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Pathways Launch Committee for Regional Organization for Western Energy (ROWE) Announces Inaugural Board of Directors

The vision for an independent regional entity governing Western energy officially advances with the slate of five Board of Directors announced today

September 25, 2026 - The Launch Committee of the West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative (Pathways Initiative) approved the recommendation of the Nominating Committee that included a slate of five directors for the inaugural [Regional Organization for Western Energy \(ROWE\)](#) Board, representing a diversity of geographies, backgrounds, and perspectives. Those five board members include:

- **John Di Stasio**, Former president of the Large Public Power Council (LPPC), where he advocated for America's largest public power systems in Washington, DC; Prior to this role, Di Stasio spent 35 years working for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), the nation's sixth-largest public power utility.
- **Evelyn Kahl**, most recently General Counsel and Chief Policy Officer of the California Community Choice Association (CalCCA); Kahl also spent three decades in private legal practice representing generators, marketers, large energy consumers, load-serving entities, and Community Choice Aggregators.
- **Paul Kjellander**, former Commissioner of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, Idaho Governor's Energy Advisor, Administrator of the Idaho Office of Energy Resources and three-term member of the Idaho House of Representatives.
- **Deborah Smith**, member of the CAISO Western Energy Markets Governing Body and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's Energy & Environment Directorate Advisory Committee; Previously, Deb served as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light and served as General Manager and CEO of Central Lincoln People's Utility District in Oregon.
- **Rebecca Wagner**, former Commissioner on the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, Chair of the Energy Imbalance Market Transitional Committee, Vice Chair of the Western Energy Imbalance Market Governance Review Committee, and member of the Western Energy Markets Governing Body.

The Launch Committee's recommendation goes to the ROWE Formation Board for final approval next week.

The ROWE is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization created as a new and independent entity to provide independent governance over voluntary energy markets and services across the Western United States, including but not limited to, the Extended Day-Ahead Market and the Western Energy Imbalance Market. The Pathways Initiative began in 2023 with the goal of developing a proposal to create a new, independently governed entity capable of offering an expansive suite of West-wide wholesale electricity market functions across the largest possible

footprint. The Pathways Initiative Launch Committee, consisting of twenty six members from across a variety of sectors, presented a Final Proposal in fall 2024 and has spent the last year working to develop a Briefing Book for the new Board that contains ideas and proposals for implementation of the Final Proposal recommendations. These stakeholder driven proposals create the foundation for the ROWE to become a durable organization that will carry forth the long-term vision of a more integrated and sustainable Western energy grid.

“This is an exciting moment for ROWE, and I want to recognize the tremendous work of the Nominating Committee in helping bring us to this point,” said Beth Vaughan, Nominating Committee Co-Chair. “Representing a diverse range of stakeholder perspectives, the committee approached its work with thoughtfulness, care, and a shared commitment to building an organization positioned for long-term success. The five individuals selected bring an impressive breadth of experience, perspectives, and leadership to ROWE. We are grateful for their willingness to serve and confident that their commitment and collaborative spirit will help lay a strong foundation for ROWE and for the important work ahead.”

“The Nominating Committee conducted a thorough search process in close collaboration with stakeholders across the Western Interconnection, and we are proud to recommend an outstanding slate of directors who bring diverse experience and perspectives and will provide a strong foundation for the ROWE’s launch,” added Meg McNaul, Nominating Committee Co-Chair. “I look forward to seeing this exceptional group of directors begin the important work of establishing the ROWE and implementing the vision of independently governed Western energy markets for the benefit of consumers throughout the West.”

As the Western energy landscape continues to evolve, the ROWE board will begin its work immediately, conducting its first meeting in October following an official vote by the Formation Board to confirm their positions on September 30. Following the initial seating of this five-member board, additional seats will be filled and updates will be provided and posted online at rowesternenergy.org.

