



39TH ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

April 7th - 8th, 2026
Hilton Americas - Houston

CONFERENCE *Erica Engle*

CHAIRS: *Alexandra Williams, GuidePost Energy*

LARGEST REGIONAL GATHERING OF POWER PROFESSIONALS THIS SPRING!

600+ Attendees Expected!

Prominent Industry & Government Speakers

Timely Session Topics & Discussions

PLUS Rooftop Reception at The Grove on April 7th

[REGISTER FOR SPRING CONFERENCE NOW](#)

Pre-Conference Activity Add-Ons at Hilton Americas on Monday, April 6th

"Large Load Interconnection & Voltage Ride-Through (LLI/VRT)" Workshop from 1:00 - 4:45 PM

Welcome Reception from 5:00 - 6:30 PM

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Hotel, Room Reservation & Parking

GCPA has a room block with a limited number of rooms for the nights of Mon 4/6 - Tue 4/7 at Hilton Americas Houston. **Single or double occupancy rooms are available at the special rate of \$269 per night. Rate includes complimentary in-room high speed wireless internet service.** Reservations must be received on or before the room block cutoff date of Monday, March 16.

[CLICK HERE TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM ONLINE](#)

Call 1-800-236-2905 if you need assistance; mention the room block

TO VIEW THE HILTON AMERICAS - HOUSTON WEBSITE: [Click Here](#)

Parking is available at Hilton Americas standard rates which are currently \$42/day for self parking in the attached garage and \$65/day for valet parking.

Continuing Education Credit Information

PEs: As part of the Continuing Education Program requirements for Professional Engineers in Texas, each licensed engineer is required to earn 15 hours per year of Professional Development Hours (PDH). Attendees will receive 9.25 hours of credit if all conference sessions are attended and 3.25 hours of credit for the workshop.

CPAs: GCPA is a Board Registered CPE Sponsor with the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy. This registration does not constitute an endorsement by the Board as to the quality of our CPE program. The learning objectives for CPAs attending the conference are: to obtain an in-depth understanding of the topics listed in the program. There are no prerequisites. The learning objectives for the workshop are: to obtain an in-depth understanding of Large Load Interconnection & Voltage Ride-Through. Attendees will receive 9.9 hours of credit if all conference sessions are attended and 3.9 hours of credit for the workshop.

Attorneys: GCPA will be applying with the Texas State Bar for MCLE credit approval for portions of this conference. Please check back for updates.

Thanks to Our Media Partner

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW - [REGISTER NOW](#)

Join us at this spring's leading electric power conference for the ERCOT/Gulf Coast region.

600+ attendance expected based on 2025 attendance of 650 with approximately one-third of these attendees holding upper level management titles ranging from CEO to Vice President.

Pre-Conference Activity Add-Ons - Monday, April 6

- Large Load Interconnection & Voltage Ride-Through (LLI/VRT) Workshop at Hilton Americas from 1:00 PM - 4:45 PM
- Welcome Cocktail Reception for Attendees at Hilton Americas from 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Spring Conference Day One - Tuesday, April 7

- Registration and Continental Breakfast opens at 7:30 AM
- Conference opening welcome at 8:20 AM
- Session and keynoter presentations from 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- Rooftop Cocktail Reception at The Grove from 4:45 PM - 7:00 PM

Spring Conference Day Two - Wednesday, April 8

- Registration and Continental Breakfast opens at 8:00 AM
- Session and keynoter presentations from 8:30 AM - 11:50 AM
- Conference adjourns at close of final session at 11:50 AM

Thanks to Our Planning Committee

Conference Chairs:

Erica Engle

Alexandra Williams, GuidePost Energy

Elaina Ball, CPS Energy

Shaun Connell, Lancium

Sarah DeVon, TotalEnergies Gas & Power

Mark Egan, Energy Evolution Advisors

Meghan Griffiths, Jackson Walker LLP

Sean Kelly, Amperon

Mariana Schmid, Microsoft

Agenda - Tuesday, April 7

7:30 AM

REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:20 AM

GCPA President's Welcome
Recognition of Chairs
Conference Introduction

Brian Lloyd, Vice President, Oncor
Barbara Clemenhagen, Executive Director, GCPA
Erica Engle
Alexandra Williams, Vice President Origination, GuidePost Energy

