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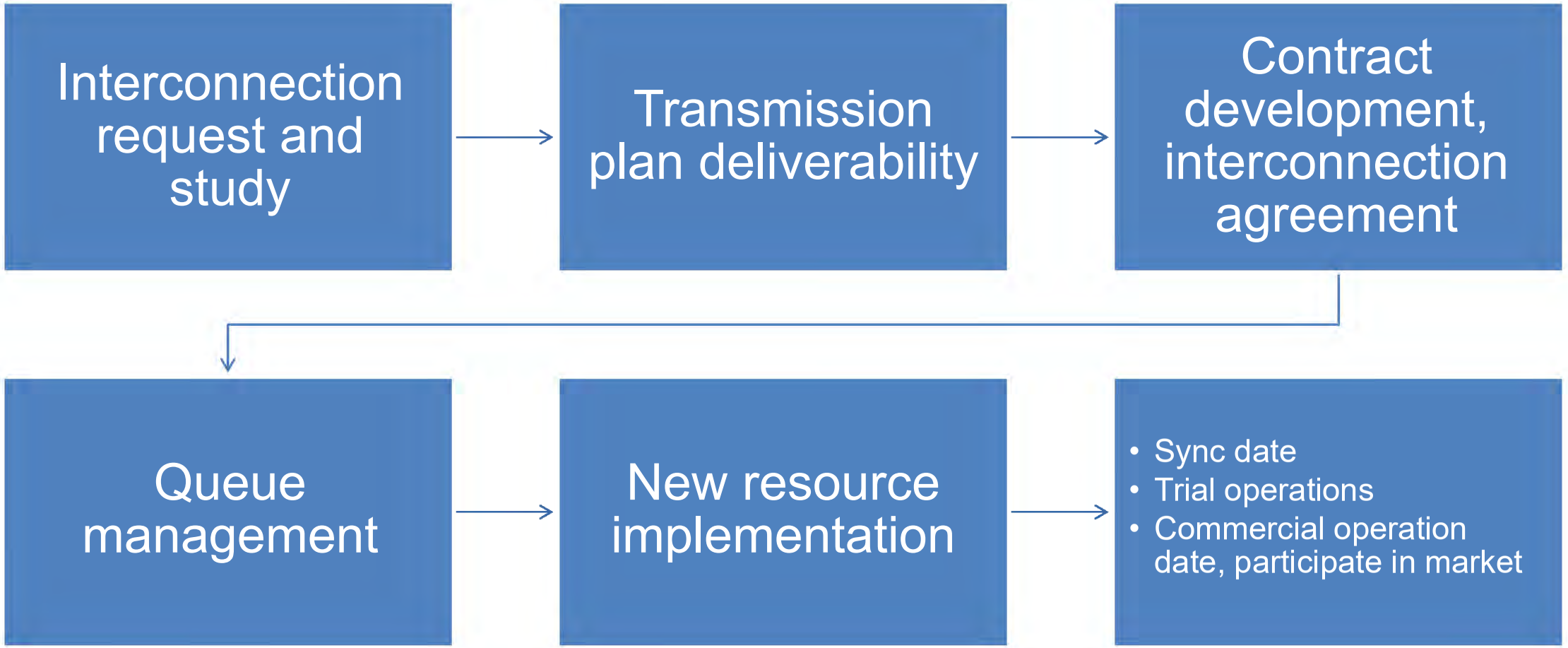
Interconnection Reform and Resource Interconnection Standards

