



**Midwest Regional Meeting
Des Moines, Iowa
April 30 through May 2, 2024**

Des Moines Marriott Downtown, 700 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50309

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Monday, April 29, 2024

Time	Session	Speakers
12:45 PM-4:00 PM	Attendees are welcome to sit in on “Community Creations” presentations by the Hydropower Collegiate Competition Teams	Organizer: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Time	Session	Speakers
8:30 AM-11:00 AM	Asset Owner Only Meeting <i>All attendees that work for asset owners/power producers are welcome to participate</i>	Facilitator: Robert Vyvyan, P.E., Lead Civil & Chief Dam Safety Engineer, Alliant Energy
8:30 AM-9:30 AM	Hands-On Session for Collegiate Competition Teams: Explore Clean Energy Activities, Energy Trading, and Hydro Pumped Storage <i>All attendees of the Midwest Regional Meeting are welcome to join in the fun, immersive educational activities</i>	Facilitators: Staff from KidWind, U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and Hydro Foundation
8:30 AM-10:45 AM	Attendees are welcome to sit in on “Community Creations” presentations by the Hydropower Collegiate Competition Teams	Organizer: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy

9:45 AM-10:45 AM	<p>Hands-On Session for Collegiate Competition Teams: Explore Clean Energy Activities, Energy Trading, and Hydro Pumped Storage</p> <p><i>All attendees of the Midwest Regional Meeting are welcome to join in the fun, immersive educational activities</i></p>	<p><u>Facilitators:</u> Staff from KidWind, U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and Hydro Foundation</p>
11:00 AM-12:00 PM	<p>Student Industry Knowledge Exchange (SIKE) Lunch</p> <p><i>All attendees are welcome! Come prepared to interact with students sitting at your table in a fun networking exercise.</i></p>	<p><u>Facilitator:</u> Bree Mendlin Program Director, Hydropower Foundation</p>
12:00 PM-4:30 pm	<p>Tour of Red Rock Hydroelectric Project</p> <p><i>Requires pre-registration. Includes transportation from the hotel to the project and back.</i></p> <p>Details of tour are found here</p>	<p><u>Host:</u> Missouri River Energy Services (MRES)</p>
5:00 PM-7:00 PM	<p>Welcome Networking Reception</p>	

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

7:00 AM-8:00 AM	<p>Registration and Networking Breakfast</p>	
8:00 AM	<p>Opening Remarks and Welcome</p> <p>Update from the Midwest Hydro Users Group (MHUG)</p> <p>Hear the latest news and updates on the MHUG front, the welcome will include brief introductions from everyone in attendance to break the ice and get the discussions started.</p>	<p><u>Speakers:</u> Marla Barnes, Vice President, Member and Industry Engagements, National Hydropower Association</p> <p>Rory Alsberg, MHUG President and Senior Business Development Manager, J.F. Brennan Inc.</p> <p>Whitney Hansen, MHUG Vice President and Vice President, Senior Civil/Structural Engineer, Barr Engineering</p>
8:45 AM	<p>Session 1: Clean Energy Transition in the Midwest</p> <p>In the heartland of America, a transformative energy shift is underway, with the Midwest emerging as a focal point for renewable energy innovation. Learn how power producers and suppliers in the region are positioning themselves, including the many ways hydropower can be leveraged.</p>	<p><u>Session Leader:</u> Nora Rosemore, Manager – Renewable Business Operations, ALLETE/Minnesota Power</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Travis Hart, Director, Hydro Operations, Ameren Missouri</p> <p>Tim Blodgett, Vice President, Member Services, Missouri River Energy Services (MRES)</p> <p>Eric Palmer, Manager, Utility Planning, ALLETE/Minnesota Power</p>

		Matt Roberts , Vice President, Business Development, Emerson
9:45 AM	Networking Break	
10:00 AM	<p>Session 2: Equipment Modernization and Replacement Strategies at Legacy Facilities</p> <p>This wide-ranging session will cover tools and strategies available to optimize the efficient operation of a hydropower system. New technologies and designs will also be explored with focus on reliability improvements and cost-effective solutions to environmental challenges.</p>	<p><u>Session Leader:</u> Jim Thrasher, Business Development, Thompson HCMS</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Gia Schneider, Co-Founder and CEO, Natel Energy</p> <p>Daniel Langlois, Senior Sales Manager, Hydro Services, GE Renewable Energy</p> <p>Joe Dvorak, Hydropower Specialist, North Central Region, HDR</p>
10:45 AM	Q&A Session with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Chicago Regional Office	<p><u>Speaker:</u> Kevin Griebenow, Regional Engineer, Chicago Regional Office, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)</p>
11:15 AM	Networking Break	
11:30 AM	<p>Session 3: Climate Extremes – What is Happening in the Midwest and Impacts for Hydropower</p> <p>Panelists will delve into the intricate relationship between shifting weather-related patterns and hydropower operations in the region. Participants will gain invaluable insights into this complex interplay, paving the way for informed decision-making and proactive measures to mitigate future risks and ensure the long-term sustainability of energy production in the Midwest.</p>	<p><u>Session Leader:</u> Ellen Faulkner, Senior Project Manager, Water Resources, Ayres Associates</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Jeff Zogg, Senior Service Hydrologist, NWS Weather Forecast Office, NOAA</p> <p>Ben Niffenegger, Executive Officer, Strategy & Regulatory, Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company (WVIC)</p> <p>Sunny Wescott, Lead Meteorologist, Infrastructure Security Division, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), U.S. Department of Homeland Security</p>
12:15 PM	<p>Networking Lunch</p> <p>Featuring:</p> <p>1) Awards Ceremony – Announcement of the Winners of the Hydropower Collegiate Competition</p>	<p><u>Presenter of Hydropower Collegiate Competition Awards:</u> Corey Vezina, Hydropower Program Manager (Acting), Water Power Technologies Office, U.S. Department of Energy</p> <p><u>Guest Speaker:</u></p>

	<p>The grand finale of the Hydropower Collegiate Competition is taking place during the Midwest Regional Meeting. Winners will be announced at this lunch. Universities participating are HERE.</p> <p>2) Building the Workforce Pipeline for the Future – Unveiling the New WC2 Program</p> <p>The Hydropower Foundation has launched a new exciting program called the Waterpower Clubs / Waterpower Community (WC2) to help connect university students with industry, with the objective of building a workforce pipeline.</p> <p>Learn how your organization can benefit from and get involved in WC2!</p>	<p>David Sinclair, Strategic Advisor, Hydropower Foundation</p>
2:00 PM	<p>Special Guest Lecture: Red Rock Hydropower Project: Adding Power Generation at an Existing U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Dam</p> <p>This project has a capacity range of 43 MW to 55 MW of electricity, which is transmitted to the power grid in Pella, Iowa, by a combination of underground and overhead transmission lines. The construction of this facility required the penetration of the existing Corps dam impounding Red Rock Lake. Additionally, the powerhouse was constructed at the downstream toe of the dam.</p>	<p>Speakers: Vern Cochran, Plant Supervisor, Red Rock Hydroelectric Project, Missouri River Energy Services (MRES)</p> <p>Rachael Bisnett, Senior Associate, Stantec</p>
2:45 PM	<p>Session 4: Small Hydro Case Studies: Lake Byllesby Dam and Bowersock Hydropower</p> <p>This session is dedicated to understanding issues that are unique to small projects and suggestions of practical strategies that can be adapted to maintain operations and reliability.</p>	<p>Session Leader: Darrin Johnson, FERC Compliance and Licensing, Mead and Hunt</p> <p>Speakers: Josh Petersen, Director of Engineering, Merjent</p> <p>Sarah Hill-Nelson, President, The Bowersock Mills and Power Company</p>
3:30 PM	<p>Networking Break</p>	
4:00 PM	<p>Session 5: Funding (Loans and/or Grants) from the Government</p> <p>Dollars allocated through federal laws, such as the BIL - Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (also known as the IIJA-Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act), are beginning to flow.</p> <p>Hear how two recipients were successful with their applications, which considerations were made, and how those funds be put to work.</p>	<p>Session Leader: Norbert Woodhams, Business Development, Worthington Products</p> <p>Speakers: Zach Moureau, Environmental & Compliance Manager, Kaukauna Utilities</p> <p>Jim Vandeputte, Policy Manager, Eagle Creek Renewable Energy</p>
4:30 PM	<p>Session 6: Decision-Making Strategies around Hydropower Assets: Re-Investing, Divesting, and License Surrender/Dam Removal</p> <p>Multi-faceted decision-making strategies surrounding hydropower assets will be explored, navigating the complexities of reinvestment, divestment, and the pivotal choice of license surrender or dam removal and what those entail.</p>	<p>Session Leader: Elizabeth McCormick, Associate, Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP</p> <p>Speakers: Jeremy Clotfelter, Director, Hydro Operations, Northwestern Energy</p> <p>Adam Monroe, Executive Director, Hydro Operations, CMS Energy</p>

	<p>Through a blend of case studies and expert insights, participants will explore the diverse array of factors influencing these critical decisions, from economic viability, regulatory considerations to environmental impacts and community engagement.</p> <p>With a focus on fostering sustainability and maximizing long-term value, the session will equip attendees with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed choices regarding the future of hydropower assets.</p>	
5:30 PM	Closing Remarks	<p>Speakers: Rory Alsberg, Senior Business Development Manager and MHUG Chair, J.F. Brennan</p> <p>Chris Hayes, Senior Advisor of Technical Programs and Training, National Hydropower Association (NHA)</p>
5:45 PM-6:45 PM	Event Wrap-Up Happy Hour	

Thursday, May 2, 2024

Time	Session	
8:00 AM-12:00 PM	Option 1: Dam Safety Workshop: New Information and Findings about Performing Comprehensive Assessment – Lessons Learned, Best Practices, and What Comes Next?	<p>Speakers: For the full agenda and speakers, go to the next page or click HERE</p>
8:00 AM Tee Time	Option 2: Golf Outing	Click HERE for More Details



Presents:

Dam Safety Workshop: Performing Comprehensive Assessments – Lessons Learned, Best Practices and What Comes Next?

Thursday, May 2, 2024, 8:00 AM-12:00 PM

This workshop will focus on undertaking Comprehensive Assessments under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s new guidelines. Valuable insights will be shared covering the planning process, execution, level of effort, and next steps following a comprehensive assessment, including how to leverage outputs to inform decisions and prioritize work.

Several perspectives will be shared, including those from independent consultants, state and federal regulators, as well as hydroelectric project owners.

Time	Session	Speakers
8:00 AM-8:15 AM	Welcome, Background and Introductions	Chris Hayes , Senior Advisor, Technical Programs and Training, NHA
8:15 AM-9:15 AM	Regulatory Perspective	Kevin Griebenow , Regional Engineer, Division of Dam Safety and Inspections, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC D2SI)
9:15 AM-10:15 AM	Consultancy Perspective	Thomas Fitzgerald , Principal, Schnabel Engineering Megan Puncke , Deputy, Dams Business Leader, Black and Veatch
10:15 AM-10:45 AM	<i>Networking Break</i>	
10:45 AM-11:30 AM	Asset Owner Perspective	Group Discussion
11:30 AM-12:00 PM	Group Discussion	Facilitated by Thomas Fitzgerald
12:00 PM	Adjourn	