

Transforming the Northwest Energy System NWESS 2026



University of Washington
Alder Hall
April 1-2, 2026



Speaker: Dr. Mani Vadari

Title: Defining Delivery System Planning challenges of meeting load increases, affordability, and renewable energy mandates

Abstract: Energy systems are seeing unprecedented change – large load interconnections, renewables (Tx and Dx interconnected), utility grid scale storage, not to mention microgrids, and Virtual Power Plants. In addition, these changes are coming extremely rapidly and from all directions – all of them starting with the Delivery System Planning area. Addressing them requires changing the dialog from electric power system planning to delivery system planning. This is much more than just changing the name. It is a transformation that starts from reimagining planning of both electric and gas focusing on delivering energy from where it is available to where it is needed.

The talk will focus on the changes and their implications. I will also discuss how the modern utility needs pivot and quickly requiring an ability to focus on the change that is here now but also continuously focus on changes that will come and hit us in the next 4 years, 8 years. For this to

work efficiently, the utility needs to move beyond the roadmap of today into a journey map for tomorrow. I will also talk about how forecasting needs to change.

Bio: Dr. Mani Vadari is an IEEE Life Fellow with more than 40 years of leadership in shaping the modern power grid. A power systems engineer by training, he has guided utilities, technology companies, and governments around the world in defining the business and technical strategies needed to build the next generation electric and energy system.

Mani's expertise spans the full spectrum of grid operations — transmission, distribution, generation, planning, wholesale and retail markets, Smart Grid, and Smart Cities. As President of Modern Grid Solutions, Mani leads a team of experts delivering complex, multidisciplinary solutions across technology, operations, regulation, and finance. He is also an Affiliate Professor at the University of Washington and an Adjunct Professor at Washington State University.

Mani is the author of two widely read books, and has published more than one hundred technical papers, articles, and blogs, contributing significantly to the industry's knowledge base and thought leadership.

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