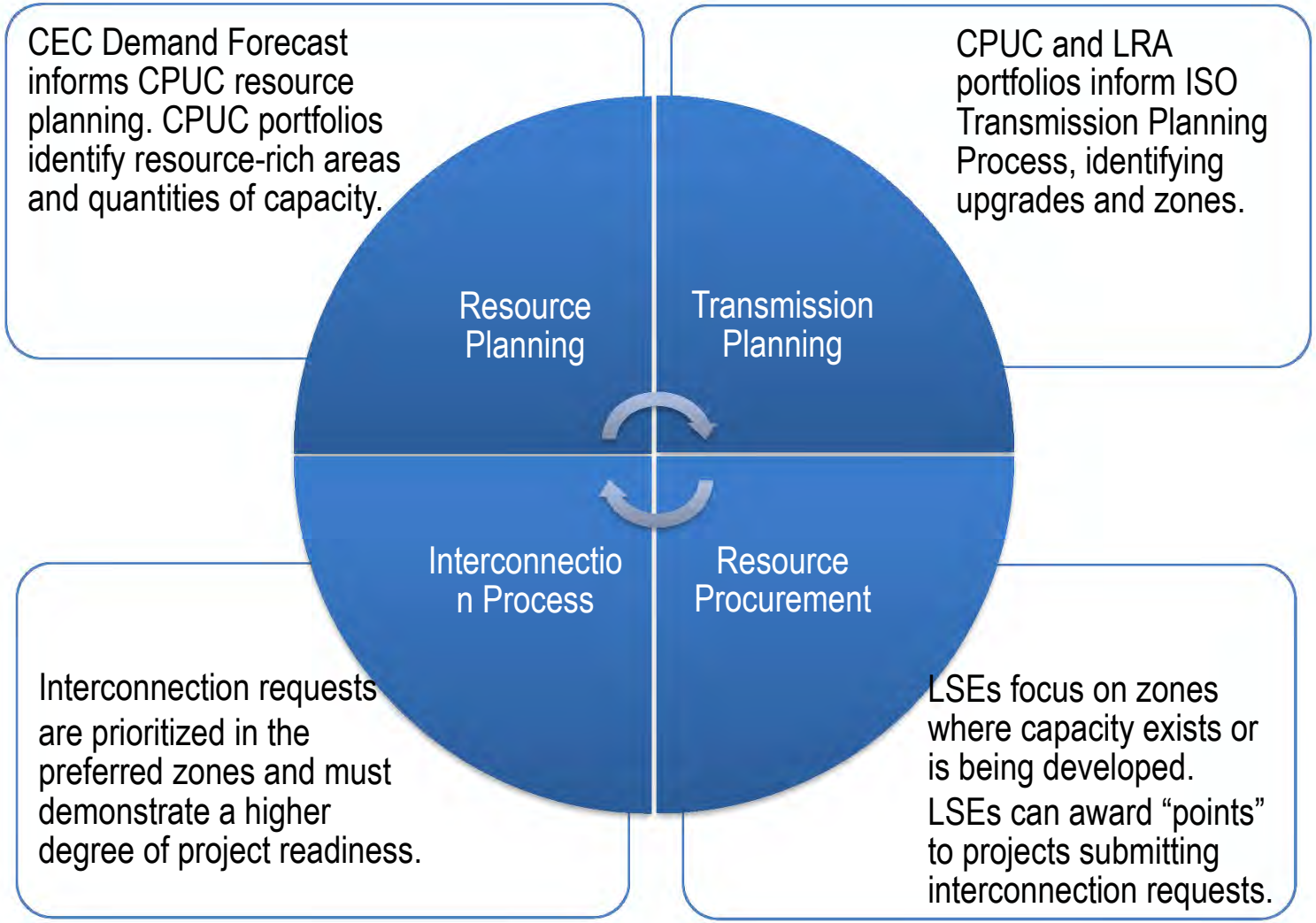
Danielle Mills, Principal, Infrastructure Policy Development

Integrated Energy Policy Report Workshop on Interconnection and Energization
August 11, 2025

The CAISO interconnection process includes many steps to ensure safe connection of generating and storage facilities to the grid.

