

# Journey to DSO

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Mark A. Gabriel  
President & CEO

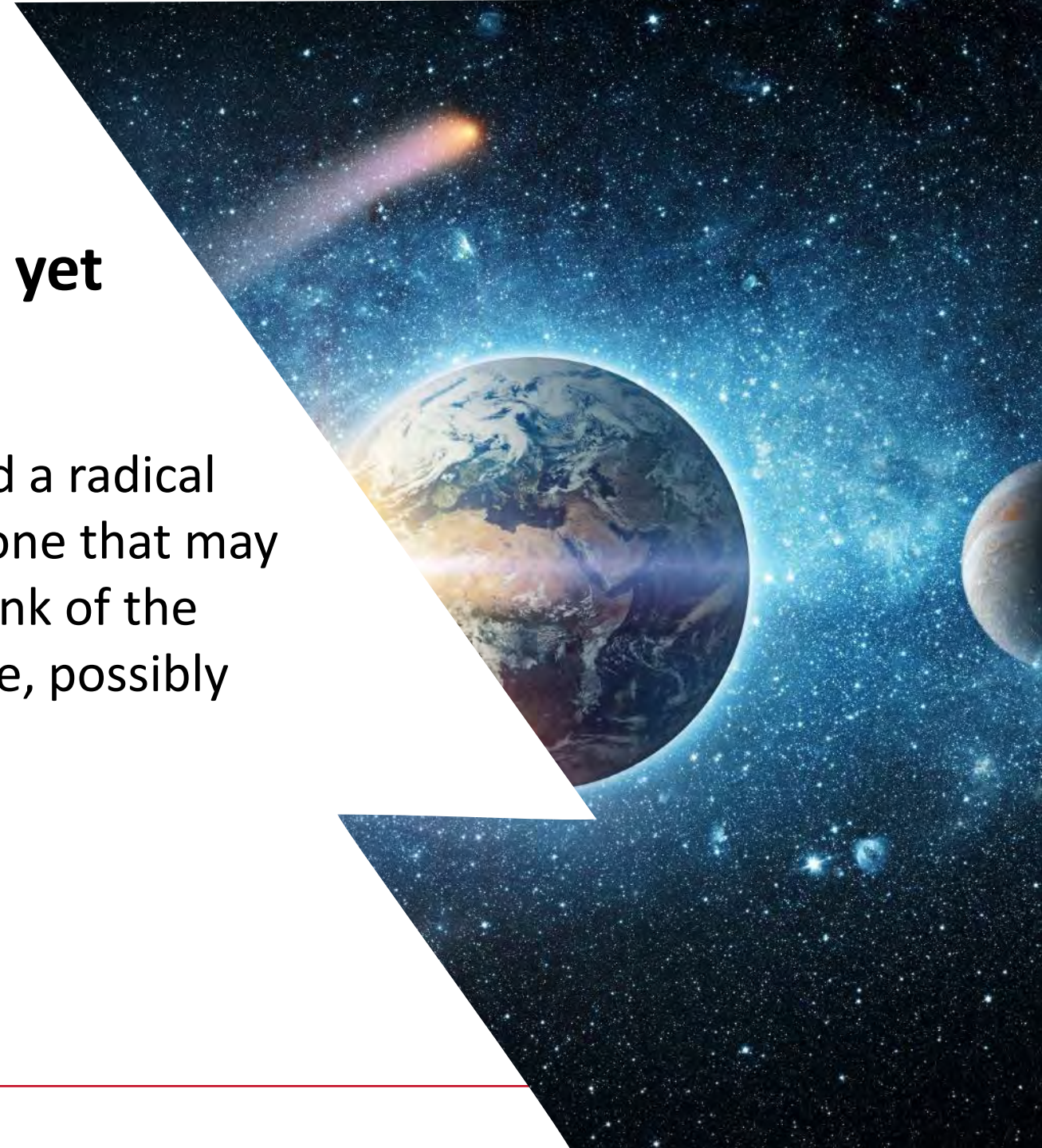
Survalent Global Users Conference  
Oct. 6, 2025



# The future is already here... it's just not widely distributed yet

“We may be at a point where we need a radical departure from the standard model, one that may even require us to change how we think of the elemental components of the universe, possibly even the nature of space and time.”

-Adam Frank, Professor of Astrophysics, Dartmouth



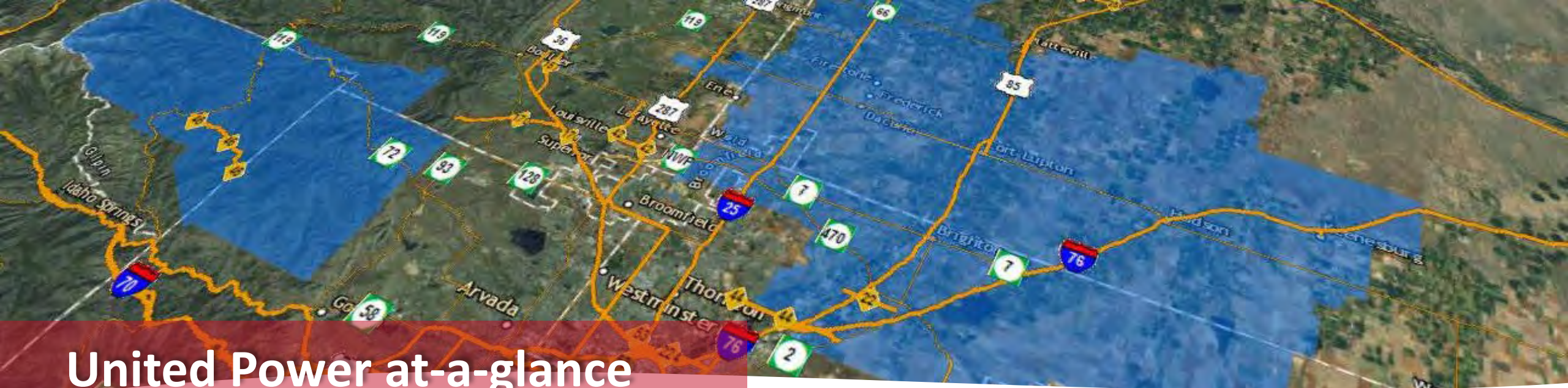




## Fundamental challenge

The challenge for the utility of today and tomorrow is not only what is real but what is perceived as real.





