# Review of NERC’s 2025 Long-Term Reliability Assessment

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# Executive Summary

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# The NERC LTRA assesses future regional resource adequacy risk. Re-assessment using a more complete accounting of generation, imports, and demand from other data sources results in lower risk.

Overall, the LTRA resource margins are much tighter than what may occur for four reasons.

**First, the LTRA underestimates likely-to-connect power resources**. Power resources in advanced development stages are projected to provide enough capacity to resolve the majority of shortfalls identified in the LTRA.

**Second, the most significant risk to resource adequacy shortfalls are delays to generator interconnection**. Actions that delay interconnection study, permitting, and/or construction for generation facilities increase the likelihood of shortfalls.

**Third, the LTRA underestimates imports from one region to another**. At levels seen historically during extreme events, these are sufficient to further alleviate resource inadequacy.

Furthermore, additional interregional transmission would lessen shortfall risk. The NERC-identified interregional transfer capability additions would help resolve many of the identified seasonal capacity and energy shortfalls.

**Fourth, data centers may require significantly less power than expected**. Combined with the other three corrections, this scenario could allow all regions to meet 2030 peak summer load and reserve needs.

With a clearer vision of the future and rapid action, the grid could be even more reliable in five years than it is today.

# NERC's 2025 Long-Term Reliability Assessment is too pessimistic. This analysis explores three major categories of input assumptions that impact the regional risks NERC identified.

North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC)'s Long-Term Reliability Assessment (LTRA) importantly captures potential reliability issues for a snapshot in time. NERC relies on utility-reported input data in making its assessments. This data, by definition, does not account for national power sector trends or limitations—such as double-counting of prospective demand or generation—that can have large impacts on future risk.

In this analysis we compare NERC's input data and assumptions against other sources to explore how changes to inputs impact the severity of risk identified in the LTRA. We explore three categories of inputs: demand, generation resources, and interregional transmission.

As the LTRA highlights, reserve margins—the difference between electricity demand and available supply—are tightening across the country. We find that while these margins are tightening, the severity of that risk is likely less than reported in the LTRA.

**Three major factors:**

- **Generation Resources**
- **Interregional Transmission**
- **Demand for electricity**



**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 Long-Term Reliability Assessment (LTRA)" (Jan. 2026)

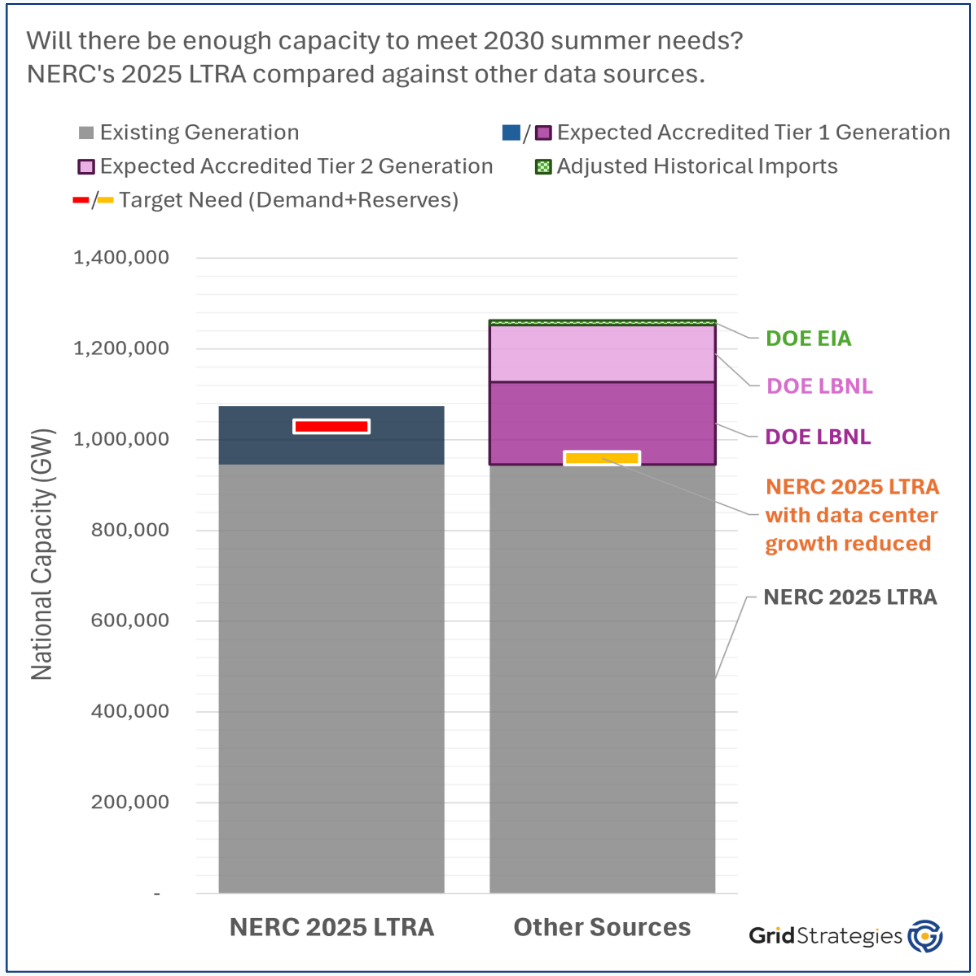
# NERC's 2025 LTRA highlights important reliability concerns, but the severity of these concerns depends on the data used.

A reassessment of the LTRA regional seasonal adequacy using a more complete accounting of generation, imports, and demand from other data sources reveals different—and in many cases less dire—risk assessments for some regions.

- The LTRA generation forecast is based on an incomplete accounting of nearly built generation projects. A more reasonable expectation for generation growth can be determined from each region's interconnection queue.
- The LTRA import forecast excludes the opportunity for increased imports from new interregional transfer capability.
- The LTRA demand forecast is supplied by utilities and regional planners. The vast majority of the load growth in the LTRA forecast is based on utility large load forecasts. Some of this load is uncommitted and may not materialize or it may curtail during peak periods.

The combination of low generation, low import, and high demand assumptions used in the 2025 LTRA resulted in resource margins appearing tighter than may actually materialize.

A comparison of the aggregated resource margins from NERC's LTRA and other national, reputable data sources, which account for the above three factors, is shown to the right. This chart is explained in the Methodology.