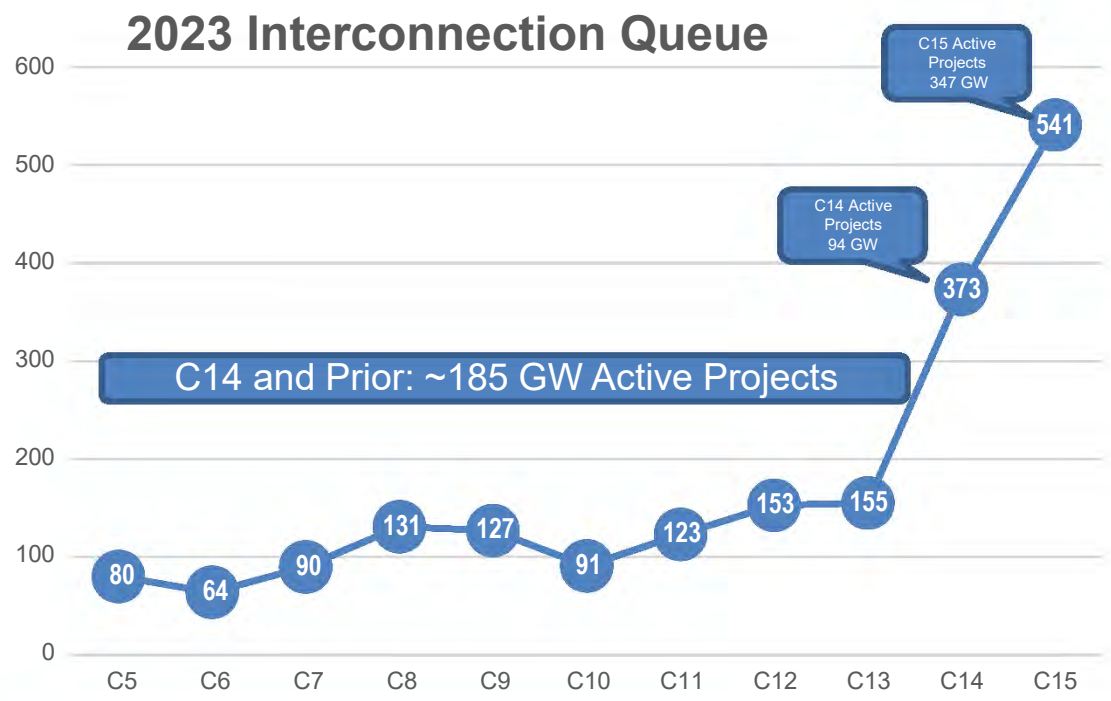


Transformation of the interconnection process is part of a larger coordinated strategy with state agencies.



Clusters 14 and 15 called for transformational changes to the ISO's interconnection process.

- CPUC resource portfolios calling for up to 7,000 MW of new nameplate capacity per year.
- Interconnection requests skyrocketed in Clusters 14 & 15