# United Power at-a-glance

Electric cooperative **founded in 1938**

One of the **fastest growing** co-ops in the nation

Serving **17 Denver area communities**

**Smallest service area** in CO (900 sq. miles)

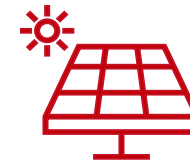
**Largest co-op** in CO by load

**2<sup>nd</sup> largest co-op** in CO by meters (116k+ meters)

**3<sup>rd</sup> largest utility** in CO by load



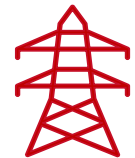
**8,990+**  
registered EVs and  
plug-in hybrids\*



**13,000+**  
members have  
solar rooftops\*



**340+**  
battery walls in  
member homes\*



**680 MW**  
system peak  
July 2025

# Challenges in the energy frontier

- Infrastructure
- Power plant closures
- Intermittent resources
- Varying hydropower production
- More customer-side resource choices
- Changing markets
- Inability to build transmission
- Security
- State requirements





# What does the future hold across the West?

Dramatic reduction in centralized generation

Inability to construct transmission

Market (2026-27)

Flood of electro-technologies

Strategic electrification

Data centers/Artificial Intelligence



## What does the future hold for United Power?

- Being a network provider capturing and providing value to members
- Increasing local generation
- Multiple power suppliers and transmission providers
- Market participant in the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Western Energy Imbalance Service (WEIS)
- Entering SPP RTO (regional transmission organization) Expansion
- Implementing SPP Markets+
- Direct market interactions (FERC 2222)