SOURCE | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Wilson, J., et al. (2025; Rand, J. et al. (2025); EIA, "About the EIA-930 data" (accessed Feb. 2026)

# Implementing currently available solutions will help all regions alleviate the identified capacity and energy risks.

Resource supply is available to meet rising needs but is encountering roadblocks. Potential solutions include:

- More efficient interconnection queues for all resources
- Permitting certainty and reduced construction delays for needed grid infrastructure
- Adopting reforms to increase coordination between transmission planning and generator interconnection

Additional import capability would help alleviate tight reserve margins. Potential solutions include:

- Appropriately valuing the resource adequacy (capacity) contribution of interregional transmission
- Comprehensive transmission planning processes that consider both firm and non-firm imports
- Acting on NERC's recommended interregional transfer capability additions

Tightening reserve margins are driven primarily by demand growth from large source loads, such as data centers. Potential solutions include:

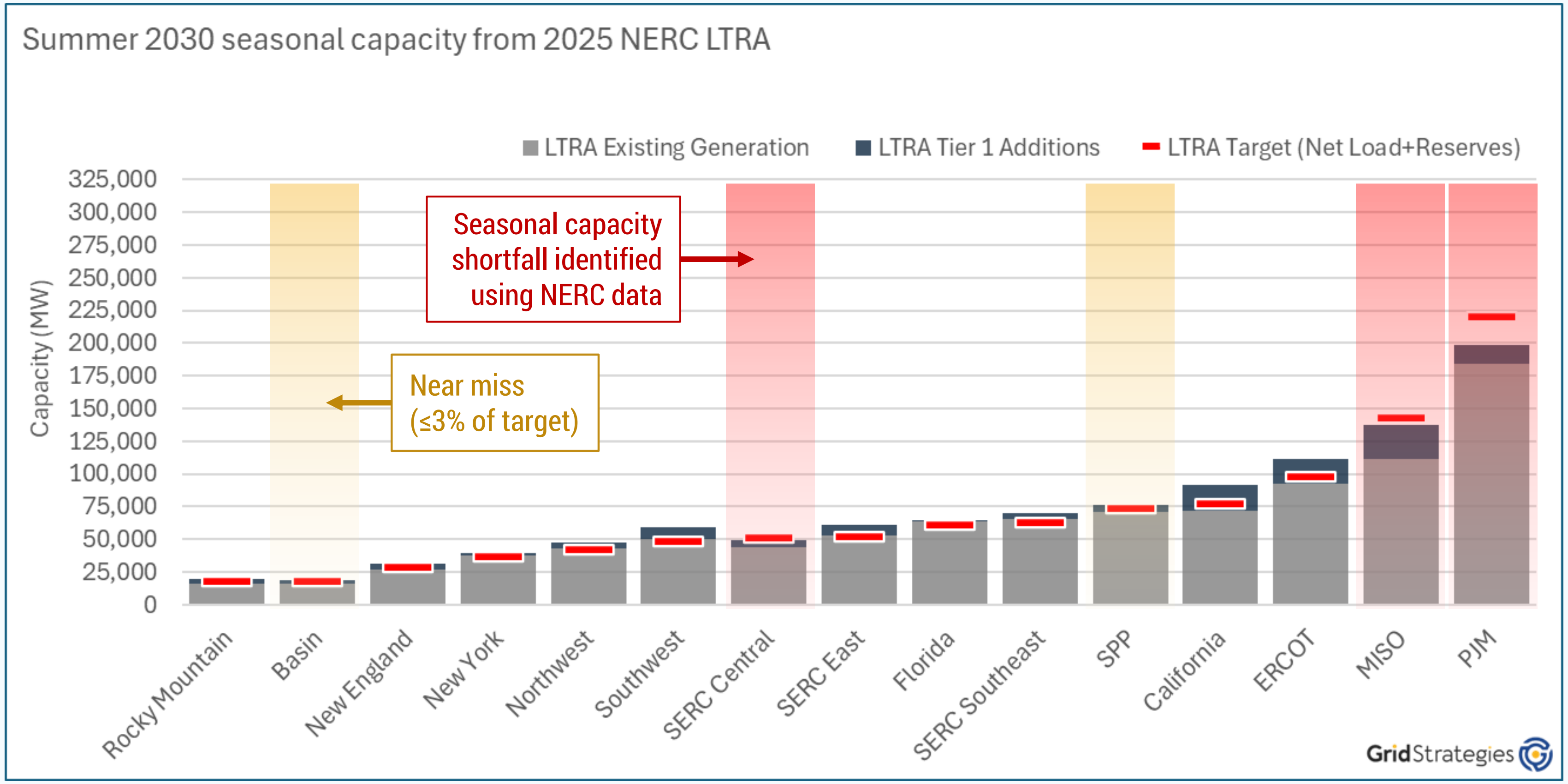
- Reducing the uncertainty and lack of transparency in load forecasts
- Regulatory solutions to connect large loads reliably

# Generation Resource Assumptions

# NERC only considered resources with executed interconnection agreements when determining shortfall risk.

All resources must undergo interconnection studies to identify any grid upgrades that may be necessary to reliably connect. At the end of the interconnection queue process, an interconnection agreement (IA) is executed. NERC considers any resource that has an executed IA as **Tier 1**.

To be resource adequate, a region must have enough future capacity and imports to meet load and reserve margins ("target"). NERC only counts Tier 1 resources toward future resources in the LTRA. NERC identifies three regions* that may be short of 2030 summer capacity needs using its assumptions. Two regions only exceed their target by less than 3%, marked here as "near miss" regions.




*NERC did not identify SERC Central as a heightened risk region though it is shown to be short of future capacity using the LTRA source data, perhaps because they did not identify elevated energy inadequacy risk despite the seasonal capacity shortfall in the region. We highlight it as elevated risk given the identified seasonal capacity shortfall.

