

March 17th – 18th, 2026 | San Diego, CA

Hydropower Conference

Hydropower Unleashed: Tools, Trends &
Tactics for a Resilient Future



7:00 - 8:30 AM BREAKFAST | Exhibit Hall Young Professionals Networking Breakfast - TBD

8:30AM WELCOME PLENARY - ALL TRACKS | Harbor Ballroom A-F

Opening Remarks: Catherine Rhea, CEATI

Keynote Presentation: Tom Bugert, Helian Energy & Brett Bickford, Chelan County PUD

9:45 - 10:30 AM COFFEE BREAK | Exhibit Hall

DAY 1
TUESDAY MARCH 17th,
2026

Session A1: Dam Safety | Risk Management
Session Chair: Jason Cleere, Brookfield Renewable

From Probability to Prioritization: Implementing RIDM After a Level 2 Risk Analysis

Matt Giovannoni, SMUD & Stacy Vorster, GFT

LifeSim in Action: Reducing Flood Risk Without Lifting a Shovel

Erin Gleason, Denver Water & Jaime Lubeck, HDR

Session B1: Hydro Plant Equipment | Turbine-Generator Alignment & Structural Interaction
Session Chair: Robert Gordon, Seattle City Light

Effects of Concrete Movement on Turbine-Generator Alignment

David Elwood, GE Vernova & Wenbo Jai, Chelan PUD

Case Study: Stator Thermal Expansion Analysis - Boundary Dam Power Plant Unit U51

Enzo Cloutier, VibroSystM & Seattle City Light

Session C1: Hydro Operations & Planning | Modelling
Session Chair: Nathalie Voisin, USDOE-PNNL

Enhancing Hydropower Decision-Making Through Integrated Hydrologic, Hydraulic, and Ice Forecasting Tools

Shane Wruth & Milan Bijeljanin, Manitoba Hydro

Short-Term Hydroelectric Dispatch Model for Head-Dependent Units with Restricted Operating Zones

Carlos Lopez Salgado, USDOE-Argonne National Lab

Session D1: Workforce Development
Session Chair: Ronda Strauch, Seattle City Light

Growing Capability and Succession Planning: Learnings from New Zealand Dam Owners

Peter Fox, Meridian and Katy Cottingham, Meridian/Dam Safety Intelligence and Shreesh Basnyat, Watercare Services Limited

Plugging into the Pipeline: Connecting Academia with the Hydropower Industry

Bree Mendlin, USDOE-National Lab of the Rockies

12:00-1:30 PM NETWORKING LUNCH | Exhibit Hall

Session A2: Dam Safety | Safety Management
Session Chair: Paul Lennemann, Tacoma Power

From Damage to Operational Adaptations: Enhancing Safety and Reliability of the Lake Almanor Low Level Outlet

Randy Presleigh & Abbas Dorostkar, PG&E

Lessons from a Troubled Siren System: Emergency Management and Public Alerting Challenge

Ali Firoozfar, Seattle City Light & Greg Richards, GFT

Session B2: Hydro Plant Equipment | Tech Demo Stage

Session C2: Hydropower Operations & Planning | Tech Demo Stage

Session D2: Workforce Development
Session Chair: Marcel-Paul Raymond, CEATI

Harnessing AI and Digitalization in Hydropower: Workforce Impacts and Industry Needs

Haijing Liu, Jennifer Daw, Bree Mendlin, USDOE-National Lab of the Rockies

Strengthening Dam Safety through Skills Transfer and Succession: Lessons from Nalubale Kiira

Orishaba Harriet, Uganda Electricity Generation

3:00 - 3:45 PM COFFEE BREAK | Exhibit Hall

Session A3: Dam Safety | Tech Demo Stage

Session B3: Hydro Plant Equipment | Materials, Lubrication & Manufacturing Quality
Session Chair: Jean Pellerin, CEATI