SAFETY



RELIABILITY



AFFORDABILITY



FLEXIBILITY



RESPONSIBILITY



**EMPOWER AND  
ENGAGE WITH  
MEMBERS AND  
COMMUNITIES**



**PROVIDE FLEXIBLE,  
AFFORDABLE,  
RESPONSIBLE  
POWER AND  
SERVICES**



**CONTINUOUSLY  
OPTIMIZE THE  
ELECTRIC  
DISTRIBUTION  
SYSTEM**



**ACHIEVE AND  
MAINTAIN BUSINESS  
AGILITY AND  
RESILIENCE**



# Which is more likely to be built?



+



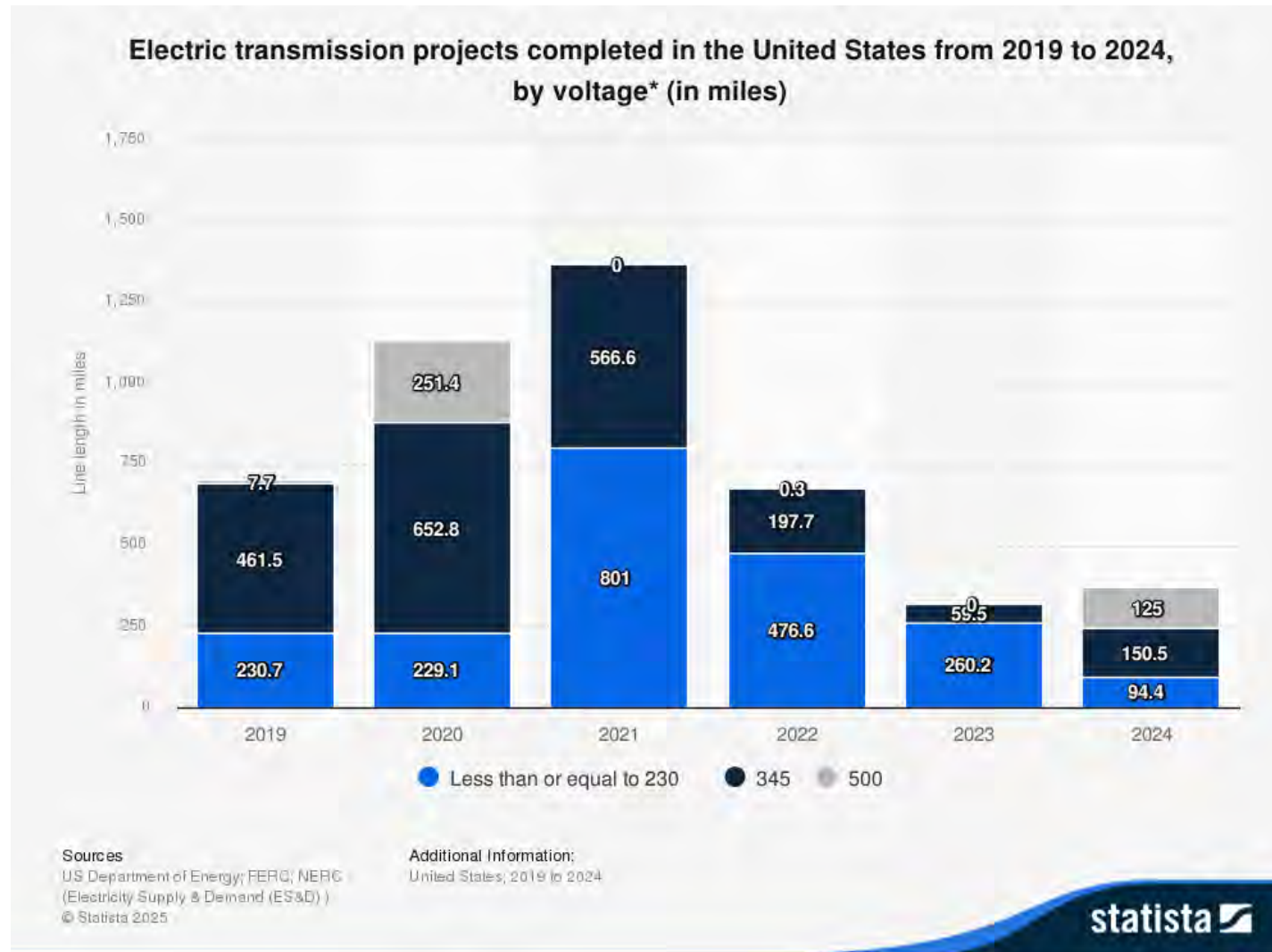
OR



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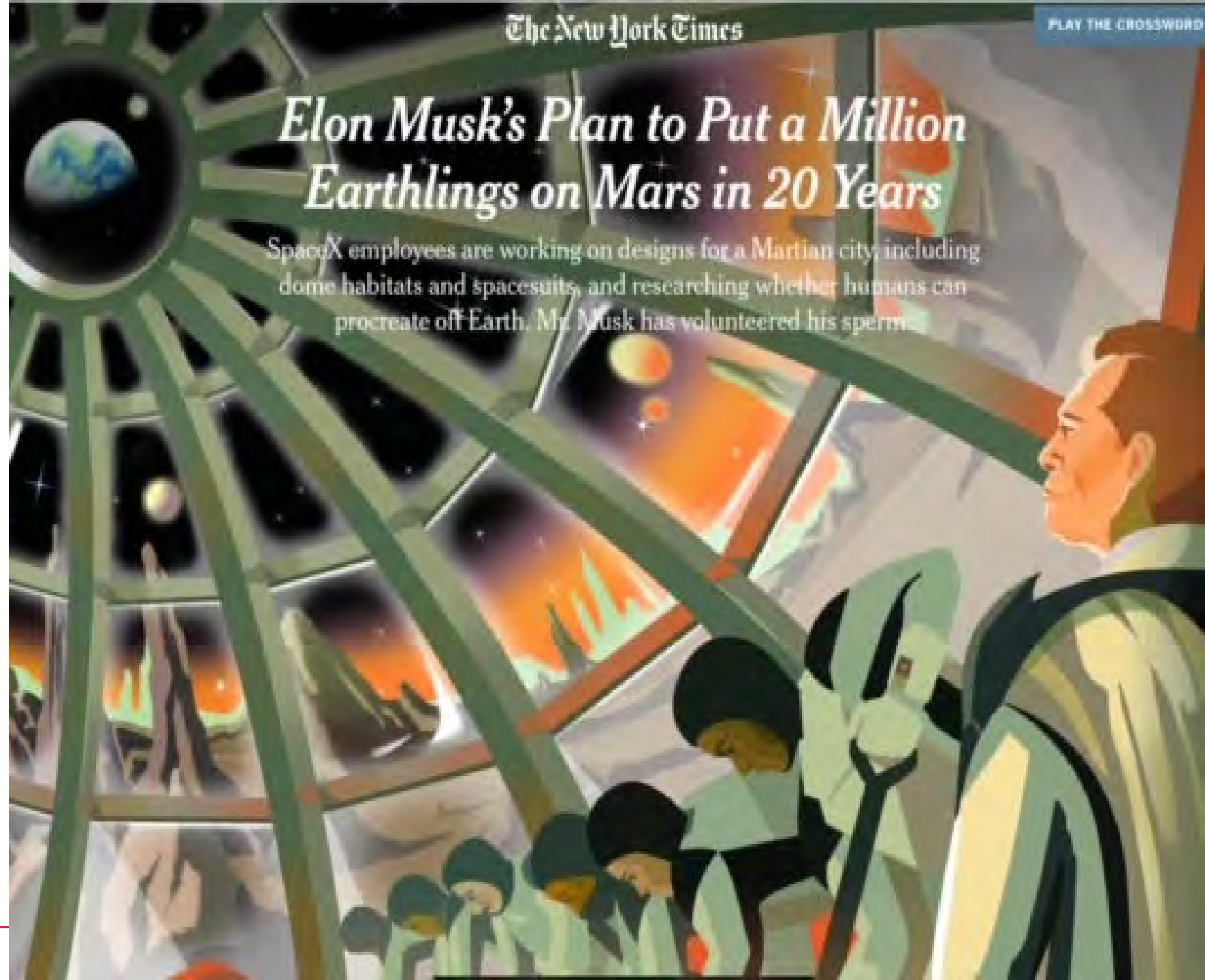
# Electric transmission projects completed in the U.S., 2019-24





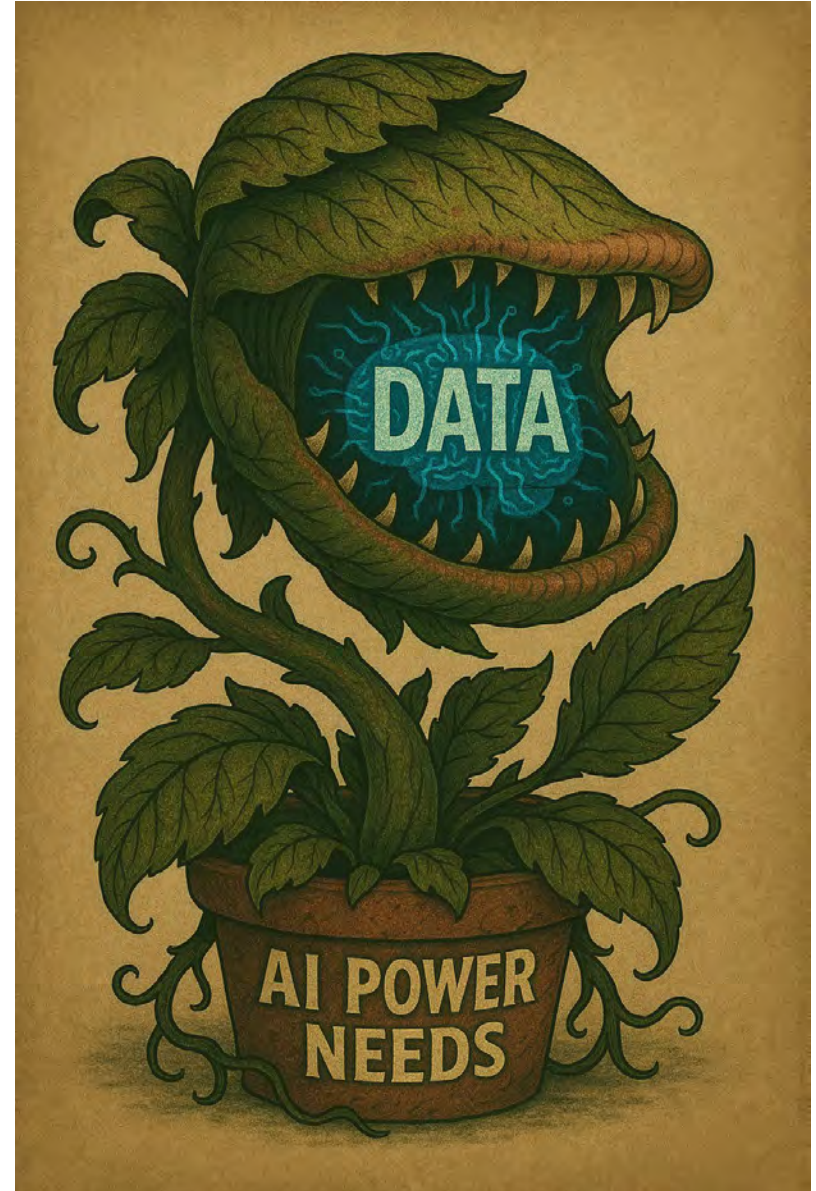
The Transwest Express project was proposed in 2007, approved in 2015, and will not be completed until 2028.