8:30 AM

POWER STAR AWARD PRESENTATION

8:45 AM

KEYNOTE - When Electrons Meet Elections: The Political Weaponization of the Grid

Eric Cantor, Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Moelis & Company

9:15 AM

Session I - Life After Go-Live: Early Lessons from Real-Time Co-Optimization (RTC)

Four months into RTC implementation, market participants and experts assess the real-world impacts on price formation, ancillary service markets, battery storage strategy, and overall grid operations. This candid discussion explores what's working, what's surprising, and what still needs refinement in ERCOT's most significant market design change in years.

Moderator: **Steve Reedy**, CEO, CIM View Consulting

Panelists:

Vanessa Anesetti, Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, Just Energy
Casey Kopp, Head of Asset Backed Trading, ENGIE North America
John Strickland, Sr. Director - ERCOT Power Trading & Operations, NRG
Christian Tomaino, Manager, ERCOT Origination, Tenaska Power Services Co.

10:00 AM

NETWORKING BREAK

10:30 AM

Vignette - The Electron Economy: An Investment Thesis

Gridfree.AI share their perspective on the electronic economy and where they're placing bets in the energy transition, offering insights into what's attracting investment capital in the evolving market.

Speakers: **Ralph Alexander**, Chairman and CEO, Gridfree.AI

10:45 AM

Session II - Retail Evolution: Consolidation, DERs, & the Virtual Power Plant Revolution

The ERCOT retail market is transforming as consolidation reshapes the competitive landscape while distributed energy resources and virtual power plants create new business models. This panel examines how retailers are evolving from commodity providers to energy service orchestrators, aggregating residential solar, storage, EVs, and smart devices into dispatchable grid resources while navigating regulatory frameworks and customer expectations.

Moderator: **Shazma Khan**, Vice President Origination & Sales, TotalEnergies

Panelists:

Justin Lopes, COO, Base Power Company
Deborah Merrill, President, BP Retail (invited)
PJ Popovic, CEO, Rhythm Energy

Agenda - Tuesday, April 7 (Continued)

- 11:45 AM **LUNCHEON**
- 1:15 PM **KEYNOTE - Baseload, Peakers, and Billions:
The Economics of Keeping the Lights On in an AI-Powered World**
Dan Eggers, Sr. Executive Vice President, Finance & Data Economy, Constellation Energy
- 1:45 PM **Session III - The Great Build-Out: Navigating the Supply Chain and Labor Crunch**
A practical discussion with developers and EPCs on overcoming critical bottlenecks in sourcing high-voltage equipment, transformers, and skilled labor required for Texas's massive transmission and generation expansion. Panelists share strategies for securing equipment, managing lead times, and building the workforce needed for unprecedented infrastructure development.
Moderator: **Erica Engle**
Panelists:
Michael Kotara, Senior Power Market Executive, Zachry, Inc.
Tom Poteet, Sr. Vice President of Corporate Development, Mesa Power Solutions
Andrew Schwaitzberg, President, Danovo Energy Solutions, a Quanta Services Company
- 2:30 PM **NETWORKING BREAK**
- 3:00 PM **Session IV - Rethinking 'Reliability': Are We Solving for the Right Problem?**
A philosophical but critical panel questioning our definition of reliability. Does it just mean avoiding blackouts, or should it encompass resilience to extreme weather, affordability, and protection from extreme price volatility? How do we build a market that values all three while managing the system stability challenges introduced by large, high-density loads?
Moderator: **Beth Garza**, Sr. Fellow, R Street Institute
Panelists:
Stacey Doré, Chief Strategy & Sustainability Officer, EVP of Public Affairs, Vistra
Katie Coleman, Partner, O'Melveny
Kristian Koellner, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Transmission, LCRA
Stephanie Kroger, President, Hunt Energy Network
- 4:00 PM **Session V - Live Podcast Recording: Close of Business Tuesday**
Join us for a special live recording of the popular energy podcast featuring Sean Kelly, CEO of Amperon, hosted by Gabe Cuadra. This timely discussion will explore near-term market dynamics, load forecasting challenges, and what the data tells us about ERCOT's evolving landscape.
Moderator: **Maynard Holt**, Founder & CEO, Veriten
Guests: **Sean Kelly**, CEO, Amperon
- 4:45 - 7:00 PM **COCKTAIL RECEPTION AT THE GROVE**
Join us at this beautiful rooftop location across the street from the Hilton Americas.

