

MGA MID-GRID 2.0 2035 Quarterly Meeting
Little Rock, AR | September 27-28, 2023
Speaker Biographies

Mike Ross, Southwest Power Pool

As senior vice president for external affairs and stakeholder relations, Mike Ross leads SPP's government affairs at the federal level and the 15-state region it serves. Additionally, he has responsibility for external affairs, stakeholder relations, stakeholder training, corporate communications, media relations and public relations.

Ross joined SPP in 2013, after serving six terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District, where he was a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and its Energy Subcommittee. He was also a member of the House Financial Services Committee, House Science and Technology Committee, House Foreign Affairs Committee and was elected vice president of NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Before serving in the U.S. Congress, he spent 10 years in the Arkansas State Senate and was a small business owner.



Ross is a member of the board of trustees for the Arkansas Research Alliance, board of directors for the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and serves on the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Foundation Board. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Kris Zadlo, Grid United

With more than 30 years of electric power industry experience, Kris Zadlo oversees all of Grid United's commercial and technical initiatives as Chief Commercial and Technology Officer.

Previously, Zadlo was a Senior Vice President at Invenergy, responsible for commercial analytics, government and regulatory affairs, strategy, transmission analysis, and establishing Invenergy's energy storage program. Prior to Invenergy, Zadlo was Vice President of Transmission for Calpine Corporation and earlier held various management positions during his ten years at Commonwealth Edison Company of Chicago. During his career, he has been responsible for interconnecting over 20,000MW of utility-scale energy projects.



Zadlo is active in his church leadership, serves as a Scout Master, and is part of the Chicago Society, which promotes cultural and civic awareness. He holds a master's degree in electrical engineering from Purdue University and a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. Zadlo is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois.

Lauren Azar, Azar Law LLC

Lauren Azar provides legal and advisory services in the electric industry providing business, regulatory and policy advice, as well as project development and permitting. Azar has been working in the utility industry for over twenty years, representing electric utilities and water ratepayers. Among other things, she is currently working within the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) footprint to improve transmission planning and cost allocation on behalf of the Sustainable FERC Project.



From 2007-11, Azar was a Wisconsin Public Service Commissioner.

In 2009, Commissioner Azar was elected as President of Organization of MISO States (OMS) and through her leadership, MISO developed a transmission plan over its footprint to develop 17 long-haul transmission lines, called Multi-Value Projects (MVPs). In 2009 and 2010, she chaired two processes – one for MISO stakeholders and the other for OMS -- developing a new cost allocation for the MVPs, which FERC approved. By the end of FY2020, these MVPs had enabled about 13% of the installed wind capacity in the United States.

While a Commissioner, Azar also organized the 39 states, Washington D.C. and eight Canadian provinces and territories within the eastern transmission interconnection to participate in interconnection-wide planning studies. As co-founder and first President of the Eastern Interconnection States Planning Council (EISPC), she sought and received \$14 million dollars from the DOE. In its inaugural year, Commissioner Azar led the Council through this unprecedented joint planning effort.

Azar served as the Senior Advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Energy from 2011-13, advising him on the electric industry and its institutional barriers. She also co-led negotiations among nine federal agencies, to overhaul and streamline their evaluation of electric transmission and served as the DOE's representative to the precursor of the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (FPISC).

Azar served as the Vice Chair of DOE's Electricity Advisory Committee from 2010-2011 and is currently serving as a member of that Committee and is chairing the Committee's transmission working group.

Stacey Burbure, American Electric Power (AEP)

Stacey Burbure is the Vice President of FERC and RTO Strategy and Policy for American Electric Power Service Corporation (AEP). She began working for AEP in 2019 as senior counsel in the Legal Department, representing the company in PJM transmission owner committees and handling transmission formula rate and policy issues before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Prior to joining AEP, Burbure held a senior counsel position at an investor-owned utility, focusing on transmission issues. Previously, she acted as senior counsel to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation where she acted as lead counsel to the Reliability Standards Committee.



Burbure earned her bachelor's degree from Swarthmore College and her law degree from George Washington University Law School. She is a board member of the Charitable Foundation of the Energy Bar Association and a member of the Southwest Power Pool Board of Directors/Members Committee. Burbure is currently President of WIRES, the international trade association dedicated to advancing investment in high voltage transmission.