That means there may be people living on Mars before many of these projects are completed!



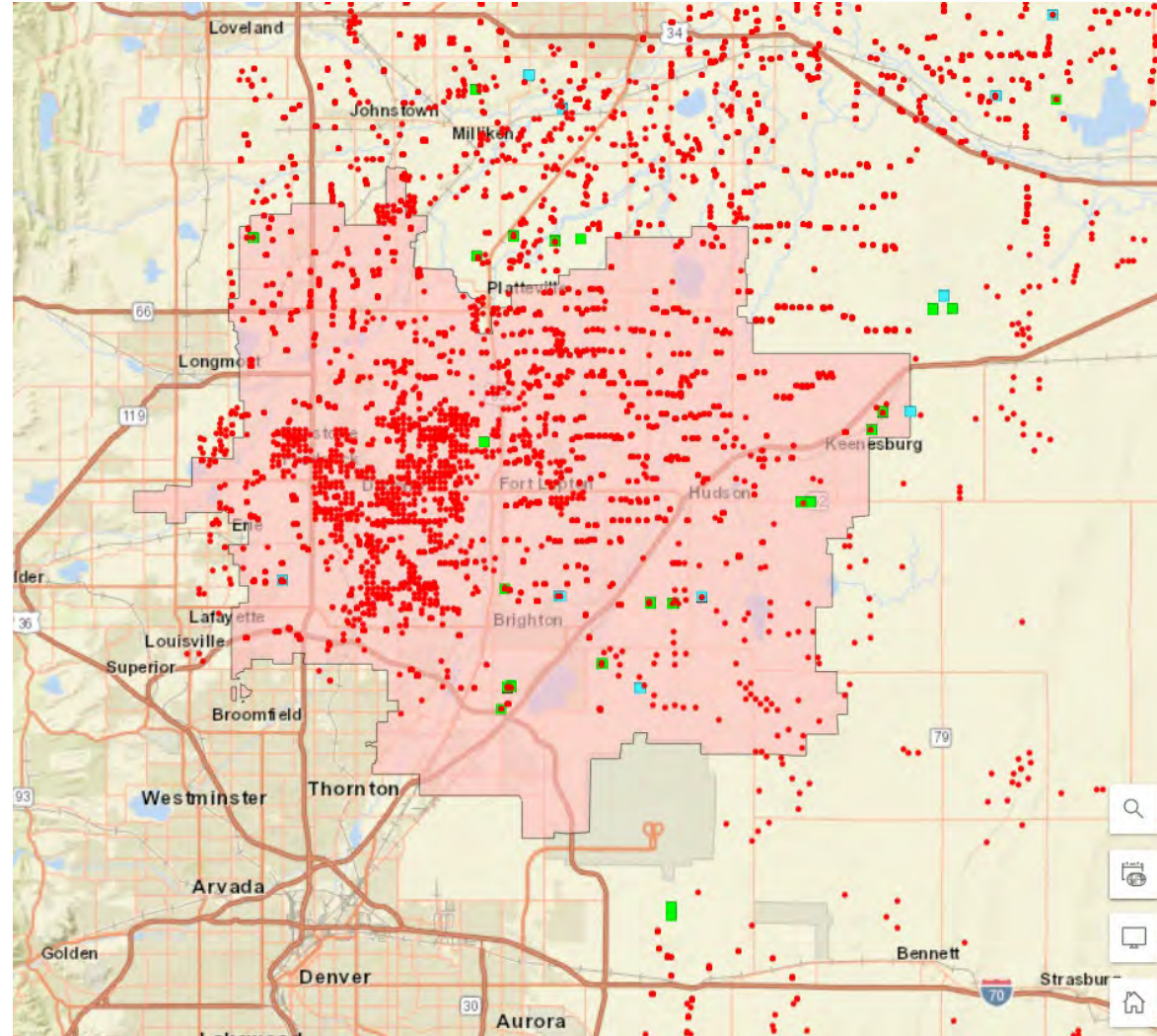
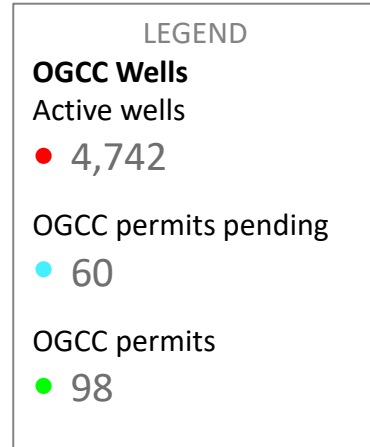
# AI boom: blessing or curse?

- Projected hyperscaler “boom” 38 GW
- U.S. households rely on average of 21 connected devices
- Between 2017 and 2023, the data center industry’s total contribution to the GDP was \$3.5 trillion
- In 2023, the U.S. data center industry directly employed more than 600,000
- Challenge is one of timing and location
- Great opportunity for better utility operations





# United Power service territory: active and permitted wells



Source: [ecmc.colorado.gov](http://ecmc.colorado.gov)  
Sept. 16, 2025



**“Predicting rain  
doesn't count,  
building the ark  
does.”**

- Warren Buffet

- The transmission calvary is not coming over the hill to save us
- Large scale generation builds are a decade away
- The solution must be local to meet demand





## Dealing with reality

- Flexible, affordable, and sustainable
- Meeting member needs
- Greenhouse gas reduction
- Distributed energy resources
- RTO Expansion participation
- Hyper-localization
- AC load control
- Electric vehicle programs
- Coincidental rate programs
- Oil & gas electrification
- Behind the meter battery storage
- Expanded green power programs