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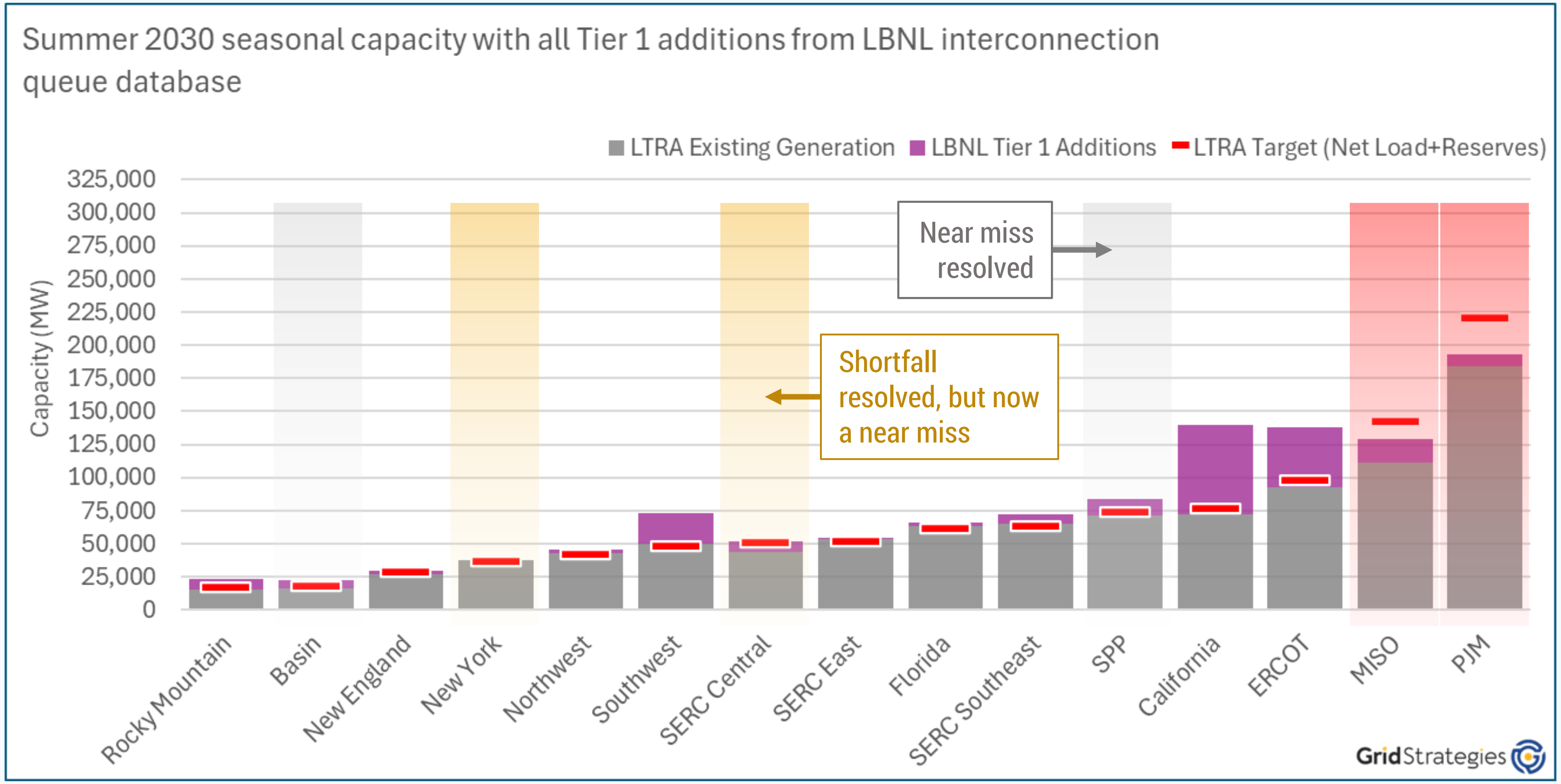
**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "2025 Electricity Supply & Demand (ES&D)" (Jan. 2026)

# The amount of resource capacity with executed interconnection agreements in the LTRA is lower than that compiled by LBNL.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)'s Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory (LBNL) tracks interconnection queue data across all regions and is a reputable source of high-quality data. The LBNL data suggests more accredited **Tier 1** resource capacity is available nationwide than is recorded in the LTRA, though regional allocations vary. The mismatch in data could be due to different processing methods, collection periods, and, importantly, resource accreditation methods.*

Using the LBNL data paints a different future risk picture than the LTRA—only two regions show 2030 summer shortfalls. This highlights how sensitive risk assessments are to their input data.




*All LBNL generation capacity used in this analysis has been discounted using regional, seasonal, and resource-specific accreditation methods, to show the expected generation capacity during peak load. Utilities do not uniformly report seasonal or resource-specific accredited capacity to NERC for use in the LTRA, which, as NERC highlights, may inaccurately account for the capacity availability during peak load (LTRA at 9, 44, 60, 71, 76, 122). See the Methodology for more information.

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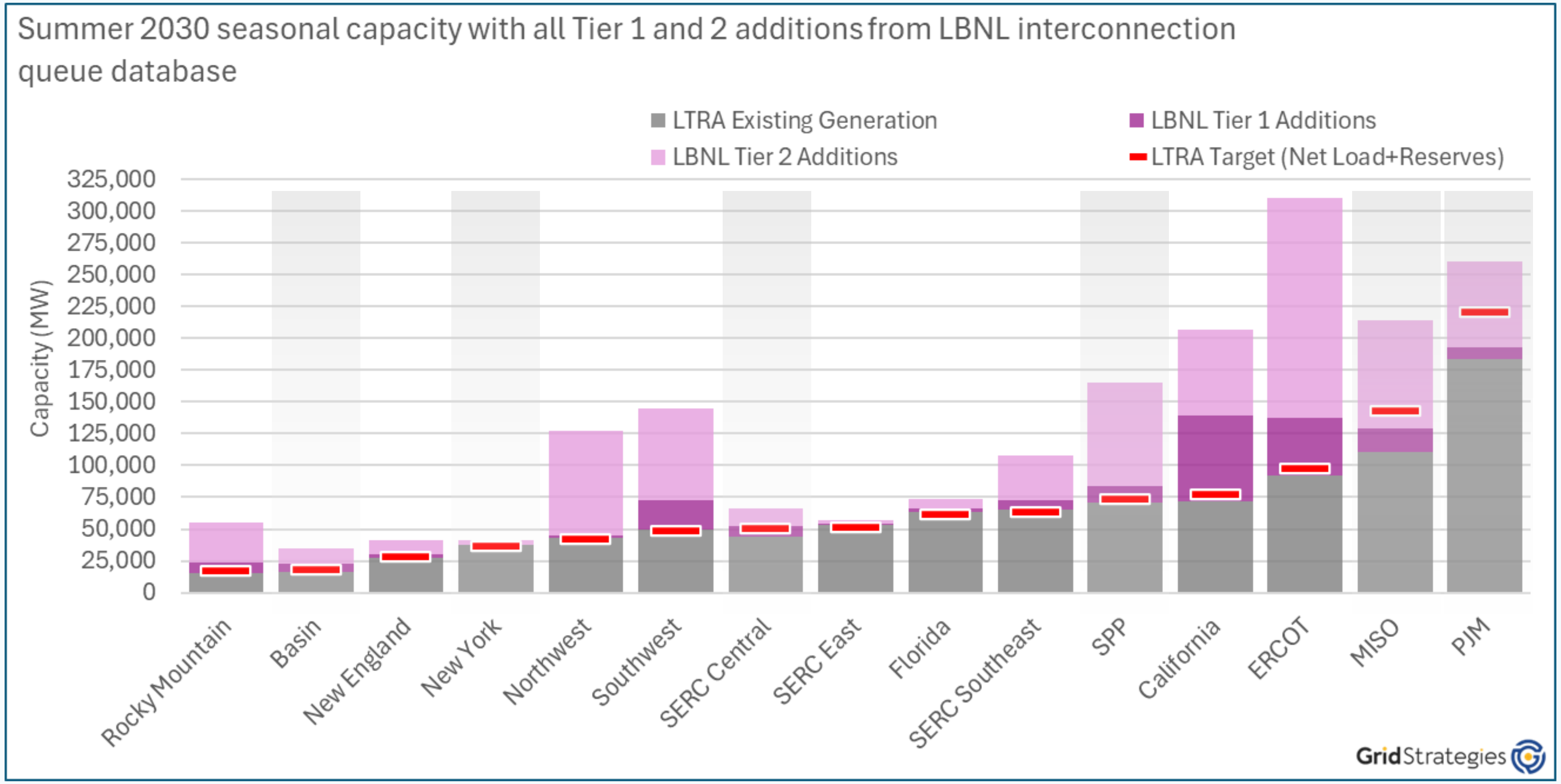
**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. "Interconnection Queue Dataset & Summarized Data Files, through 2024" (Aug. 2025)

# There are more resources under development in each region than those with executed IAs. Providing a path to interconnection for these resources helps alleviate risk.