Session C3: Hydro Operations & Planning | Decision-Making Under Uncertainty
Session Chair: Connor Werstuck, OPG

Session AB1: Dam Safety & Hydro Plant Equipment | Flow Control
Session Chair: Bruce Muller, CEATI

Oil Replacement Fluid for Turbine Runners (Kaplan) for Reduction of Friction

Klas Olsson, Fortum

Beyond P50: Quantifying Portfolio Volatility for Multi-Asset Regime

Aashish Bhardwaj & Julien Otis-Laperrière, Brookfield Renewable

Managing Quality in International Manufacturing
Stuart Bonnington, Snowy Hydro

What is MCP and Why Does it Matter? Context-Rich Interactions for Smarter Hydropower Operations

Cody Kupferschmidt, Erode AI

Gates Refurbishment or Replacement – Choosing the Right Approach

Geosyntec & utility co-presenter

Summer Dam Radial Gate Modernization

Jon East, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

5:30-7:00PM NETWORKING RECEPTION | Exhibit Hall

CEATI 

7:00 - 8:30 AM BREAKFAST | Exhibit Hall

8:30AM PANEL SESSION - ALL TRACKS - *Harbor Ballroom A-F*
Hydropower Unleashed: Tools, Trends & Tactics for a Resilient Future
TBD

9:45 - 10:30 AM COFFEE BREAK | Exhibit Hall

DAY 2
TUESDAY MARCH 18th,
2026

Session AB2: Dam Safety & Hydro Plant Equipment | Flow Control
Session Chair: Matt Muto, SCE

10:30AM **Life Extension of an Aging Penstock using Carbon Fiber Reinforced Polymer Lining**
Gary Brunet, TransAlta

11:15AM **Penstock Design, Inspection and Maintenance**
Arne Nervik, GFT

Session B4: Hydro Plant Equipment | AI & Predictive Maintenance
Session Chair: Joe First, Lewis County PUD

Enabling Physics-Based Predictive Maintenance with AI, Semantics & Simulation
John Nixon, Siemens & Ivan Nayda, Siemens

Enhancing Generator Reliability Through Offline Diagnostic Tools: A Case Study of a 32MW Hydro Generator
Krzysztof PYC, Kinetrics

Session AC1: Hydro Operations & Planning & Dam Safety
Session Chair: Chuck Bach, CEATI

Leveraging a Platform for Hydrological Prediction to Support Dam Safety Monitoring
Kin Sun Lam, Deltares & Chris Rogers, SunWater

Integrated Hydrologic and Hydraulic Evaluation for Spring Flood Management and Dam Safety Planning
Zahra Zahmatkesh, KGS

Session D3: Pumped Storage
Session Chair: Robert Gordon, Seattle City Light

Pumped Hydro Storage as a Transmission Asset in Brazil: The Coastal Paranaí Case Study
Rodrigo Fader Parana, COPEL

Multi-metrics Valuation of Future Craig-Hayden Pumped Storage Hydropower Plant
Rodney Itiki, USDOE-Oakridge National Lab

12:00-1:30 PM NETWORKING LUNCH | Exhibit Hall

Session A4: Dam Safety | Risk & Uncertainty
Session Chair: Bruce Muller, CEATI

1:30 PM **California State Water Project: Quantitative Risk Analysis Plans, Workshops, and Risk Reduction Measures**
Genny Schrader & David Sarkisian, California Department of Water Resources

2:15 PM **Managing Foundation Uncertainty for the Stability of Dams**
Ramy Saadeldin, Portage Power

Session B5: Hydro Plant Equipment | Mechanical Integrity
Session Chair: Brian Luffman, Duke Energy

Spiral Casing Integrity: Inspection, FFS Analysis & Risk-Based Repair Strategy
Jamie Scanlan, Quest Integrity

Root Cause Analysis of Rotor Pole Connectors Failure in a Small Hydro-Generator
Ibrahim Gadala, Powertech Labs & Geoff Dunbrack, Yukon Energy Corporation