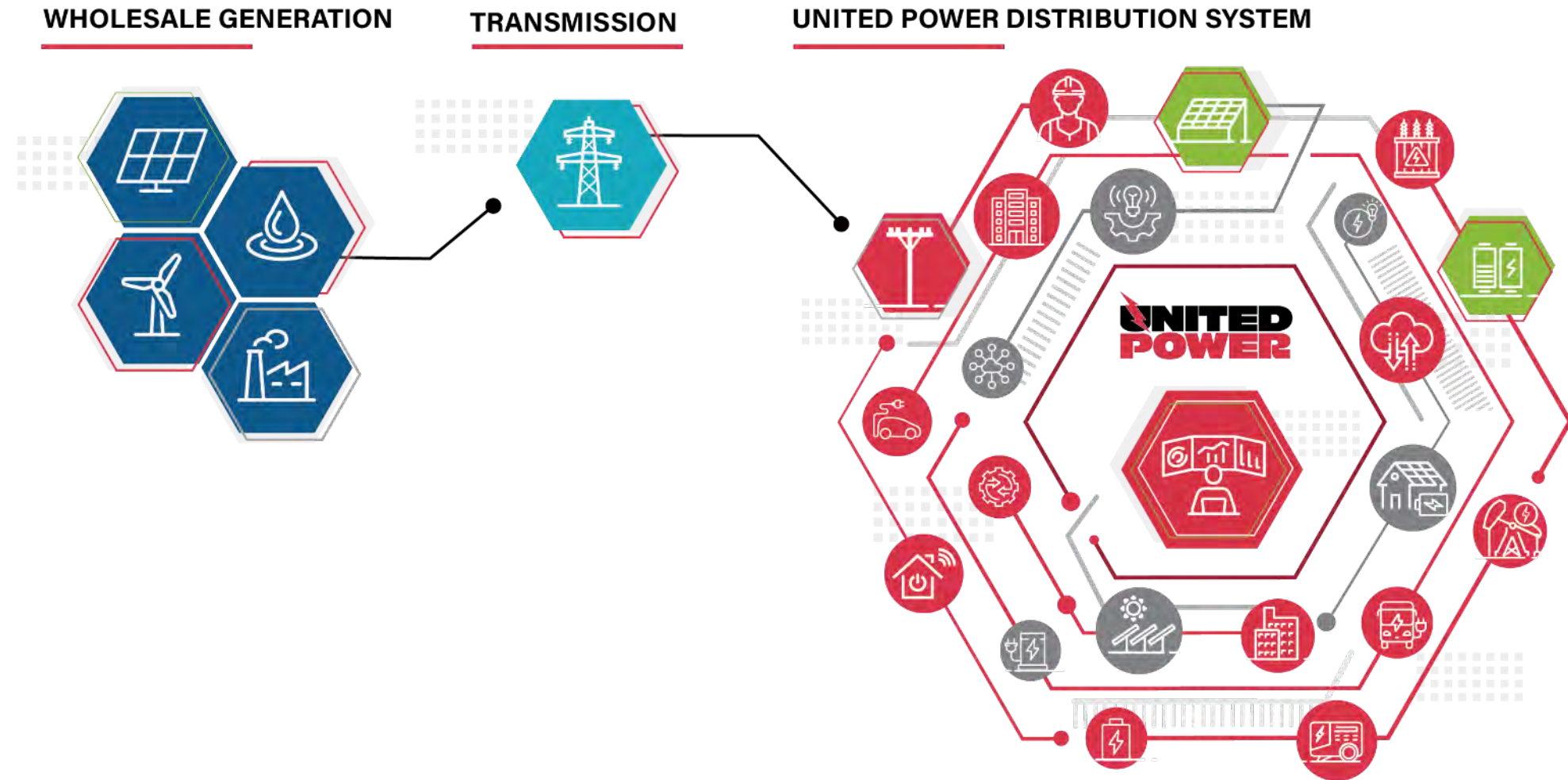


## Systems will be hyper-localized

- Distributed connected resources predominate
- Net zero buildings
- Seamless integration through technology
- Demand curves flattened to non-existent
- Markets will be air traffic control for limited large-scale generation
- Third parties will manage the finances like pork bellies are today



# DSO model



# Managing what is available





# Handling any and all inputs



## SkyWind Micro Wind Turbines

**Energy. Where you need it!**

SkyWind NG micro wind turbines are easily installed wherever power is needed. Power your AC-appliances or charge your batteries with clean energy from rooftops, radio masts, lighting poles or even treetops. No fuel or maintenance required.

Designed and tested for both high performance and maximum durability, our SkyWind turbines have proven their performance on all continents. Patented technology: 2012/0177502 A1

 **made  
in  
Germany**

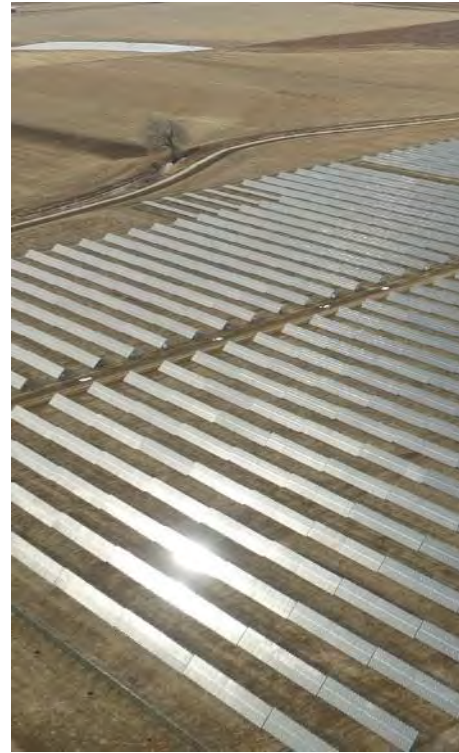
**Winning Solutions 2016**

**SIEMENS** | Stiftung





# Solving demand locally





# United Power batteries

- 119 MW of Tesla Megapack Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
  - Four 11.75 MW
  - Four 7.8 MW
  - One 33.7 MW
- Arbitrage schedule set by The Energy Authority (TEA)
  - Charge when power is cheap
  - Discharge when power is expensive
- System operators enter schedules into SCADA
  - Internal code deploys battery at given time
- Monitoring: schedules, communication, availability



# WACM reserves

- 12 SCADA codes
- Any BESS in Western Area Colorado Missouri (WACM) balancing authority (BA)
- Reserves + Arbitrage
  - Charging
  - Discharging
  - Idle
- Event count
  - April: 4HR, 25.1 MW, 101.2 MWh
  - May: 3.5HR, 13 MW, 45.7 MWh
  - June: 5.2HR, 36.6 MW, 202.4 MWh
  - July: 5.8HR, 43.4 MW, 253.3 MWh
- ~ \$300,000 saved/month