Ryan Deyoe, Telos Energy

Ryan Deyoe is a Power Markets Analyst at Telos Energy and has experience in fundamental power market modeling. At Telos Energy he has worked on projects ranging from transmission planning, clean electricity planning and has aided stakeholders IRP involvement. Prior to joining Telos Energy, he worked for PA Consulting in their Energy and Utilities practice where he led their ERCOT modeling effort. There he worked to develop generation supply forecasts building on existing ERCOT conditions out to 2040. He analyzed economic new entry of generation units onto the ERCOT grid under varying market conditions in both the energy only market and regarding ERCOT scarcity pricing. As the lead in ERCOT modeling Ryan's efforts aided clients in understanding asset values over the lifetime of the project and how to adjust to the changing ERCOT market.



Ryan attended the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he earned a BS in Civil Engineering with a focus on engineering for energy sustainability. Since his days working at the university’s nuclear reactor, he has wanted to be involved in the energy world and enjoys helping clients understand how their projects can benefit the energy transition.

Natasha Henderson, Southwest Power Pool

Natasha has nearly 17 years of experience in the electric utility industry. As the Director, System planning, she directs the development of SPP’s Transmission Expansion Plan to effectively and efficiently address future needs. She also oversees the development of engineering policies to support members, regulators and other departments and to comply with reliability standards and criteria.



Preceding her position SPP, Natasha was employed by an electric cooperative for 12 years where she managed long term power supply strategy and then directed regulatory and compliance functions for both the SPP and ERCOT markets. She has held numerous positions in the SPP stakeholder process, participating in and chairing various working groups and committees including the Supply Adequacy Working Group, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Market Operations and Policy Committee and the Economic Studies Working Group. Natasha also has experience in market operations and generation systems operations at an investor-owned utility when it was a balancing authority, prior to the SPP integrated market place.

Natasha holds a Masters in Economics from Wichita State University.

Hannes Pfeifenberger, The Brattle Group

Johannes (Hannes) Pfeifenberger, a Principal at The Brattle Group, is an economist with a background in electrical engineering and over twenty-five years of experience in the areas of regulatory economics and finance. His work focuses on improving regional wholesale power markets and transmission planning.



Hannes is a Visiting Scholar at MIT’s Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research (CEEPR), a former Senior Fellow at Boston University’s Institute of Sustainable Energy (BU-ISE), and an IEEE Senior Member. He frequently serves as an advisor to research initiatives by the Energy Systems Integration Group (ESIG) and the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Labs. Before joining The Brattle Group, he was a Consultant for Cambridge Energy Research Associates and a Research Analyst at the Institute of Energy Economics at the University of Technology in Vienna, Austria.

He received an M.A. in Economics and Finance from Brandeis University’s International Business School and an M.S. and B.S. (“Diplom Ingenieur”) in Power Engineering and Energy Economics from the University of Technology in Vienna, Austria. A list of his public reports and presentation is [available here](#).

Matt Prorok, Great Plains Institute

Matt Prorok joined the Great Plains Institute in November 2015 and is a senior policy manager. His work focuses on the development of electric transmission infrastructure and market mechanisms to enhance the development of low-carbon energy technologies in the Midcontinent region. In addition, Matt contributes to GPI’s research and analysis work and is a facilitator for the Midwestern Governors Association’s Grid Security & Modernization initiative. As part of his work at GPI, he also served on the steering and policy committees of the Minnesota Energy Storage Alliance.



Matt has a background in engineering and sustainability. He obtained his BS in mechanical engineering from Penn State with a minor in earth systems and an MS in science, technology,

and environmental policy from the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs. His work at the University of Minnesota focused on assessment of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to electric vehicle charging in Minnesota based on policy incentives intended to direct charging to specific hours of the day.

Melissa Birchard, Grid Deployment Office, U.S. Department of Energy

Melissa Birchard is a Senior Policy Advisor in the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office, where she works to deploy the electric transmission necessary to ensure that communities across the country can access reliable, clean, and affordable electricity. Melissa holds a law degree from Georgetown University, an MA from UCLA, and a BA from Bryn Mawr College.



Catherine Reed, NASEO

As a Senior Program Director, Catherine Reed supports NASEO's electricity program, which informs and educates the states on issues related to generation, transmission, and distribution. Prior to joining NASEO, she served as Deputy Director of the State Energy Office in the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff. This was her second tenure with the SC Energy Office, having first worked there between 2007 and 2012, implementing a range of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs through various federal grants, including the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. She also had experience working in the private sector on the design and implementation of commercial and industrial demand side management programs for an investor-owned utility. She has more than 20 years of combined experience in energy programs, resource conservation and management, public policy and planning, and stakeholder engagement. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration from the University of South Carolina.