Session C4: Hydro Operations & Planning | Forecasting
Session Chair: Ronda Strauch, SCL

Advancing Inflow Forecasting with CIROH and Reclamation
Chris Frans, USBR & Shaun Carney, RTI

Data-Driven Flood Mitigation for the Lower Volta Basin: Leveraging Modelling, Geospatial Intelligence, and Emerging Technologies
Abdul Noor Wahab & Kwadwo Asante Addo, Volta River

Session D4: Pumped Storage
Session Chair: Robert Gordon, Seattle City Light

A Modern Digital Delivery Framework for Pumped Storage Hydropower Projects
James O'Reilly, Knight Piesold

Taum Sauk Dam Failure – 20 Years Later
Gene Campbell & Bryan Moore, Ameren

3:00 - 3:45 PM COFFEE BREAK | Exhibit Hall

Session A5: Dam Safety | Emergency Preparedness & Long-Term Recovery
Session Chair: Jennifer Dodd, TVA

3:45 PM **Building Partnerships with Exercises**
David Baker, Allele

4:30 PM **Nolichucky Dam Stability Assessment & Hydraulic CFD Modeling: Lessons from the 2024 Overtopping Event**
James Bryant, TVA & Gurinderbir Sooch, Hatch

5:15 PM **Closing Remarks**

Session B6: Hydro Plant Equipment | Reliability & Cost Strategies
Session Chair: John Yale, CEATI

Establishing a Standard Methodology to Evaluate Start/stop and Cycling Costs and Impacts
Chris Brown, Scanning Solutions & Jim DeHaan, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Applicable Test Criteria for Generator Bars Submitted to Cycling
Alexander Schwery, GE Vernova

Closing Remarks

Session C5: Hydro Operations & Planning | Hydrologic Data for Risk-Informed Water & Hydropower Management
Session Chair: Marcel-Paul Raymond, CEATI

Accurate, Basin-Wide Snowpack Mapping is a Critical Resource for Reservoir Management & Power Generation Optimization
Jeffrey Deems, Airborne Snow Observatories

A Hydropower Drought Monitor and Outlook
Vincent Tidwell & Nathalie Voisin, USDOE-Pacific Northwest National Lab; Elizabeth Ossowski & Jason Gerlich, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

5:30-7:00 PM WOMEN IN POWER NETWORKING RECEPTION | TBD

CEATI

Event Overview:

For more than 15 years, CEATI has gathered utility leaders, experts and influencers at this prestigious event to share practical insights and breakthrough developments shaping the future of hydropower. Our 2026 event will host over 700 utility professionals from a variety of leadership roles, including Dam Safety Engineers, Hydro Plant Managers, Engineering Directors, Hydrologists, Water Resource Managers and Business Executives.

The event will feature presentations on the following themes:

- Dam Safety
- Hydropower Plant Equipment
- Hydropower Operations & Planning

Within These Tracks, Our Conference Planning Team Will Prioritize Content Related To:

- Hydro equipment and facility life cycle planning
- Hydropower facility adaptation and retrofitting initiatives (ex. upgrades, restorations to facilities)
- Implementation of new technologies & techniques through innovation
- Recruitment, skill building and succession planning
- Risk management and enhanced planning
- Innovation and transferrable learnings from other industries
- Informed business decision making around our assets, programs and operations under greater uncertainty & constraints
- Cyber security – implementation, risk & mitigation

Additional tracks will be featured this year:

- Tech Demo Stage
- Pumped Storage
- Workforce Development
- Flow Control Equipment

Who should attend:

- Electric Utilities and Dam Owners
- Consultants
- Equipment Manufacturers and Suppliers
- Research Facilities and Laboratories
- Academics

Event Details:

- [Week at a Glance Schedule](#)
- [Participating CEATI Utility Members](#)
- [Member Registration](#)
- [General Registration](#)
- [Event Website](#)