# Prairie Center Battery Bank

RTAC: 100 OK

SITE TOTALS:

36 Megapacks: 33.7 MVA; 202 MWh rated

MW: -12.997  
MVAR: -0.520  
MVA: 13.008  
Power Factor: 99.92

Energy Capacity MWh: 197.96  
98.0 % available of all 36 inverters  
Inverters Online: 36  
98.0 % available of online inverters

Contingency Reserve Obligation: 14 MW Max: 20 MW  
Hours Runtime at CRO: 14 Hours

Reserves Requested by WACM from UP: 13 MW  
Time Left in Reserve Request: 64 Min  
Actively Deployed Reserves: 13.0 MW

Deployed Reserves Cover Reserve Request

Battery Setpoint  
MW Setpoint to UP RTAC: 13.00  
MW Setpoint to Battery: 13.00

Henry Lake Tri-State T1

MW: 52.92  
Limit MW: 90.0  
Max Charging Setpoint MW: 37.1

Prairie Center T2

MW: 2.73  
Limit MW: 40.0  
Buffer MW: 1.5

3312-0400  
Prairie Center Feeder 4

58293903017

SEL 735 Battery 1: OK  
MW: -4.289  
MVAR: 0.168  
MVA: 4.292  
Power Factor: -100.00  
Frequency - Hz: 60.00

UP Meter Cabinet  
58294003001  
A Amps: 190.5 A Volts: 125.8  
B Amps: 189.5 B Volts: 126.0  
C Amps: 189.4 C Volts: 125.6

3312-0700  
Prairie Center Feeder 7

58293903016

SEL 735 Battery 2: OK  
MW: -4.325  
MVAR: 0.168  
MVA: 4.329  
Power Factor: -100.00  
Frequency - Hz: 60.00

UP Meter Cabinet  
58294003002  
A Amps: 191.9 A Volts: 125.8  
B Amps: 190.6 B Volts: 126.0  
C Amps: 190.9 C Volts: 125.6

3312-0800  
Prairie Center Feeder 8

58293903015

SEL 735 Battery 3: OK  
MW: -4.369  
MVAR: 0.175  
MVA: 4.372  
Power Factor: -100.00  
Frequency - Hz: 60.00

UP Meter Cabinet  
58294003003  
A Amps: 194.3 A Volts: 125.8  
B Amps: 193.2 B Volts: 126.0  
C Amps: 193.1 C Volts: 125.6

UP Control Enabled



Controller in Auto

Contacts: Fractal ROC  
512-646-9689  
Whetstone Ops  
719-378-5020

CMOD: SPP Follow Command Signal: OFFZ  
SPP Setpoint (MW): 0.00Z

Battery Feeder A



Battery Feeder B



Battery Feeder C



SITE DISPATCH:

Fractal/Whetstone Site Battery Controller: OK

Charging Schedule

Available Charging MW: -31.00

SCHEDULE @ 100 7/21 7.00  
-20.00 MW HHMM MM/DD DURATION

Discharging Schedule

Available Generating MW: 36.00

SCHEDULE @ 1400 7/21 9.00  
13.00 MW HHMM MM/DD DURATION  
Rating - Maximum CRO = 13.7 MW

Run Now

(+ is disch., - is charge)

RUN NOW @ 5.50  
13.00 MW DURATION

Manual Reserves

RUN NOW @   
0.00 MW

PDF  
Operating Guide

Generation Values (- MW is Generation)


PDF  
Battery Site One-Line

Activate Windows  
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

# WAPA reserves

- Southwest Power Pool
- Transmission and generation loss
- Contingency reserve obligation (CRO)
  - 3% Load + 3% Generation
- Any BESS in WACM BA
- Reserve request
  - 10-minute response timeframe
  - 1 MW – CRO
  - Dynamic request
  - United Power unique w/batteries
- 12 SCADA codes

**BATTERY RESERVES**



**PRAIRIE CENTER & AMERESCO RESERVE CODE STATUS**

Monitor Reserve Request Code #277: **Running**  
Reserves Discharge AGC Code #278: **Running**  
Reserves Charge AGC Code #279: **Running**  
Reserves Return to Zero Code #280: **Running**  
Reserves Manual AGC Code #281: **Running**  
Reserves Capacity Check Code #282: **Running**  
Active Reserves Code #283: **Running**  
Loss of Generation Code #284: **Running**  
Reserve Request Summary Code #285: **Running**  
WACM Request to PC RTAC Code #255: **Running**  
Reserve Count Code #260: **Running**

