

September 2026



Ecology Action Centre

IN OUR POWER:

*Recharging Nova Scotia's
Energy System*



*Regional Transmission
Planning and Integration*



In Our Power: *Recharging Nova Scotia's Energy System*

Our energy system must meet the needs of all Nova Scotians. This is not wishful thinking. Energy is a human right, essential for health, safety, comfort and access to information. A system that is reliable, affordable and sustainable is essential.

We need that system now.



What is regional integration?

It's about working together for the benefit of everyone.

Renewable energy is the future — and the present. But the wind isn't always blowing and the sun isn't always shining. Some excess power could be stored in batteries, but it's important to be able to trade electricity with your neighbours and help each other during emergencies. The only other option for provinces is firing up gas plants when energy demands exceed capacity. That is a very expensive option — just building these fossil-fuel plants in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, will cost us at least \$2 billion.

Why is regional planning so important now?

We are at a crossroads. **Demand on the electric grid** is expected to more than double in Canada by 2050 — and **increase by 66 per cent in Atlantic Canada.** If we don't collaborate with our neighbours, provinces will have to absorb the costs and address all the issues alone. Electricity will become more expensive and less reliable as a result.



How would it work?

Slowly but surely. Regional integration does not require the immediate creation of a wholesale market or a centralized system operator. It can occur in stages across three areas: **1) planning, 2) operations and 3) procurement and markets.**

Could New Brunswick and Nova Scotia connect?

Atlantic Canada is already interconnected, but planning and operations remain largely provincial. Right now, **Atlantic Canada's power grids are only able to share about one gigawatt of electricity with each other.** This limits how much clean energy we can move between provinces. While a new power line, the Wasoqonatl reliability tie between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, is planned for 2028, it won't fully fix the limited ability to move power across the region.



Has integration been done elsewhere?

From New England to California, there's been a long history of working closely together when it comes to ensuring reliability of the electric grid.

What are the advantages?

Regional integration can provide three types of benefits. First, **it can reduce costs and improve system efficiency** by making better use of existing assets, avoiding duplicate investments, reducing reserve requirements and accessing lower-cost resources across provincial boundaries. Second, **it can improve reliability and resilience** by allowing a larger, coordinated system to draw on a more diverse set of resources during outages, extreme weather or periods of system stress. Third, **it helps grow renewable energy**. By connecting larger regions, the power grid can better handle weather-based changes in solar or wind power, waste less unused energy and send clean power directly to areas that need it most. Nova Scotia Power, for example, estimated that it could have to curtail (have an oversupply it can't use) up to 40 per cent of wind energy by 2040.



Are there downsides?

There are. **Regional integration presents real challenges.** Each province manages its own electricity at present, which means they all have different goals and rules. Because the costs and benefits of sharing power aren't always equal, it will need to be clear who pays for what. Connecting systems will also require new organizations, more trained workers, and clear ways to make decisions together.

Are we moving forward on this?

There are very positive signs right now. The NB Power Review recently recommended that the province study the issue of a Maritime Systems Operator, one non-profit responsible for maintaining reliability at the lowest possible costs across P.E.I, N.S. and N.B. The P.E.I. premier recently said Atlantic premiers are in discussion about this issue, and they talked to the governor of Massachusetts about how the New England Systems Operator was created across six U.S. states.



Resources

Atlantic Energy Collective. [*An Atlantic Canadian Energy Future*](#) - January 2026

California ISO. [Fact Sheet - Western Energy Imbalance Market](#) - June 2024

CBC. [P.E.I. government puts out expression of interest for a battery energy storage system](#) - March 23, 2026

Ecology Action Centre. [PRESS RELEASE: EAC releases new report calling on Atlantic provinces to pursue regional coordination of electricity grids to prevent blackouts](#) - June 18, 2026

Government of New Brunswick. [Fit for the Future: A Comprehensive Review of NB Power.](#)

Government of New Brunswick. [NB Power Comprehensive Review: Action Plan](#) - May 25, 2026