NERC considers any resource that has begun system studies, but has not yet completed them, to be a **Tier 2** resource. According to LBNL data, there is nearly five times the accredited Tier 2 resource capacity with planned in-service dates by 2030 nationwide than NERC-counted Tier 1 as well as three times the NERC-counted Tier 2 summer 2030 resource capacity.

NERC does not include any Tier 2 capacity in the LTRA shortfall analysis. Inclusion of this capacity suggests that regions could be at less risk of seasonal shortfalls than illustrated in the LTRA.

But this is only true if there are clear pathways for interconnection of these resources. LBNL research shows that generators are facing increasing delays in the interconnection study and post-study phases. These delays contribute to project cancellations, which is dangerous for seasonal resource adequacy.





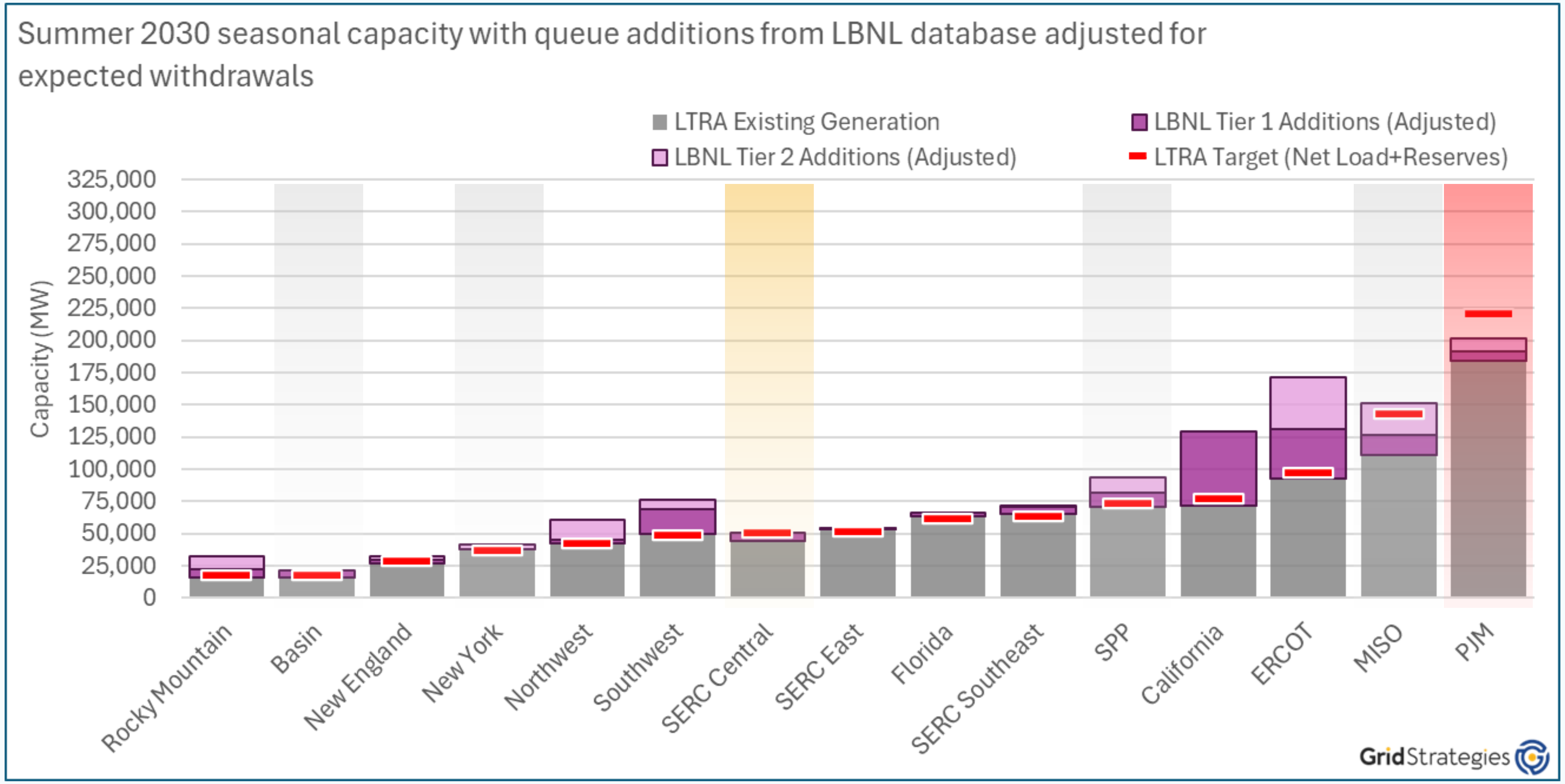

**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Even when accounting for likely resource cancellations in the queue and post-queue phases, LBNL data suggests enough resources could connect to meet most regions’ 2030 capacity needs.

It is unlikely that all Tier 1 and Tier 2 resources will connect to the grid. LBNL analysis shows as much as 85% of resources that enter the queues fails to connect to the grid (“withdrawal rates”), including facilities with executed IAs.

Rather than omit all Tier 2 data to account for the risk of cancellations (as done in the LTRA), we apply historic region-specific and phase-specific withdrawal rates to the LBNL data to estimate how much may connect to the grid by 2030.

Consideration of likely-to-connect resources currently in the interconnection queues resolves the majority of identified seasonal adequacy shortfalls. The resolution of shortfalls shown here is accomplished without a delay to announced resource retirements.