Agenda - Wednesday, April 8

- 8:00 AM **REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
- 8:30 AM **ANNOUNCEMENTS - Barbara Clemenhagen**, Executive Director, GCPA
- 8:35 AM **KEYNOTE - Powering the AI Revolution: Enabling the Gigawatt-Scale Data Centers of the Future**
Ali Fenn, President, Lancium
- 9:05 AM **Vignette - Large Load Lessons from Virginia**
This vignette will examine Dominion's large load tariff structure and what Texas can learn from Virginia's approach to managing data center growth.
Speaker: **Michael Yuffee**, Partner, Baker Botts
- 9:20 AM **Session VI - Forecasting the Unknown: How Load Uncertainty Shapes the Future of 765kV & Transmission Cost Allocation**
This panel explores how Texas can plan major transmission expansions amid unprecedented uncertainty in long-term load forecasts. Panelists discuss how explosive but volatile data center and industrial growth is reshaping planning assumptions, and examine the PUC's ongoing review of transmission cost allocation and potential changes to 4CP.
Moderator: **Will McAdams**, President & Founder, McAdams Energy Group
Panelists:
Chad Burnett, Vice President of Regulatory and Finance, AEP
Taylor Kilroy, Executive Director, Texas Public Power Association
Warren Lasher, President, Lasher Energy Consulting
Shawn McGlothlin, Associate, J. Pollock, Incorporated
- 10:05 AM **NETWORKING BREAK**
- 10:35 AM **Vignette - 765kV Progress Report**
Update on ERCOT's evaluation of 765kV transmission options and the path forward for Texas's next-generation grid backbone.
Speaker: **Mandhir Sahni, PhD**, COO, EEPlus, Inc.
- 10:50 AM **KEYNOTE - The Next Frontier: Advanced Technologies & Grid Resilience – A Vision of the Future**
Varun Sivaram, Sr. Advisor to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy; Co-Founder, Emerald AI
- 11:05 AM **Session VII - Why Not in My Backyard: Interconnecting in NOIE Territory**
Some co-ops are not interconnecting large loads, hindering regional economic development. This panel explores the financing and structural reasons behind this trend, featuring perspectives from co-ops that are embracing growth alongside those facing constraints.
Moderator: **Alexandra Williams**, Vice President, Origination, GuidePost Energy
Panelists:
Samantha Crouch, Sr. Exec. Vice President Power Supply & General Counsel, Farmers Electric Coop
Julie Parsley, CEO, Pederneles Electric Coop
Brock Peterson, COO, Satoshi Energy
Mike Wise, Sr. Vice President of Regulatory & Market Strategy, Golden Spread Electric Coop

Pre-Conference Half-Day Workshop: Monday, April 6 - 1:00-4:45 PM

Large Load Interconnection & Voltage Ride-Through (LLI/VRT)

1:00 PM **Welcome & Introduction**

1:15 PM **ERCOT Perspective: Large Load Interconnection—Past to Present**

A big-picture, explanatory session led by **Jeff Billo**, Vice President of Interconnection & Grid Analysis, ERCOT examining how the large-load process worked historically, what changed as load volumes exploded, the key inflection points that led to today's queue dynamics, and the principles guiding ERCOT's current reform efforts.

