



News Release

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California ISO garners national award for innovative solar plant test

At its annual meeting, NARUC honors grid operator for demonstration project

FOLSOM, Calif. – The California ISO received a national regulatory award for its groundbreaking work in demonstrating that solar energy plants can offer power grid resiliency, opening new horizons for integrating large amounts of renewable resources into electric systems.

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) recognized the ISO, along with its partners in the project, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and First Solar, at its annual meeting and education conference in Baltimore last week.

“These tests conducted by the ISO and its partners create vast opportunities for renewable energy plants to offer operating flexibility we once thought only possible with conventional resources,” said ISO CEO Steve Berberich. “This could potentially be a watershed moment for the carbon-free power grid of the future, showing the ability of solar plants to provide grid reliability services. We are proud that NARUC recognized the importance of the study.”

NARUC’s program, *Innovation Awards: Promoting Innovation among Utility Regulatory Policy and Utilities*, fosters and honors work of NARUC members and utility innovators for creative solutions to regulatory issues.

The program was established to track new trends and opportunities in diverse technologies, and allow utility regulation to adapt and increase resilience.

Specifically, the ISO, NREL, and First Solar won the award for “Utility Industry Innovative Pilots or Demonstration Projects.”

The testing, conducted on a large, utility-scale First Solar unit in August 2016, demonstrated that renewable energy plants with smart inverter technology can offer electric reliability services similar, or in some cases superior to, conventional power plants.

The plant was tested for performance in three key areas: frequency control, voltage control, and ramping capability, all identified by federal regulators as essential for expanded integration of renewable resources onto the power grid.



The demonstration is especially valuable to the ISO, as California has seen a dramatic rise in solar power generation, putting the operator at the forefront of reliably managing a greener grid.

Click [here](#) to read the report, "Using Renewables to Operate a Low-Carbon Grid."

Click [here](#) to learn more about NARUC's Innovation Awards.

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The California ISO provides open and non-discriminatory access to one of the largest power grids in the world. The vast network of high-voltage transmission power lines is supported by a competitive energy market and comprehensive grid planning. Partnering with over a hundred clients, the nonprofit public benefit corporation is dedicated to the continual development and reliable operation of a modern grid that operates for the benefit of consumers. Recognizing the importance of the global climate challenge, the ISO is at the forefront of integrating renewable power and advanced technologies that will help meet a sustainable energy future efficiently and cleanly.	