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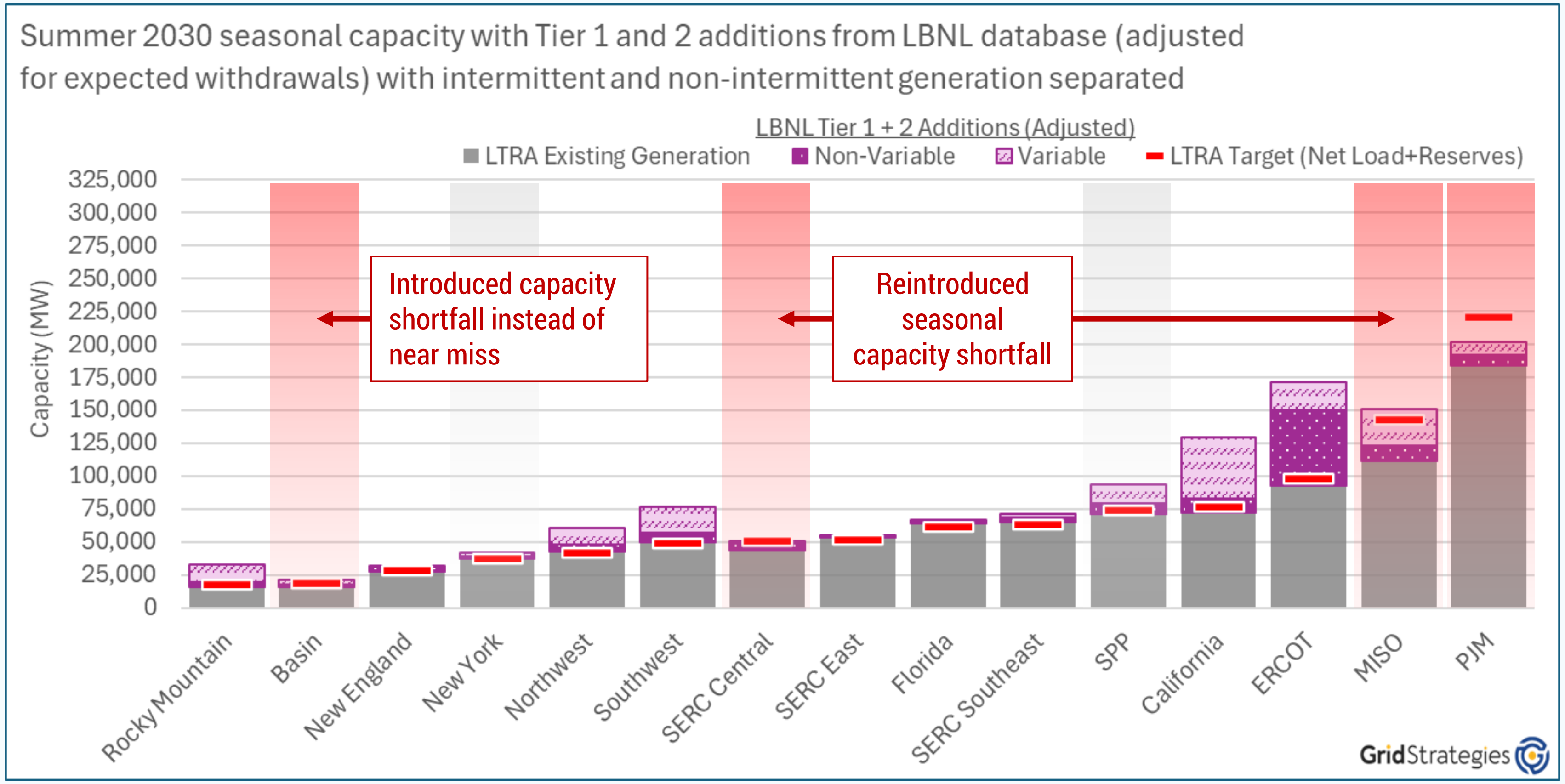
**SOURCE** | NERC “2025 LTRA” (2026); NERC “ES&D” (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Delays in the study, permitting, and/or construction phases to resources already in the queues—including wind and solar facilities—could jeopardize meeting regional seasonal capacity needs.

Additional permitting or equipment procurement steps applied to facilities increases their time to interconnection or results in project cancellation outright. Unnecessary hurdles for facilities waiting to interconnect could jeopardize huge amounts of resource capacity in advanced stages of development.

Shown here is the amount of likely-to-connect Tier 1 and 2 resource capacity from the LBNL data, broken out into variable (wind and solar) and non-variable resources.

Actions which delay permitting or construction for variable generation facilities could prevent large portions of the Midwestern, Southeastern, and Western regions from maintaining resource adequacy where they otherwise would be able to.

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**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

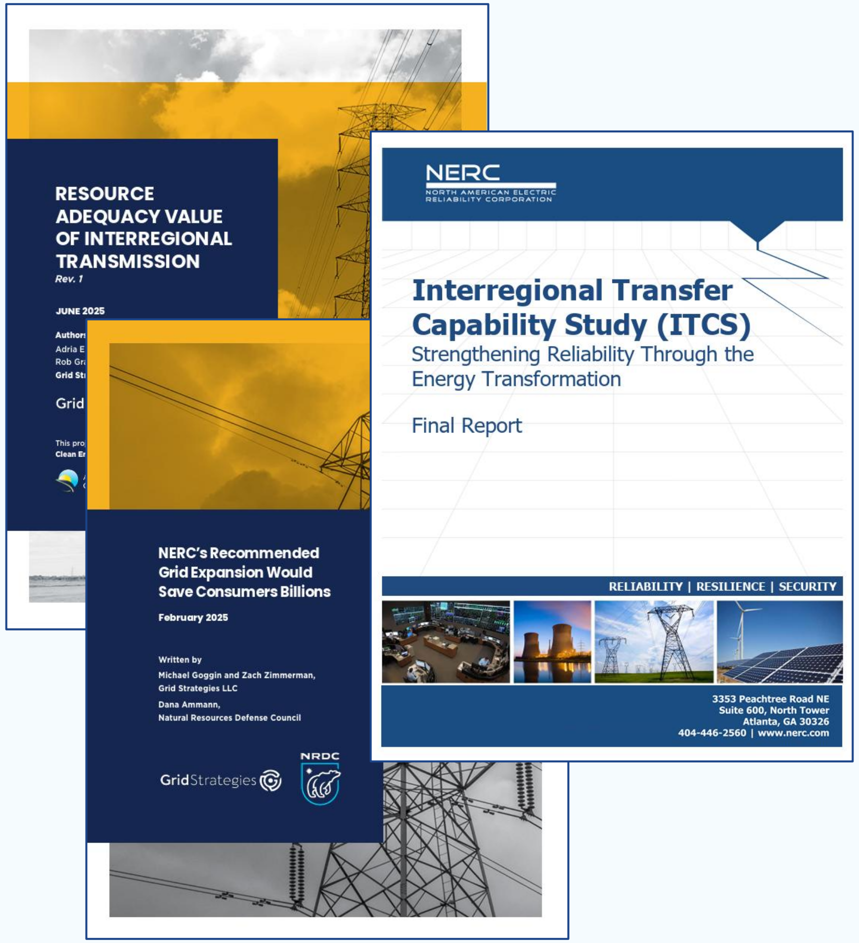
# Interregional Transmission Assumptions

# Interregional transmission helps to alleviate capacity adequacy concerns, especially during times of grid stress.

One of the many benefits of interregional transmission is the ability to move power between regions during times of grid stress. The availability of imports is primarily due to net load diversity among regions due to timing differences in peak demand and generation unavailability, particularly during severe weather events. Weather patterns and extreme grid events do not impact all regions equally, so there is often spare capacity in a neighboring region that could be shared during times of need. As a result, this benefit will largely persist even if reserve margins in neighboring regions are lower going forward. This phenomenon is well documented in several studies.