1:30 PM **Panel: Large Load Interconnection Reform — Steps Being Taken to Unstick the Queue**

A candid discussion with ERCOT, utilities, developers, and market participants on what reforms are working in practice, where friction and uncertainty remain, how enhanced screening, clustering, and flexibility are changing outcomes, and what "success" looks like for the next wave of large-load projects.

Moderator: **Eric Goff**, President, Goff Policy

Panelists:

Jeff Billo, VP Interconnection & Grid Analysis, ERCOT

Harsh Naik, Transmission Planning, Oncor

Evan Neel, Sr. Director, Lancium

Bharath Ravulapat, Director, Crusoe

2:15 PM **Vignette: AI Factories of the Future**

A forward-looking vignette from **Sean Jones**, Sr. Staff Business Development Manager, Tesla on how AI factories differ from traditional data centers, what this means for load profiles, ramp rates, and grid interaction, why reliability and power quality matter at the silicon level, and the implications for utilities and system operators planning the next decade.

2:30 PM **Networking Break**

3:00 PM **Vignette: AI Factories of the Future**

A technically grounded explainer from **Ahmed Rashwan**, VP Transmission Planning & Operations, Utilities, EPE that bridges AI facilities and grid operations, covering what voltage ride-through (VRT) means in practice for large loads, how dynamic and power-electronics-heavy loads behave during grid events, why inconsistent performance creates system-level reliability risk, and how VRT expectations are evolving—and where ambiguity still exists.

3:15 PM **Panel: From Capability to Commitment: How Stakeholders Are Addressing Reliability**

This panel cuts through the theory to address what's actually working today, what's still being figured out, and how reliability expectations for large loads will evolve as ERCOT's system continues to transform..

Moderator: **Ahmed Rashwan**, Vice President - Transmission Planning and Operations, Utilities, EPE

Panelists:

Clayton Greer, Vice President, Energy, Cholla

Mark Henry, Chief Engineer & Director, TRE

Sean Jones, Sr. Business Dev. Mgr., Tesla

Jason Ryan, Exec. VP, CenterPoint Energy

4:00 PM **Capital at Risk: How Reliability and Interconnection Uncertainty Shape Large-Load Investment**

This panel brings it back to what matters most: how uncertainty translates into capital allocation decisions and real money at risk.

Moderator: **Meghan Griffiths**, Partner, Jackson Walker, LLP

Panelists:

Chris Matos, Strategic Negotiator, Google

Martina Sittler, Vice President, Targa

4:45 PM **Closing Remarks**

Pricing Information

CONFERENCE PRICING

Price includes one and a half day conference on 4/7 - 4/8, welcome reception on 4/6 and cocktail reception at The Grove on 4/7.

CONFERENCE	Early Bird Registration through 3/15	Regular Registration 3/16 - 4/3	Onsite Reg. 4/4 - 4/8
GCPA Members	\$1000	\$1200	\$1400
Non-Members	\$1300	\$15000	\$1700
RTO/ISO & .gov	\$415	\$415	\$465
GCPA Members in Job Search Mode	\$500	\$600	\$700
Non-Members in Job Search Mode*	\$800	\$900	\$1000
Full-Time Students	\$200	\$200	\$300

WORKSHOP PRICING

Price includes half day workshop on 4/6, beverages and snack.

WORKSHOP	Early Bird Registration through 3/15	Regular Registration 3/16 - 4/3	Onsite Reg. 4/4 - 4/6
Fee w/ conf. registration	\$280	\$340	\$440
Fee W/OUT conf. reg.	\$390	\$450	\$550

WELCOME RECEPTION

Welcome reception on Mon. 4/6 includes one drink ticket and hors d'oeuvres. Additional cocktails can be purchased at the bar. Reception is complimentary to conference and/or workshop attendees only and is not available as a stand-alone purchase for non-conference attendees. PLEASE RSVP WHEN REGISTERING FOR THE CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP.

REFUND POLICY

Cancellations must be received by 5 PM on Friday, March 20 in order to receive a refund. A 10% service fee will be charged against all refunds. Please direct all cancellation requests to Mary Armstrong at marmstrong@gulfcoastpower.org.