ROWE Board Member Bios

John Di Stasio 	John Di Stasio brings more than four decades of public-power and electric utility leadership experience to ROWE. His career includes more than 30 years with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), where he advanced through operational and functional leadership roles before serving as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer leading one of the nation’s largest public utilities, with responsibility for reliability, customer service, financial performance, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and grid modernization. Following SMUD, John became the first President of the Large Public Power Council, and for a decade, represented 29 of the nation’s largest public-power utilities across 22 states and Puerto Rico. There, he helped develop LPPC into a national organization with defined governance, policy priorities, committee structures, and operating processes while representing its members before Congress, FERC, federal agencies, and industry forums on matters including reliability, transmission, cybersecurity,
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	infrastructure, and energy policy. John earned a B.S. in Organizational Behavior from the University of San Francisco.
Evelyn Kahl 	Evelyn “Evie” Kahl brings nearly four decades of energy law, utility regulation, market policy, and organizational leadership experience to the ROWE. She most recently served as General Counsel and Chief Policy Officer of the California Community Choice Association (CalCCA), where she led legal, regulatory, legislative, data analytics, and market design functions and advised executive leadership and the Board on governance, risk, and strategic priorities. Previously, Evie spent three decades in private legal practice representing generators, marketers, large energy consumers, load-serving entities, and Community Choice Aggregators. She co-founded and served for 20 years as Managing Partner of Alcantar & Kahl LLP, where her work encompassed California electricity restructuring, wholesale market issues, ratemaking, transmission, procurement, and complex regulatory proceedings. Evie has also played a direct role in the West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative, including service on its Launch Committee, Formation Committee, and ROWE Formation Board. She earned a B.A. from Concordia College and a J.D. from the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco.
Paul Kjellander 	Paul Kjellander brings more than three decades of utility regulation, public policy, and regional energy leadership experience to the ROWE. He began his public service as a three-term member of the Idaho House of Representatives, where he served on multiple legislative committees and became Chair of the House Majority Caucus. Paul subsequently served four terms as a Commissioner on the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, becoming its longest-serving President, with responsibilities spanning rate proceedings, integrated resource planning, transmission investment, resource adequacy, utility transactions, and other regulatory matters. He also served for four years as the Idaho Governor’s Energy Advisor and Administrator of the Idaho Office of Energy Resources. Paul’s regional and national leadership has included serving as President of both the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the National Council on Electricity Policy, where he worked across jurisdictions with regulators, legislators, consumer advocates, federal agencies, and other energy-sector stakeholders. In the West, he has also held leadership roles in regional transmission planning through the Northern Tier Transmission Group and, more recently, The Western Transmission Consortium. Paul earned a B.A. from Muskingum University and an M.A. in Telecommunications from Ohio University.
Deborah Smith 	Deborah “Deb” Smith brings more than three decades of public power, utility executive, and regional energy governance experience to ROWE, spanning finance, system operations, customer service, organizational leadership, and Western energy markets. She currently serves on the CAISO Western Energy Markets Governing Body and on Pacific Northwest National Laboratory’s Energy & Environment Directorate Advisory Committee. Previously, Deb served as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light, where she led one of the nation’s largest public utilities, serving approximately 900,000 people. She also served as General Manager and CEO of Central Lincoln People’s Utility District in Oregon and spent 17 years with the Eugene Water & Electric Board, advancing through financial, customer, operational, and executive leadership roles, including Chief Financial Officer and Assistant General Manager. Across these organizations, her responsibilities have encompassed generation, transmission and distribution, power trading, financial and enterprise risk management, customer services, reliability, and long-term resource planning. Deb has held leadership and governance

	roles across numerous Western and national energy organizations, including serving on the formation board of The Western Transmission Consortium and as the first woman to chair the Public Power Council. She earned a B.S. in Finance, magna cum laude, from Arizona State University.
Rebecca Wagner 	Rebecca Wagner brings nearly three decades of utility regulation, energy policy, and Western electricity market governance experience to ROWE. Her career includes nearly a decade as a Commissioner on the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, where she oversaw regulatory proceedings involving electric and other utilities and addressed integrated resource planning, renewable energy, energy efficiency, transmission policy, and other matters balancing reliability, affordability, utility financial viability, and the public interest. Since leaving the Commission, Rebecca has served as President of Wagner Strategies, advising clients throughout the West on energy policy, regulatory affairs, and stakeholder engagement. She has also played a sustained role in the evolution of Western electricity market governance, chairing the Energy Imbalance Market Transitional Committee, serving as Vice Chair of the Western Energy Imbalance Market Governance Review Committee, and most recently serving as a member of the Western Energy Markets Governing Body. Rebecca earned a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Nevada, Reno.

About the Regional Organization for Western Energy (ROWE)

The Regional Organization for Western Energy (ROWE) is a newly formed 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization created to provide independent governance over voluntary energy markets and services across the Western United States, including but not limited to the Western Energy Day-Ahead Market and the Western Energy Imbalance Market. Representing Step 2 of the West-Wide Governance Pathways Initiative's (Pathways Initiative) three-step process, ROWE is designed to be "a new entity with independent governance capable of offering an expansive suite of West-wide, voluntary wholesale electricity market functions across the largest possible footprint." Work is underway to establish the legal and organizational structures, ensuring the ROWE is prepared to govern energy markets and services in the West. Additional information can be found at rowesternenergy.org.