

**Equity Advisory Group –
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date: May 19, 2023
 Time: 7:30am – 9:00am
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Facilitator:	EAG Members:
<i>Amber Lenhart</i>	<i>Carmen Groome</i>
Avista:	<i>Connie Kliewer</i>
<i>Matt Ulgadea</i>	<i>Will von Bracht</i>
<i>Annette Brandon</i>	<i>Margee Chambers</i>
<i>Melanie Rose</i>	
<i>Amanda Ghering</i>	
	Guests:

Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
 - Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent
- II. Partner Share
- III. Wildfire Planning
- IV. Equity Refresher
- V. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

Facilitator

Amber Lenhart

 Amber Lenhart
 Melanie Rose/ Matt Ugaldea
 Annette Brandon
 Amber Lenhart

Meeting Notes

Welcome & Introductions

Introductions, Meeting Rules/Intent, and review of today’s agenda.

Partner Share

Member: Pride month is coming up and so on June 10th, the Friday before hand there is a 2 spirt pow wow and will send us the information to share with everyone. The Pow Wow will be downtown along with the pride day.

Member: There is the Greater Spokane Food access and shows where local food markets are and there is a match option to support others and help encourage sustainability.

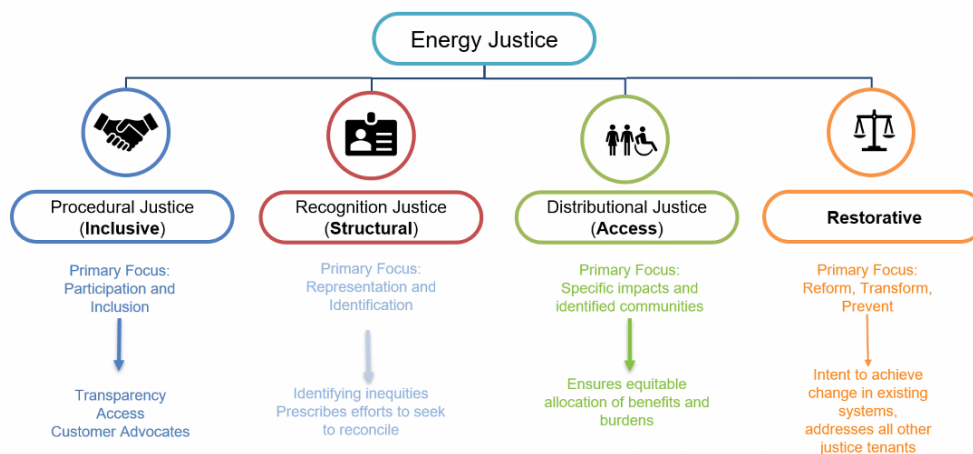
Facilitator: Woman Helping Woman Fund just provided a new report, around health equity issues. Women Helping Women Fund State of Women and Children Report 2.0 and data dashboard: www.whwfspokane.org/data-and-research

Member: SNAP we have ramped up our communication efforts to reach more customers to ensure they are receiving the energy grants they are eligible for. We will be receiving additional weatherization funding for heating/cooling needs and additional water assistance funding from the city.

Equity Refresher

A quick refresher on the Equity focus areas or tenants of Equity as we head into our conversation today around wildfire. We want to ensure customers are receiving equitable benefits. We want to ensure we are being inclusive; do we have all of the voices at the table, are we including all of our service area, urban/rural/tribes, etc., Is the data transparent is it accessible.

Focus Areas (“Tenants”)



Wildfire Resiliency Plan

The risk of wildfires is increasing in our area. This year our goal is to reach 16 different counties in WA during this fire season to inform them of our plan and how it may impact them while collecting feedback on how we can partner with others to support our communities. Wildfire risk is increasing in our area and so it is so important to raise awareness around the risks and mitigation potentials. In 2020 we released our 10-year wildfire plan which aims to prevent, mitigate, and reduce the impacts of wildfires. We plan to spend over \$410 million dollars over the 10-year plan horizon.