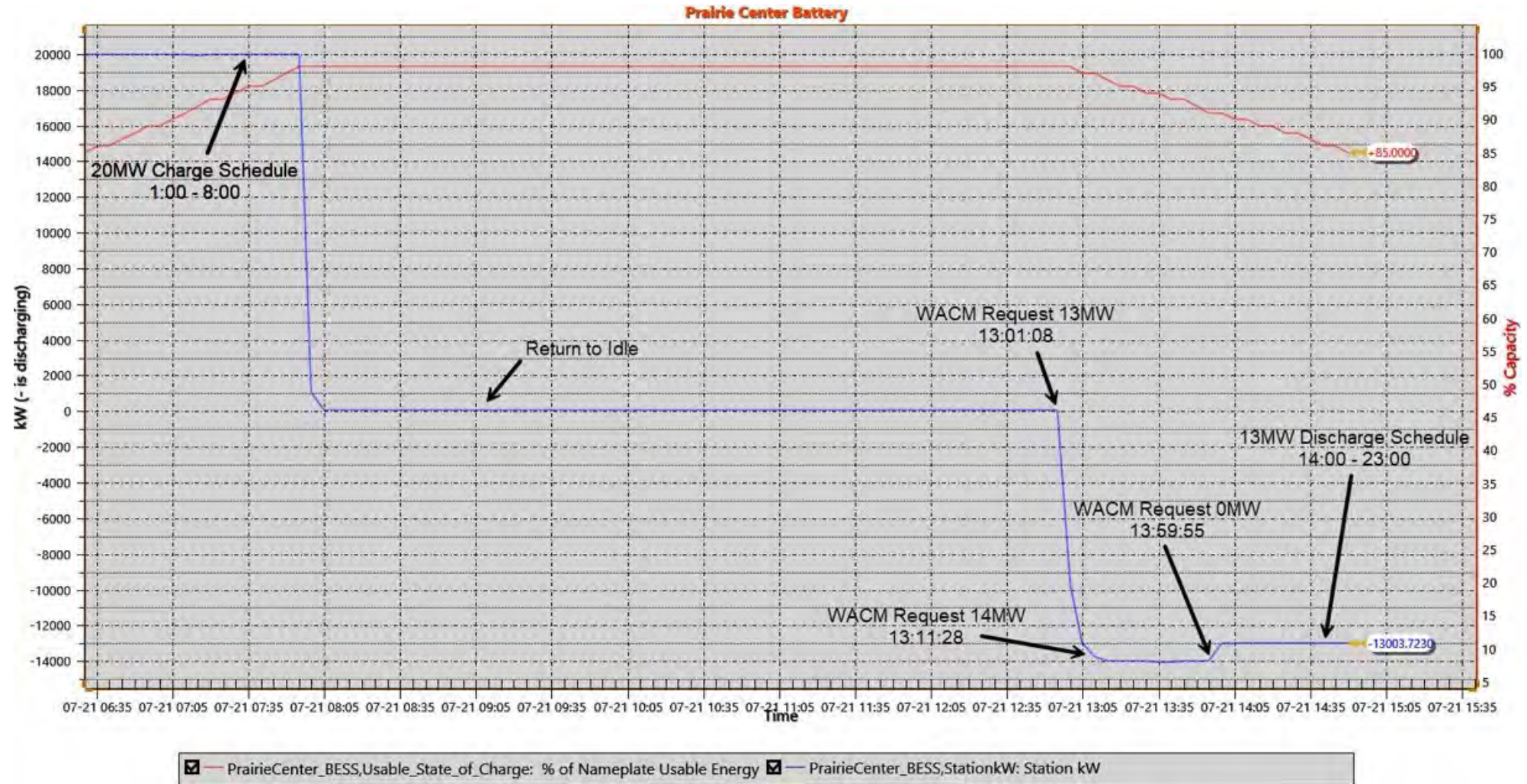
**ALARMS**

Sufficient Generation to Meet CRO  
Sufficient Capacity to Meet CRO for 1HR  
Deployed Reserves Cover Reserve Request

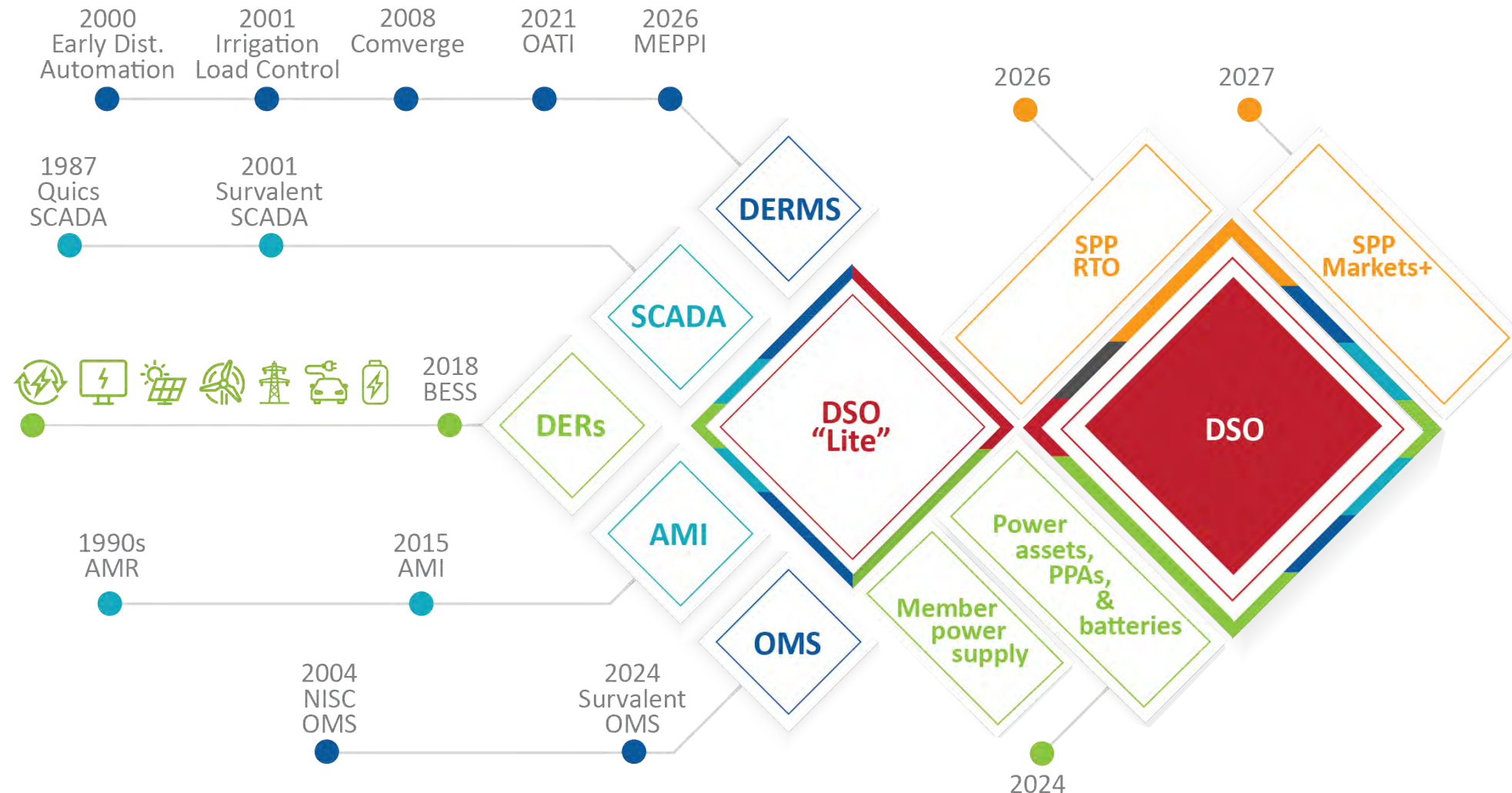
UP Lost Generation (Report to WACM): <b>0 MW</b>	Reserves Requested by WACM from UP: <b>0 MW</b>	Total Deployable Reserves: <b>36 MW</b>
Time to Replace Loss Generation: <b>0 Min</b>	Time Left in Reserve Request: <b>0 Min</b>	Contingency Reserve Obligation: <b>17 MW</b> Max: <b>21 MW</b>
UP Summed Losses: <b>0 MW</b>	Actively Deployed Reserves: <b>0.0 MW</b>	Sufficient Generation to Meet CRO
	Deployed Reserves Cover Reserve Request	Sufficient Capacity to Meet CRO for 1HR