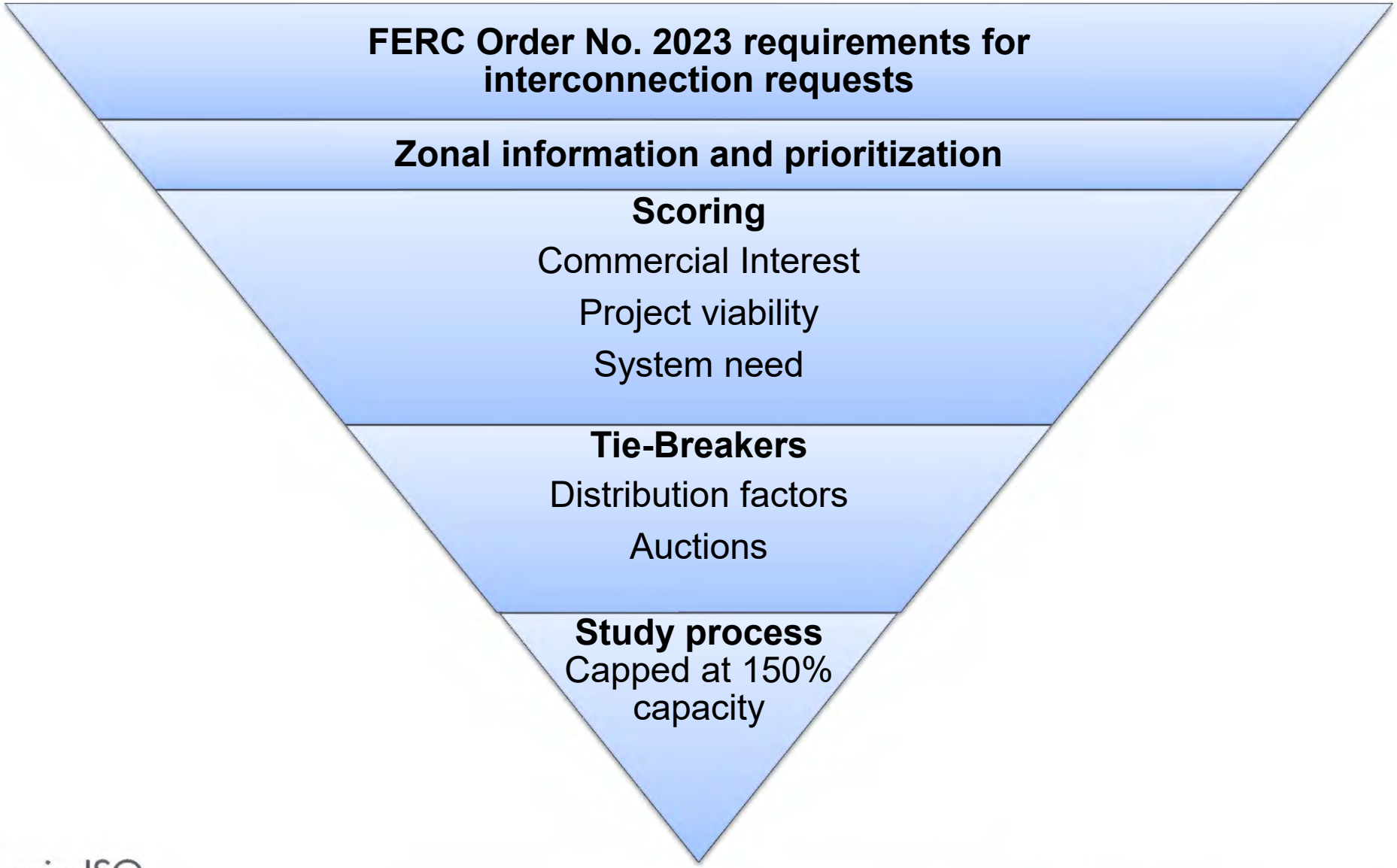


- High volumes of requests in areas not calling for new capacity in state resource plans
- Cluster 15 vastly exceeded expectations
- With Cluster 15, the ISO queue exceeded three times the capacity of that which will be needed to achieve California's 2045 policy requirements

Status of interconnection process enhancements 2023 & FERC Order No. 2023 interconnection reforms

- Track 2 reforms: **Approved by FERC September 2024**
  - Addressed transformational changes needed to the interconnection request intake process.
  - Fully implemented with cluster 15 resubmissions.
- Order No. 2023 compliance: **Approved by FERC May 2025**
  - Established foundation for interconnection reform with specific study milestones and requirements.
- Track 3 reforms 1st filing: **Approved by FERC June 2025**
  - Established a process for more mature projects to move forward more quickly through an intra-cluster prioritization.
- Track 3 reforms 2nd FERC filing: To be filed in 2026
  - Established transmission deliverability allocation process modifications to be implemented in 2027 allocation cycle.

Reformed Interconnection Request Intake Process



The reformed ISO interconnection request intake process reduced cluster 15 to a more manageable level

Cluster 15 Process	Number of requests	Total Plant Capability (GW)
Initial Interconnection Requests (2023 window)	541	347
Resubmissions (2024 window)	255	118
Percent Reduction: Initial to Resubmissions	*53%*	*66%*
Projects proceeding to validation (folowing project scoring and ranking)	177	96
Projects proceeding to studies (includes project withdrawals prior to the start of studies)	**145**	**68**
Percent Reduction: Resubmission to Study	*43%*	*42%*
Precent reduction OVERALL	**73%**	**80%**

- One-third of the projects in the Cluster 15 study process are Energy Only

The ISO agreed to monitor and revisit several elements of the interconnection process in the next IPE initiative

- Engagement with local regulatory authorities to ensure transparency, rigor, and integrity of the LSE allocation process
- Participation of non-LSEs in the commercial interest scoring process
- Changes to the project size cap on the full allocation election
- Incorporation of distribution system interconnection projects into the intake scoring and the 150% study limit processes
- Alignment between procurement and interconnection milestones
- Management of the accumulation of stagnant projects in the queue
- Modest modifications to components of timelines and sequencing of the interconnection process and milestones

The capacity in the ISO queue is sufficient to meet needs well into the future

ISO Queue Resource Capacity by Type (GW)					
	Project Capacity that have Completed the Study Process			Projects in Studies	
Type	**Active thru Cluster 13**	**Active Cluster 14**	**Total**	**Cluster 15 Studies done Q4, 2026**	**Total**
Storage - Battery	43	55	98	40	138.0
Storage - Other	-	-	0	0.7	0.7
Pumped-Storage Hydro	1	3	4	0.1	4.1
Solar	23	23	46	25	71.0
Wind Turbine	8	2	10	0.8	10.8
CT - NG or H2	1	-	1	1.7	2.7
Bio Fuel	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.01	0.2
Total Plant Capacity	**76.1**	**83.1**	**159.2**	**68.3**	**227.5**

Upcoming Interconnection Milestones

Current Schedule	Interconnection Process Enhancements 5.0 2025-2026 Schedule
08/11/2025	Straw Proposal Workshop
08/29/2025	TPD Affidavit Deadline
10/13/2025	Draft Final Proposal Posting
12/22/2025	Final Proposal Posting
03/05/2026	Board of Governors Meeting (Decision)
10/01/2026	Cluster 16 Window