Grid Hardening: Taking our existing infrastructure and removing or improving things that are proven to cause sparks and could cause fires. Replace and/or strengthen electric infrastructure, especially in fire prone areas to protect it from possible damage and reduce the likelihood of spark-ignition sources. Started to replace old copper wiring and wooden cross arms with fiberglass crossarms which are not conductive and will not catch fire. We also added plastic sleeves son the poles to the squirrels and animals cannot touch the wire and pole at the same time and cause sparks. This is a high-level overview of what we are doing to try to prevent wildfires, but it also helps to increase reliability of service

which is also a huge benefit. We were able to help/harden 180 miles with upgrades in our highest risk areas.

Facilitator: Could you remind us of the difference between distribution and transmission lines?

Company: Distribution brings service to your home, transmission lines comes from the dams to the substations where it is ready to move to the distribution systems. Think of it like amazon, the big trucks bring the goods to the warehouse and then the smaller trucks bring the package to your home.

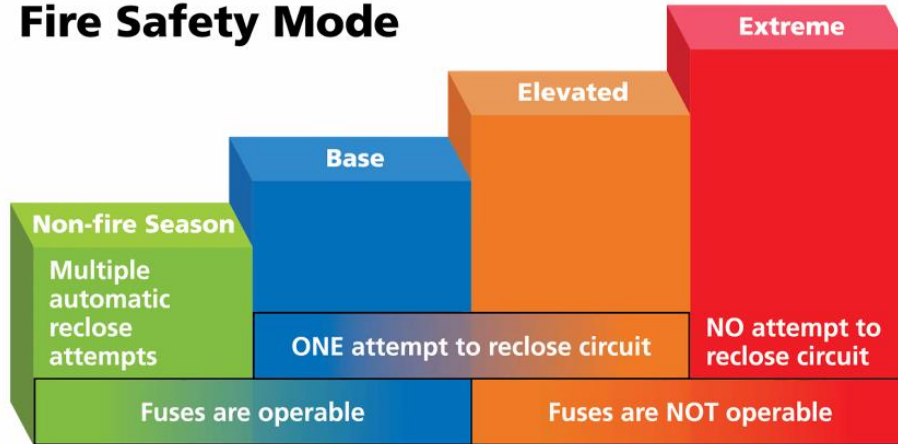
Vegetation Management: Inspect 100% of the electric system annually to identify and remove dead, dying, and diseased trees and incorporate remote sensing technologies like LiDAR and Satellite images to assist with inspections. Most lines are patrolled manually, but hard to reach areas we are able to use the LiDAR technology.

Situational Awareness: Active monitoring of potential fire risk and aligning system protection with that risk. We stream weather data into this model and calculates near real time risk score. We review a 7-day outlooks based on the forecast. This allows us to plan for potential issues and monitor where the risk is to address it quickly or figure out if we can mitigate any issues.

Operations and Emergency Response: Partnering with 1st responders to promote safety for workers and citizens. We have what we call fire safety mode which the protection settings are outlined below. This is all in addition to the grid hardening and vegetation management works discussed previously. The green box is where we are today, the system is working as normal. If something comes in contact with the line like a bird or squirrel, the system tries to fix itself. During a non-fire season that is not a big deal, then we move to the blue box where we turn our system into base fire safety mode. We do this around July sometimes in June, just depends on the fire season and weather. We will leave the system in base mode until the end of the fire season. This means the system will not try to fix itself multiple times, it will only try one time preventing multiple potential sparks. Elevated or the orange box means we will still provide the system one attempt at fixing itself. This may result in customers experiencing longer outages during the summer months with customers are not used to. As this results in us manually patrolling the lines to fix any issues and ensure there are no chances of sparks. If we are in the red box, then customers will experience longer outages as the system will not try to fix itself and a manual fix is required to ensure there are no sparks caused by the attempted automatic reclose.

Full Range of Protection Settings

Fire Safety Mode



A permanent fault (circuit that won't close automatically) requires thorough inspection before reclosing the circuit. This additional step may extend the duration of a outage.

