

WEBINAR SERIES

Thirty Years after 1996: WECC Oscillations Then and Now

Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 10 a.m. PT (1 p.m. ET)

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In 1996, the WECC interconnect famously entered an unstable oscillatory event resulting in a wide-spread blackout. The event was the catalyst for major investments in wide-area PMU monitoring, significant advancement in PMU data analyses, more accurate transient simulation modeling, and better tuning of damping controls. This talk looks back at the event and the resulting understanding of the WECC system oscillatory modes. Fundamental questions addressed include: Why did oscillations become a bigger issue coming into the 1990s? What did the event entail? What did we know in the 1990s versus today about the system? Where is the system headed in the next 30 years?

Meet the Presenter



Dan Trudnowski is a professor of electrical engineering at Montana Technological University, and a consultant to the electric power industry. He completed his Ph.D. in EE at Montana State University in 1991, and then spent 5 years as a researcher at the U.S. Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Lab. In 1995 he joined Montana Tech where he has served as Professor, Department Chair, and Dean. Dan is an expert in control systems, power system analysis, and application of signal processing. Within these areas, he has participated in and led funded research and development projects resulting in analysis software, control system designs, and laboratory and field prototypes. He has advised approximately 30 graduate students, authored/co-authored over 120 peer-reviewed publications, co-authored a book; and been awarded 3 patents. In 2010, Dan received professional recognition as an IEEE Fellow for work related to electromechanical oscillations. He shared an R&D 100 Award in 2017 for developing an innovative approach to dampen electromechanical oscillations using the PDCI in the WECC.

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