Lynn Retz, Kansas Corporation Commission

Lynn joined the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) in December 2016 as the Energy Division Director and continues in that role. She assumed the duties of Executive Director for the KCC in July 2019. Prior to joining the KCC Lynn was a Senior Auditor with the Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit and has been an attorney in private practice.



Claire J. Vigesaa, North Dakota Transmission Authority

Claire graduated from NDSU with a BS in Ag & Bio Systems Engineering in 1982. He worked in the electric cooperative network for 39.5 years, retiring in March of 2022.

His career began at Verendrye Electric Cooperative, Velva ND as an energy engineering advisor, working on a research project analyzing the effect of electric heat on substation loading. He had several career advancements, serving as Assistant General Manager at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative and Vice President of Development and Energy Services at Cass County Electric Cooperative. In these positions, he developed load management programs, served as rate and billing manager, managed public & member relations, key accounts, economic development programs, and served as chief lobbyist.



Later in his career he was tapped to help with a special task force at Tri-State G & T Association in Denver, facilitating the transfer of 100 kV plus assets (\$145 million asset transfer) from its member systems to the G & T.

Claire was named General Manager/CEO of Upper Missouri Power Cooperative in April of 2012. During that tenure, he saw the cooperative quadruple electric energy sales, the cooperative became a transmission owner in MISO and he participated in the submission of transmission assets in the Southwest Power Pool.

Throughout his career he was privileged to serve on numerous boards and committees; as President of the Carrington Economic Development Corporation, landing the Dakota Growers Pasta Company in 1992, served on Governor Schafer's transition team, served as an Executive Board Member and Interim CEO of the Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corporation, served on the board of Western States Power Corporation and as a board member of the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association. He also served on National Touchstone Energy Committees for over ten years and served as a NRECA mentor for new electric cooperative CEOs.

Failing at retirement, he was approached to serve as Deputy Director of the North Dakota Transmission Authority following retirement and was appointed to serve as Executive Director of the North Dakota Transmission Authority in July of 2023. In this position, he monitors electric transmission grid activities and provides support and information to ND Agencies, utilities, and developers with transmission related topics.

John Moura, NERC

John Moura is the Director of Reliability Assessment and System Analysis for the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), where he joined in 2008. John leads the Electric Reliability Organization's efforts to independently assess and report on the overall reliability, adequacy, and associated risks of the interconnected North American bulk power system. John leads the development of NERC's annual long-term and seasonal reliability assessments, as well as NERC's efforts in evaluating reliability impacts of potential environmental regulations, high-levels of variable generation, and an increasing dependence on natural gas. He is the co-author of numerous NERC special reports and several technical publications. In addition, John is actively engaged in multiple groups and committees across North America focused on the power system risk and vulnerability analyses, loss of load studies, probabilistic resource adequacy modeling, and interconnection-wide power system modeling. John earned his bachelor degree from Rutgers University.



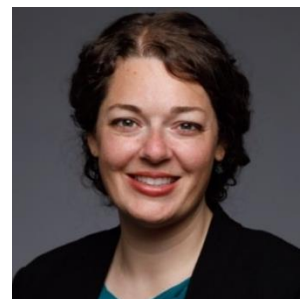
Marcus Hawkins, Organization of MISO States

Marcus Hawkins was promoted to Executive Director of the Organization of MISO States effective January 1, 2019, after serving as Director of Member Services & Advocacy since September 2016. Prior to OMS, he was a Senior Engineer in the Division of Regional Energy Markets at the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. He has additional power market experience from working as an Analyst at PA Consulting Group. Marcus received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nuclear Engineering and a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. He also earned certificates in Technical Communication and Energy Analysis & Policy while at UW.



Kate McCormick, Illinois Commerce Commission

Kate McCormick is the Assistant Director of Policy at the Illinois Commerce Commission, tracking and advising on federal energy issues, primarily related to MISO and PJM. Prior to joining the Commission, Kate worked on energy policy with the Natural Resources Defense Council followed by work on civic engagement and consulting on sustainable food ventures with City Colleges of Chicago and New Venture Advisors.



Kate graduated magna cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania and has master's degrees in Latin American Studies and Public Policy from Stanford University. She completed an MBA at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business in 2019.