Wildfire Outreach in 2023

Key Stakeholders:

- Public Safety Partners
- Elected Officials & Municipalities
- Community Leaders

Customers:

- Commercial and Industrial
- Residential
- Medically vulnerable

Strategies:

- Telephone Town Hall Meetings
- Outreach – Regional Business Managers & Account Executives
- Communications – newsletters, email, videos, collateral materials, events



To bring awareness to this potential for increased outage times during fire season, we are hosting telephone townhall meetings where we reach out to customers on their phone and see if they are able to join the conversation around wildfire plans and hear their questions and concerns. It is a great way to reach more customers and engage our community. This year we will be translating our outreach materials in Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian pertaining to our wildfire plan to reach more customers as well. There will also be live translations available during the townhall meetings. We are also including information on our wildfire plan in bill inserts throughout the summer.



Emergency Response in Your County

- What should we be aware of?
 - Top safety priorities
 - Critical infrastructure
 - Concerns
- How is your community preparing for wildfire season?
- If you experienced an extended power outage, what support would your community need?
- Key contacts and notification process
- Languages for translation
- Partnership opportunities for public safety and community engagement
- Next steps...

This was a really nice presentation and I know it is great to know that my home would still be standing in the event of an issue.

The justice40 map syncs very nicely with our Washington highly impacted community maps (part of Named Communities) that we have been discussing as part of CEIP.

Member: What was the 10-year financial commitment, 4mil? Does this include admin? Is this enough to meet your objectives?

Company: That is \$410 million and encompasses the entire part of our plan. We increased it from last year which mostly is due to vegetation management. The trees are in pretty bad shape and needed to be remedied.

Member: Questions about management of vegetation: tree to wire is highest probability? you focus on rural areas which are 80% of the fire start risk? In the metro areas, who's responsible for the vegetation management: commercial and residential?

Company: We are still doing routine maintenance on all vegetation which is a 5-year route. We go to each area and trim trees to the point where the trees will stay away from our wires for at least 5-years.

Wildfire and Equity Discussion

Wildfire

Equity Lens



Participation
(Procedural)

Focus:

- Participation, inclusion of all individuals
- Fair Access to process, understandable
- Ease of participation in programs
- Transparency, customer representation

Wildfire Plan:

- Language Translation
- Expanded methods of outreach
- Transparent process with WUTC



Acknowledgement
/understanding
(Recognition)

Focus:

- Understand of socioeconomic or geographic variances resulting in unfairness
- Relationship of these socioeconomic or geographic variances to energy vulnerability? (security, reliability, affordability)

Wildfire Plan:

- Maps identified those who were most vulnerable
- Named Community Maps also track reliability/affordability to make sure we are impacting these areas



Who gets
benefits?
(Distributional)

Focus:

- Fairness in benefits and burdens of energy system, taking into consideration starting spot
- Can we measure the impact?

Wildfire Plan:

- Language Translation
- Expanded methods of outreach
- Transparent process with WUTC



Restorative

Focus:

- Does our process help to mitigate future inequities?
- Have we considered unintended consequences?
- Can we measure impact?

Wildfire Plan:

Not applicable?

As an EAG member, let's be intentional about this discussion and ensuring we are including more people in our wildfire discussions. How can we be more intentional and make sure our words are understandable.

<https://www.myavista.com/safety/were-doing-more-to-protect-against-wildfires>

During the townhall meetings we will have live translation service and we will have flyers in multiple languages. Our wildfire plan is also presented to the Washington Commission each year. We present the plan for the upcoming fire season to the Idaho and Washington Commission and then at the end of the fire season we present again on how our plan went and how can we improve during the following fire season. We continue to update and improve this plan annually.

We did apply to receive a federal grant pertaining to our wildfire plan needs. If we are successful with that grant we will be moving a lot of overhead lines to underground lines in rural areas and negatives most of the wildfire threat in those areas, there is still some threat, but much smaller.

Wrap Up

Thank you all for your wonderful ideas, please feel free to send us any additional ideas. We are replacing our June meeting with this June 2nd meeting from 10am to noon where we will discuss proposed Joint Advocate CBIs that were proposed during the CEIP development in 2021 and were not adopted. We will also discuss our proposed indoor air quality metrics. This will be a joint meeting with the Equity Advisory Group, the

Energy Assistance Advisory Group and the Energy Efficiency Advisory Group. This meeting will be recorded and posted to our clean energy webpage.