The LTRA only includes firm interregional capacity transfers in assessing anticipated reserve margins, which NERC defines as transfers with firm contracts. This ignores the historical role of "non-firm" imports, which are available during extreme events. For example, MISO imported over 13 GW during Winter Storm Uri, of which 5 GW was in turn exported to SPP, imports that literally kept the lights on in those regions.

Sharing of power can only occur, of course, if enough interregional transmission exists to move the available power. NERC acknowledged this in their 2024 Interregional Transfer Capability Study (ITCS) where they measured the amount of interregional transmission capacity that should be added to each region to help support energy adequacy. The ITCS analysis looks at peak grid stress days for each region and determines if excess capacity is likely to be available in neighboring regions during those same hours. It then suggests interregional transmission capacity be added to move that excess generation.

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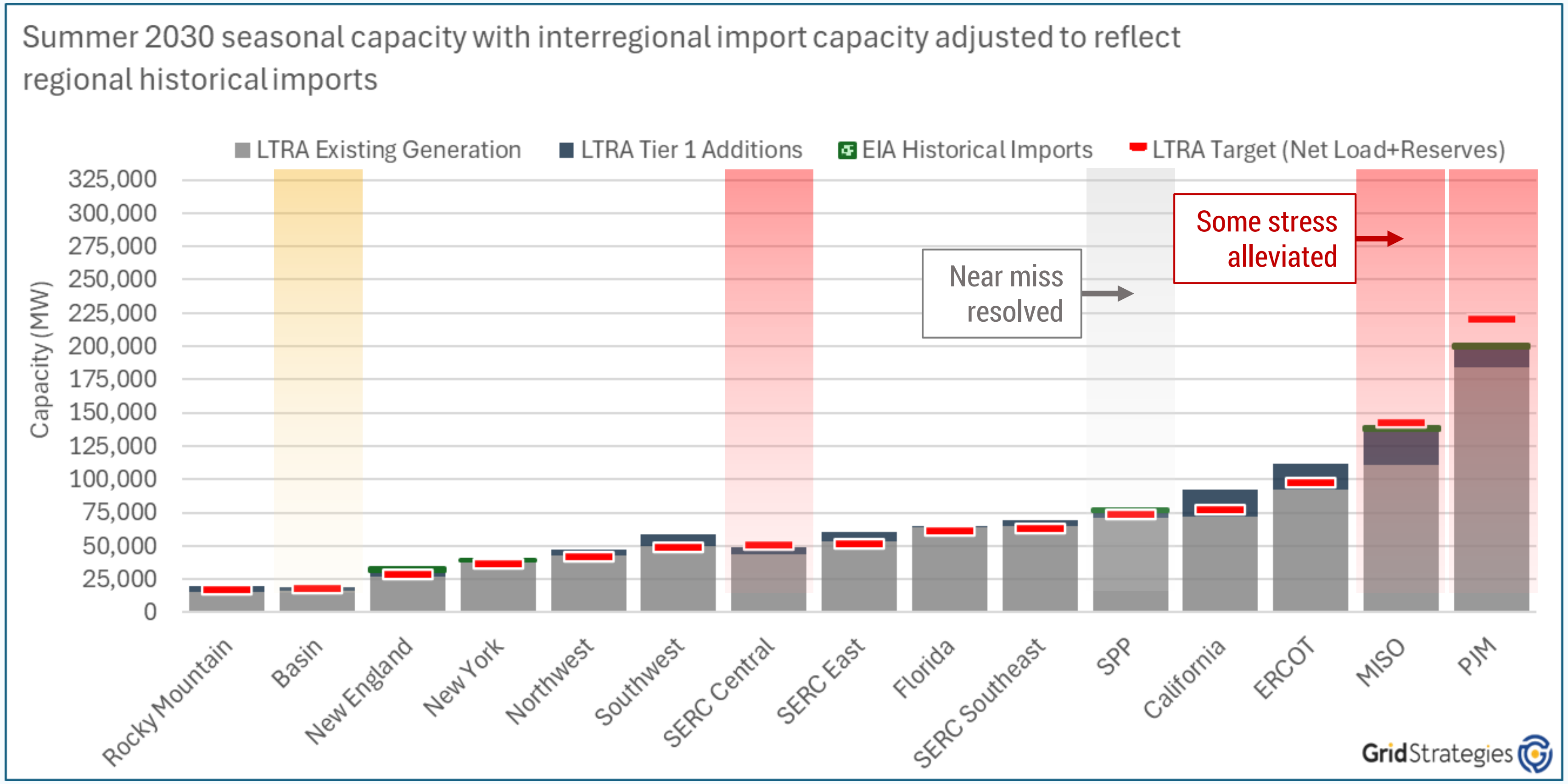
**Source** | NERC "Interregional Transfer Capability Study" (2024); Goggin, M., Zimmerman, Z., Amman, D., "NERC's Recommended Grid Expansion would Save Consumers Billions" (2025); Brooks, A., Silverstein, A., Gramlich, R., "The Resource Adequacy Value of Interregional Transmission" (2025)

# The LTRA only counts firm imports, omitting non-firm imports. Some regional stress is alleviated when combining the LTRA capacity assumptions with historical non-firm import availability.

The LTRA only includes firm interregional capacity transfers in assessing anticipated reserve margins, which NERC defines as transfers with firm contracts. This ignores non-firm imports over interregional transmission lines that have been available during historical grid stress events.

Hourly regional import and export data collected by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) confirm regions import significantly more during periods of peak demand than the LTRA assumes.

The inclusion of non-firm imports that are historically available during extreme events helps further alleviate resource inadequacy.

