Leaders from the Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming authorities will close the workshop with reflections from their experience launching and leading these institutions. Panelists will discuss early challenges encountered during the startup phase, how they were addressed, and what capabilities proved most critical in the early years. The conversation will also examine what is needed to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of state transmission authorities. • Cathy Boies, Gridworks, moderating • Maury Galbraith, Executive Director, Colorado Electric Transmission Authority • John Jenks, Director of Energy Markets Development, Wyoming Energy Authority • Lynn Mostoller, Executive Director, New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority
Copper Ballroom	11:30-12:00pm	Summation and Workshop Close • Cathy Boies, Gridworks

Hosted by Gridworks in collaboration with:

