

## Standards Announcement

### Ballot Pool and Pre-ballot Window (with Comment Period) Project 2007-07: Vegetation Management

Now available at: [http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management Project 2007-7.html](http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management%20Project%202007-7.html)

#### **Project 2007-07: Vegetation Management**

On March 18, 2010, FERC issued several orders and notices of proposed rulemakings pertaining to standards development activities and processes, suggesting a lack of progress in responding to directives from Order 693 as well in the timeliness of standards development in general. At the May 2010 NERC Board meeting, Gerry Cauley, NERC's President, also expressed these concerns, indicating that the resolution to these concerns is one of NERC's top priorities in the near term. As a result, the Standards Committee has authorized deviations from the normal standards development process for the Vegetation Management project, as well as other projects that have been through significant stakeholder review through the development process, to demonstrate that the NERC enterprise is responsive to FERC directives, and is making progress in developing new standards.

The Standards Committee approved the following deviations from the standards development process:

- The proposed changes to the standards will be posted for a shortened comment period;
- The ballot pool will be formed during the first few weeks of the comment period;
- The initial ballot will be conducted during the last 10 days of the comment period; and
- The drafting team may make modifications between the initial and recirculation ballots based on stakeholder comments to improve the overall quality of the standard.

#### **Ballot Pool (through July 7, 2010)**

Registered Ballot Body members may join the ballot pool **until 8 a.m. Eastern on July 7, 2010** to be eligible to vote in the upcoming ballot at the following page:

<https://standards.nerc.net/BallotPool.aspx>. Members who join the ballot pool to vote on the standard will automatically be entered in a separate pool to participate in the non-binding poll of the associated violation risk factors (VRFs) and violation severity levels (VSLs). (As a reminder, this new approach for VRFs and VSLs is one of the updates reflected in the recently FERC-approved Reliability Standards Development Procedure – Version 7.)

During the pre-ballot window, members of the ballot pool may communicate with one another by using their “ballot pool list server.” (Once the balloting begins, ballot pool members are prohibited from using the ballot pool list servers.) The list server for this ballot pool is: [bp-2007-07\\_FAC-003-2\\_in@nerc.com](mailto:bp-2007-07_FAC-003-2_in@nerc.com)

### **Comment Period (through July 17, 2010)**

Please use this [electronic form](#) to submit comments. If you experience any difficulties in using the electronic form, please contact Lauren Koller at 609-524-7047.

The documents for this project — including an off-line, unofficial copy of the questions listed in the comment form — are posted at the following site:

[http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management\\_Project\\_2007-7.html](http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management_Project_2007-7.html)

### **Project Background**

The project is an update to FAC-003-1, which was approved in 2006. The items identified for revision include the incorporation of FERC Order 693 comments related to applicability, procedural repairs to conform to the current standards format and development procedure, technical updates and guidance to address stakeholder suggestions, and the elimination of “fill-in-the-blank” components. More information is available on the project page:

[http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management\\_Project\\_2007-7.html](http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management_Project_2007-7.html)

Special notes about this project:

The NERC Standards Committee endorsed the use of Project 2007-07: Vegetation Management as the prototype for the proof-of-concept for using the “results-based” criteria for developing a reliability standard. The overall approach includes considerably more emphasis on the “concepts and assumptions” underlying the development of requirements and goes beyond the steps most drafting teams use when developing a standard. Accordingly, the “look and feel” of the vegetation management standard is quite different than NERC’s existing standards. However, at the core is a set of mandatory and enforceable requirements with useful guidance supporting these requirements, an approach NERC’s legal counsel has reviewed and finds acceptable. More information about results-based standards can be found at:

[http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Project2010-06\\_Results-based\\_Reliability\\_Standards.html](http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Project2010-06_Results-based_Reliability_Standards.html)

### **Applicability of Standards in Project**

Transmission Owners

Specific facilities (see standard)

### **Standards Development Process**

The [Reliability Standards Development Procedure](#) contains all the procedures governing the standards development process. The success of the NERC standards development process depends on stakeholder participation. We extend our thanks to all those who participate.

*For more information or assistance, please contact Lauren Koller at [Lauren.Koller@nerc.net](mailto:Lauren.Koller@nerc.net)*