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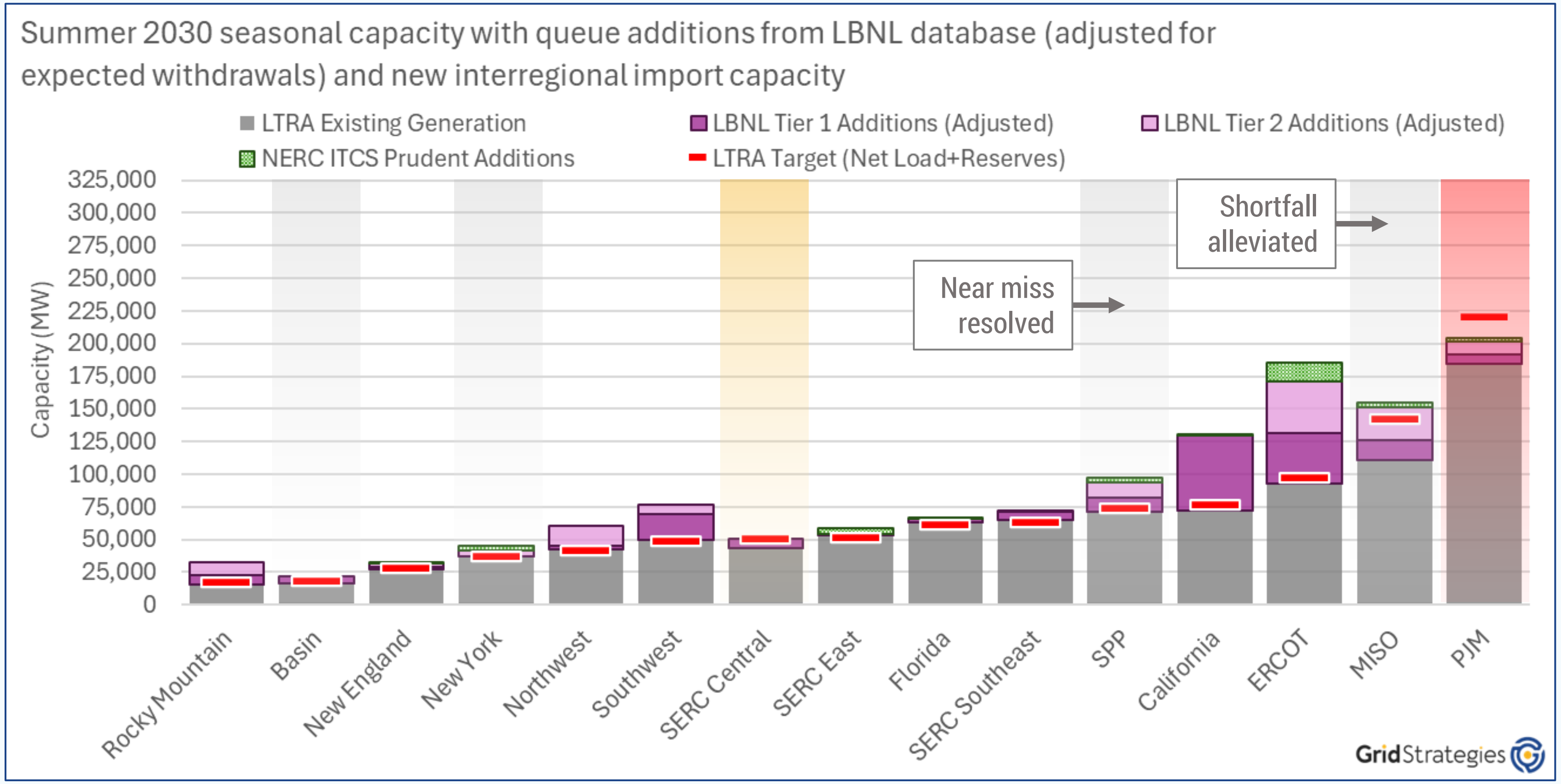
# The combination of NERC-identified increased transfer capability and reasonable resource assumptions from the interconnection queues provides even more security to avoid shortfalls.

The combination of interregional transmission additions suggested by NERC's ITCS and reasonable generation additions using LBNL queue data would provide regions with additional capacity to weather seasonal grid stress events.

The addition of new NERC-identified transfer capability would likely resolve many of the identified seasonal capacity and energy shortfalls.

All transmission takes a long time to develop, but this is especially true for interregional transmission. Unfortunately, the NERC-identified interregional transfer capability additions are unlikely to be built by 2030 under the status quo. Legislative and regulatory action taken now could accelerate the construction of these prudent additions.




SOURCE | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Demand Assumptions

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# The load growth in the LTRA is based on utility projections that, in some cases, are based on overstated assumptions.

NERC compiled the LTRA load growth forecast by rolling up projections from utilities and regional grid operators. Large load forecasts are uncertain and could overstate load growth for several reasons.

**Reliance on customer data:** Large load forecasts rely primarily on customer-supplied information.

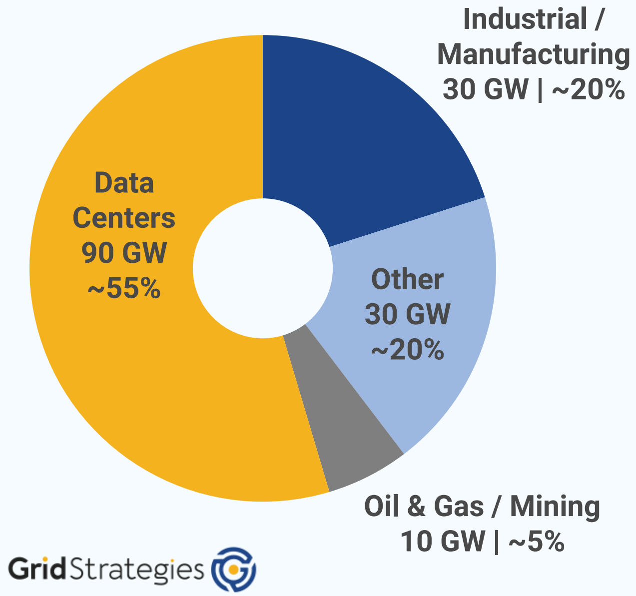
- Data centers, in particular, are constrained by global supply chains. There is no clear method for individual load forecasts to account for how supply chain constraints will affect specific projects.
- Load forecasts lack visibility into customers' overall business plans. There may be "double counting" as data center operators develop more sites as options than they intend to build. The LTRA includes all loads with "development commitments necessary to drive grid planning studies." In contrast, the LTRA only counts generators that have completed all planning studies and signed an interconnection agreement.
- Many regulated utilities have an incentive to overstate load growth and interconnection success rates to justify additional rate-based investments in generation and other infrastructure.

**Time lags**: Producing and compiling load growth projections occurs months before the LTRA is released. Mounting delays in large load interconnection and policy changes appear to have slowed load growth since their compilation.

- Load interconnection queue backlogs and long lead times for power transformers and circuit breakers needed for interconnection are likely to delay commercial operation of many large load projects.
- As outlined in the following slides, new large loads from data centers, cryptocurrency mining, and hydrogen electrolysis could each face headwinds that are not fully accounted for in the LTRA.
- Recent policy changes are reducing load growth, such as the recent termination or restriction of federal tax credits for electric vehicles, heat pumps, hydrogen electrolysis, and advanced manufacturing.

**Load flexibility:** Regulations and utility tariffs are beginning to require some large loads to provide demand response or backup generation during periods of peak demand. ERCOT's load forecast includes substantial demand response for crypto mining facilities and assumes that new requirements for large load emergency curtailment would reduce peak demand growth by 84%.

