



# NW ENERGY COALITION STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025



NW **Energy** Coalition



## OUR MISSION

The NW Energy Coalition advances clean, equitable, and affordable energy policies by leveraging our analytic expertise and convening a broad alliance of people and organizations.

## OUR VISION

Northwest communities lead the development of an emissions-free energy system that equitably meets the needs of people, brings economic value to communities, addresses the climate crisis, and preserves the region's natural resources.

*Photo credits: Mark Stevens, Eric Wheeler - Metro Transit, WEC*

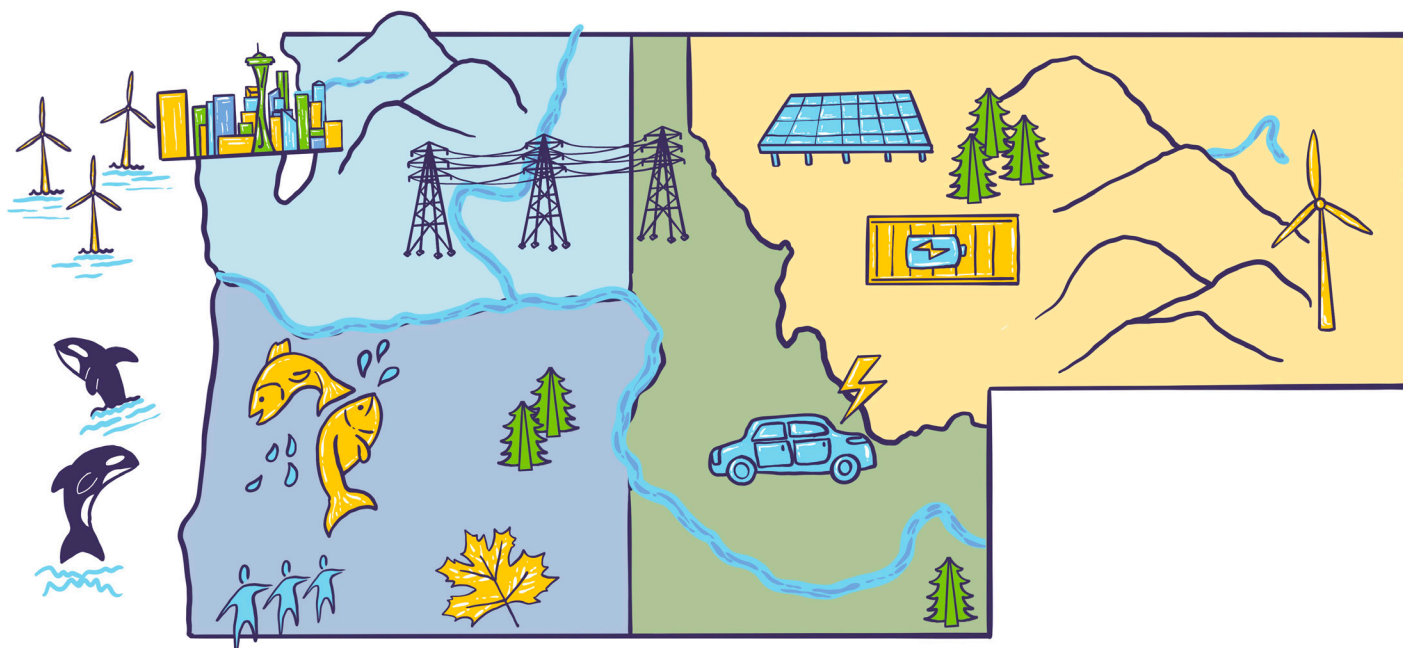


# WE HAVE A COLLECTIVE IMPERATIVE TO ACT IN THE NORTHWEST

The effects of climate change are here now. With collective understanding, community-based solutions, stakeholder alignment on outcomes, and urgent action we will capture the moment to intervene and transition our economy off of fossil fuels and create a clean and efficient energy system that benefits all communities and workers skilled to deliver clean energy solutions.

The region faces numerous challenges to creating a more harmonious and integrated energy system that fully utilizes customer-side energy resources to integrate more renewables and optimize overall energy system operations. And the Northwest must effectively navigate the critical relationships between energy, environmental and cultural impacts, particularly the impact on salmon and wildlife from the hydroelectric system and the impacts of burning fossil fuels on the climate and on air quality in highly impacted communities.

Now is the time for the NW Energy Coalition to convene stakeholders to craft solutions that appreciate the complexities of this transition for the energy system while addressing the urgency of the climate crisis and centering justice and Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities. We are prepared to do the critical work to build consensus, develop thoughtful solutions, and educate policymakers on the path forward.







*Photo credit: Grand Coulee, WA - Stephen Walker*

## OUR UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION TO MEET THE NORTHWEST'S NEEDS

The NW Energy Coalition has the technical knowledge needed to transition the Northwest to a clean and equitable energy system.

We are experts who understand the complex and interdisciplinary nature of the Northwest's energy system, which encompasses energy development, transmission, distribution, access and benefits, and spans myriad regulatory and political bodies at the local, state and regional levels.