Kimberly O'Guinn, Southwest Power Pool

Kimberly A. O'Guinn is the Director of State Regulatory Policy at Southwest Power Pool. As Director, Kim takes a leadership role in SPP outreach, work and coordination with the state utility regulatory commission and assists in addressing ongoing state & federal dockets, issues, initiatives, and strategic issues at the state regulatory level.



Before joining SPP in January 2023, Kim was appointed to the Arkansas Public Service Commission by Governor Asa Hutchinson in November 2016. As a commissioner, her primary responsibility was to ensure Arkansas public utilities provide safe, adequate, and reliable service at just and reasonable rates. In addition to retail regulation responsibility, Kim represented Arkansas and held leadership roles in regional transmission matters on the SPP's Regional State Committee, the Organization of MISO States, and the Entergy Regional State Committee.

Kim is highly regarded among the regulatory energy community. She was actively engaged in the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). She was a member of NARUC's Energy Resources and Environment Committee, International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Education and Research, and the Washington Action Program. She is also a mentor in NARUC's Advancing Women Leaders in Energy program, a partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau for Europe & Eurasia, Energy Infrastructure Division, to support women leaders in energy regulatory agencies through a gender empowerment project.

As Chair of NARUC's Emergency Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency Task Force, she led NARUC's efforts in responding to and educating members about existing and emerging issues and opportunities that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic, black sky events, and federal funding.

Kim serves on the National Utilities Diversity Council, where she served as Co-Chair before departing the Commission. During Kim's tenure as Commissioner, she served on several boards, including the Financial Research Institute, New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities, and the Electric Power Research Institute Advisory Council.

Before joining the Commission, Commissioner O'Guinn served as the Director of Communications for the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and as an Engineer in the Office of Air Quality for nearly two decades. During her tenure at ADEQ, Kim enforced the Clean Air Act to ensure state and federal regulations compliance. As ADEQ's Director of Communications, she developed and executed comprehensive plans to respond to state and federal environmental matters.

A native of Arkansas, Kim received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering from the University of Oklahoma (OU). While attending OU, she was designated a NASA Fellow while working for NASA Space Grant Consortium/NASA EPSCoR. Kim also serves on the Executive Committee of the Women's Foundation of Arkansas.

Simon Mahan, Southern Renewable Energy Association

Simon Mahan is the Executive Director of the Southern Renewable Energy Association, a nonprofit trade association focused on promoting clean energy in the south. He has run the organization for a decade, and mostly focuses on integrated resource planning processes, and transmission planning. For twenty years, Simon has worked in the non-profit space on local, state, regional and federal advocacy efforts. He and his family reside in Little Rock.



Maria Redmond, Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy

Maria serves as the Director of the Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy and has worked for the State of Wisconsin for 22 years. In addition to helping with the development and implementation of the recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change, Maria is leading the implementation of the state's first-ever Clean Energy Plan. Maria leads projects and partnerships centered on environmental justice and multi-sector deep decarbonization and supports the state's bustling clean energy economy that ensures a diverse workforce and technology innovation.



Aidan Tuohy, EPRI

Dr. Aidan Tuohy is a Senior Program Manager at the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). He joined EPRI in October 2010 and works in the Grid Operations and Planning group. He is the program manager for the EPRI research program on Bulk System Integration of Variable and Distributed Energy Resources. He has worked in resource adequacy, flexibility assessment, integration of new flexible resources such as demand response and energy storage, and other renewable and DER integration issues. He currently co-leads EPRI's Resource Adequacy Initiative.



Prior to joining EPRI, Dr. Tuohy worked as a consultant to the Irish electricity industry on projects related to wind integration into markets, system operations and planning. He also worked with the International Energy Agency on the Grid Integration of Variable Renewables project. He completed his doctoral degree at the University College Dublin Electricity Research Centre in 2009. He chairs the Energy Systems Integration Group (ESIG) working group on Operating Impacts and Market Design, while he is also involved in NERC, IEEE and CIGRE activities.

John Weeda, North Dakota Transmission Authority

John Weeda served in the role as the Director of the North Dakota Transmission Authority (NDTA) from February 2018 to July 2023. Since that point he has served as the Technical Advisor to the NDTA. In addition to this, John continues his consulting work with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Prior to these roles, he served as the Director of North Dakota Generation for Great River Energy for forty-one years. This included Coal Creek Station, Stanton Station, Spiritwood Station as well as Midwest Ag Energy Ethanol. Prior to his work at Great River Energy, he worked with Iowa Electric at Duane Arnold Nuclear Generating Plant. Weeda is a graduate of the University of North Dakota in Mechanical Engineering.