# WAPA reserves example

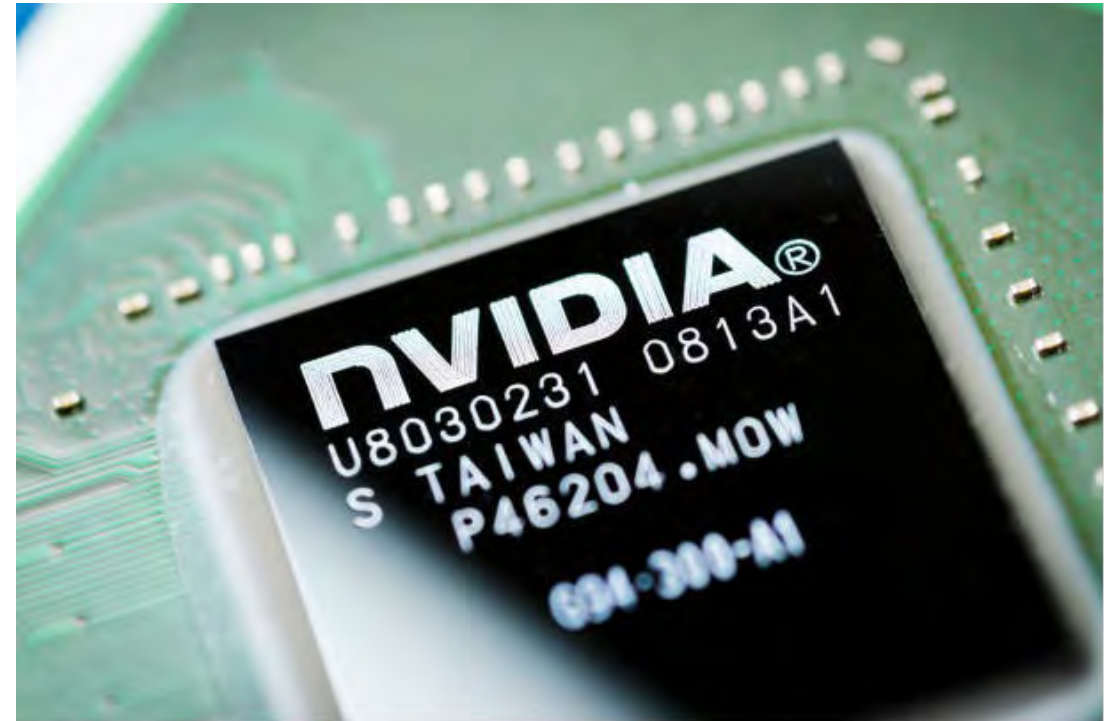
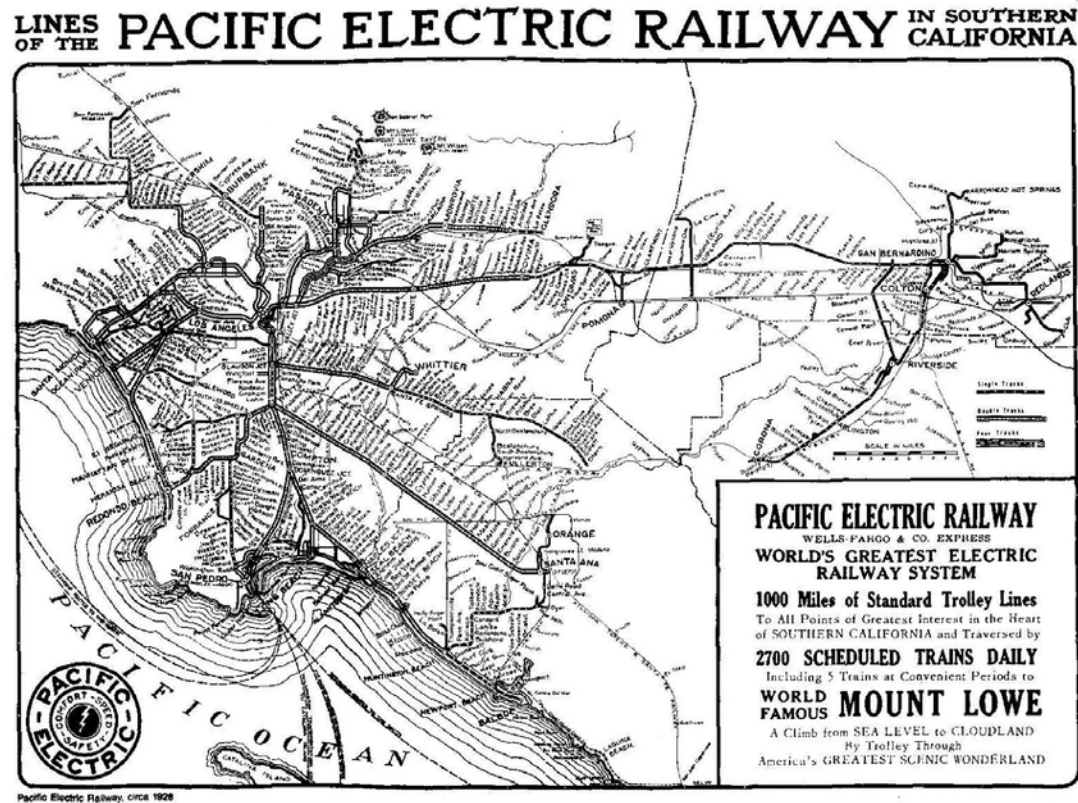


# Moving to a DSO with a no regrets strategy





# Not the first time technology has changed the utility space





# The future is already here... it's just not widely distributed yet

“We may be at a point where we need a radical departure from the **utility** model, one that may even require us to change how we think of the elemental components of the **power grid**, possibly even the nature of **electric generation** and **delivery**.”

- Mark A. Gabriel, President & CEO United Power



## Contact Me

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