Our role as a trusted convenor is vital to developing our informed and substantive positions. We have a 40-year history of educating and engaging stakeholders, and achieving policy wins through thoughtful and intentional collaboration with our diverse membership and allies, which includes community-based organizations, utilities, businesses, and environmental and human services organizations.

We follow our policy wins through the critical phase of implementation. Our emphasis on implementation makes us unique amongst advocates, and is key to ensuring that stakeholders have input and that policies achieve their goals.

# OUR PILLARS



## CUSTOMER RESOURCES

Customer resources (also called demand-side or distributed energy resources) include energy efficiency measures, demand response, electricity storage (e.g. electric vehicles, batteries, and electric hot water systems) and distributed generation such as rooftop solar.



## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Clean, renewable energy sources – including wind and solar – are the cornerstone of decarbonizing our energy system. Appropriately sited renewable sources can clean up our grid and are most effective when they are geographically dispersed and part of a suite of resources, including customer resources, that can help utilities ensure reliability of the energy system.



## FISH AND WILDLIFE

Salmon and steelhead are icons of the Pacific Northwest – important to the region's culture, ecology, and economy. Addressing the energy system impacts of changes to the region's hydrosystem as endangered salmon and steelhead are protected is vital to maintaining a clean, reliable, and affordable energy system.



## EQUITY, AFFORDABILITY, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Utilities and government agencies offer a range of vital programs that provide home weatherization and utility bill assistance to reduce the risk that families with lower incomes will lose their service or suffer from unaffordable energy burdens. Preventing disconnections and ensuring that the system is affordable and delivers tangible benefits, especially for vulnerable and underserved communities, is vitally important as our energy system rapidly transforms.



## DECARBONIZATION

Decarbonizing the energy system requires rapidly shifting away from fossil fuel consumption in buildings and transportation and a more integrated Western power system. Thoughtful attention to maintaining reliability and affordability is imperative as we invest in new systems and infrastructure.

# COALITION PRIORITIES FOR 2022-25

The NW Energy Coalition is committed to advancing Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). The Coalition acknowledges that we, as an organization, have a role in demanding energy justice for Black, Brown and Indigenous communities and that we have not been explicit in our advocacy or in our organizational commitments. Developing a clear and direct commitment to JEDI will guide internal operations within the organization as well as provide a sharper lens and frame as we develop and implement our programmatic and policy work as noted here.

**Ensure energy efficiency and customer resources are prioritized by utilities, regulators, and policymakers as the first resources to meet energy needs and as part of decarbonization strategies. Expand on energy efficiency and grid resiliency by accelerating the electric system's ability to manage energy consumption in full partnership with customers.**

Advance policies and collaborate with utilities to reduce electric and gas loads, and ensure that under represented and highly impacted populations, including Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, those with disabilities, rural communities, and communities with lower incomes help design and have access to the jobs and benefits of energy efficiency and weatherization programs.

Work with Coalition members and allies to advance policies, regulatory action, and utility programs that recognize the full value of customer resources, including energy efficiency, in managing load, providing capacity resources, and integrating renewable resources.

**Advocate for equitable and affordable energy services for underserved and highly impacted communities.**

Increase and improve our coordinated advocacy efforts with community-based organizations to help ensure that Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, those with disabilities, rural communities, and communities with lower incomes have a voice in decision making and access to affordable clean energy services and the benefits of distributed generation and clean energy workforce development.

**Promote comprehensive solutions to restore wild salmon in the Columbia Basin.**

Produce analytic and accessible materials outlining the electric service replacement strategies for lower Snake River hydropower production, and engage utilities, agencies, tribes, and policymakers to develop a comprehensive and collaborative solution that maintains a reliable and affordable electric system.





*Photo credit: Kat Plimpton, NWECC*

### **Advocate for decarbonized buildings and electrified transportation.**

Advance a thoughtful and well-planned transition away from direct use of fossil fuels in buildings and in transportation that is equitable and accessible for customers, communities, workers, and other stakeholders. This includes supporting policy and regulatory changes that send utilities the appropriate financial signals to deliver decarbonized energy services and invest in electrification.

### **Break down siloed energy markets, systems and operations to create integrated system planning and markets that include transmission, distribution, and generation planning that results in a clean power grid that is reliable and resilient.**

Encourage state utility commissions, utilities, and policymakers to develop a Western integrated power market that is transparent and accountable to the public, breaks down regional silos in utilizing renewable energy resources, and allows for more efficient uses of customer resources.

Support the development of tools and public engagement processes to make the energy system more resilient to the impacts of climate change, especially in highly impacted communities.

### **Ensure ongoing organizational excellence.**

Create culture and operations that supports the well being and diversity of all staff, financially values their contributions appropriately and equitably, and empowers them to do their best work.

Advance our mission and vision through a commitment to collaborating with and supporting all our members and allies to create a more just and equitable clean energy economy in the region.



NW **Energy** Coalition

**The NW Energy Coalition is an alliance of over 100 environmental, civic, and human service organizations, utilities, and clean energy businesses in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia, plus many individual members.**

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NW Energy Coalition  
811 1st Ave, Suite 305  
Seattle, WA 98104  
[nwenergy.org](http://nwenergy.org)

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