**Drivers of Load Growth (2025 – 2030)**

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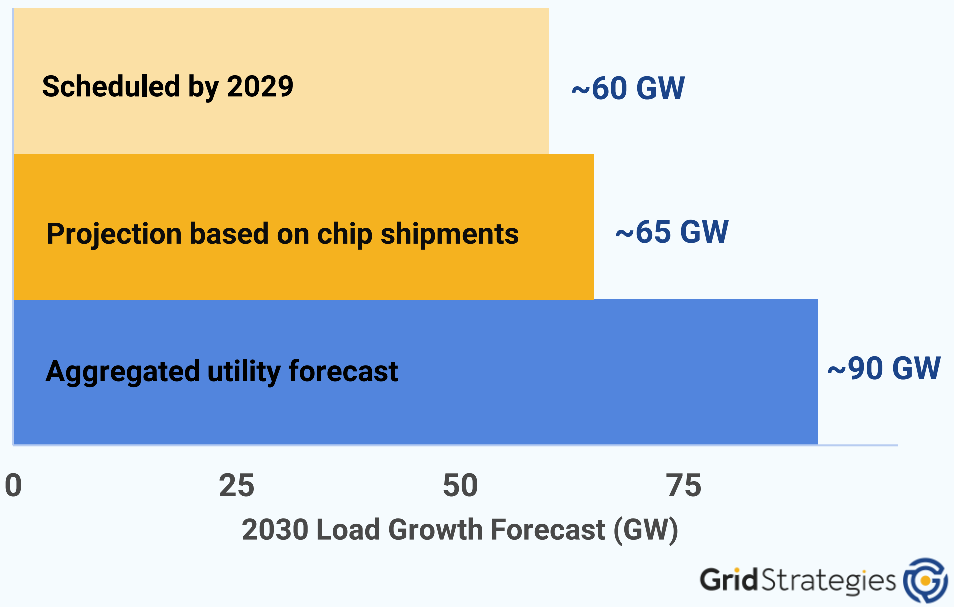
SOURCE | Wilson, J., et al. "Power Demand Forecasts Revised Up for Third Year Running, Led by Data Centers" (Nov. 2025)

# Assumed data center load

The LTRA reasonably states that, "New data centers for artificial intelligence and the digital economy account for most of the projected increase in North American electricity demand over the next 10 years." However, the growth of data centers and their contribution to peak demand may be overstated due to:

- **Supply chain shortages of chips and other key inputs.** TD Cowen estimated that due to chip limitations, U.S. data center growth would be limited to 65 GW (orange bar), about two-thirds of the data center growth assumed for the U.S. alone in the LTRA (blue).
- **Financial constraints.** Wall Street analysts have expressed concerns that expected revenues are insufficient to sustain the overall industry trajectory for AI data center investment.
- **Load flexibility.** Data centers may be able to use local generation and storage resources to reduce or eliminate their on-peak demand for grid power. Additionally, some types of data centers may opt to curtail their demand during peak periods without local supply. Curtailment activities such as these are unlikely to appear in utility forecasts of expected load. These practices may drive up annual energy use.

## Alternative Benchmarks for Data Center Load Growth



# Assumed cryptocurrency mining load

**Cryptocurrency mining accounts for about 7 GW or 15% of ERCOT's projected large load growth through 2030, though it is likely lower in other regions.**

However, cryptocurrency mining data centers are understood to be more speculative than other data center types. Cryptocurrency mining facilities are highly modular and can be readily moved to different sites, even after they have been installed and put into service at a site. Unlike some types of data centers, they do not face major siting constraints due to concerns about latency or access to fiber networks. These factors increase the likelihood of "double counting."

In ERCOT, cryptocurrency mines routinely use demand response or price-sensitive demand bids to curtail demand during peak periods. If properly incentivized to do so, their contribution to peak demand can be reduced or eliminated.

# Assumed Hydrogen Electrolyzer Load

Most hydrogen production load is forecast in ERCOT, where planned electrolyzers account for about 8-9 GW or 20% of ERCOT's projected large load growth through 2030. NYISO's load forecast used to include substantial hydrogen production, but it has been adjusted downward. Only a few other load forecasts mention hydrogen production, and at much lower volumes than in ERCOT. According to EIA data, the U.S. had only 116 MW of hydrogen electrolyzers in operation in 2024.

ERCOT's forecast may not reflect a full market response to congressional action to tighten the timeframe for projects to qualify for the Section 45V Clean Hydrogen Production Credit. The credit is now only available for facilities that begin construction by the end of 2027 instead of 2032.

The operation of planned electrolyzers is also difficult to forecast, but they are unlikely to fully contribute to peak load for two reasons:

- The tax credit depends on the carbon-intensity of electricity consumption. This will drive electrolyzers operation to hours with high renewable generation, which are unlikely to be periods of peak net load.
- Regardless of the tax credit, electrolyzers will tend not to operate on-peak because the electricity would be too expensive.



**SOURCE** | U.S. EIA "Electrolyzers are a small but growing source of U.S. hydrogen production" (2024)

# Load flexibility can reduce the capacity needed for large loads

**Nearly all the preceding categories of large loads can use demand response, on-site generation and storage, or price-responsive loads to reduce or eliminate their contribution to peak demand.**

The LTRA assessment of ERCOT's planning reserve margin assumes that new requirements for large load emergency curtailment would reduce peak demand growth by 84%. Through 2035, as load grows by 59 GW, demand response grows by 50 GW. NERC states that it made this assumption because "signed into law in June 2025, Texas Senate Bill 6 directs the Public Utility Commission of Texas to establish uniform large-load interconnection standards that, among other things, provide ERCOT with new large-load curtailment management tools and ERCOT's authority to direct (or require transmission service providers to direct) large loads to curtail their load prior to and during declared energy emergency situations."

While there is considerable debate about the feasibility for some types of data centers to provide flexibility, ERCOT's requirement shows the potential impact on resource adequacy. Nonetheless, no other load forecasts used to inform the LTRA include similar load flexibility assumptions. As a result, a large share of the projected load growth in the LTRA for other regions could be negated if NERC likewise assumed, as it did for ERCOT, that large loads use some type of flexibility during peak periods. Large loads in these regions could use similar flexibility solutions. For example, Google has signed agreements with utilities to use flexibility to reduce peak load contributions from data centers in Indiana, Nebraska, Arkansas, and the Tennessee Valley Authority footprint (Google 2025).

A recent study estimates 30% of data centers may install flexible capability anyway to curtail during localized transmission system overload or contingency events, as a way to move to the front of lengthy interconnection backlogs by reducing the need for cost- and time-intensive grid upgrades (Thomas 2026). Data centers that are unable to curtail could use behind-the-meter resources during peak periods to reduce or eliminate their reliance on grid power.



**SOURCE** | Google "How we're making data centers more flexible to benefit power grids" (Aug. 2025); Thomas, M. "Bypassing the Grid: How Data Centers Are Building Their Own Power Plants" (Feb. 2026)

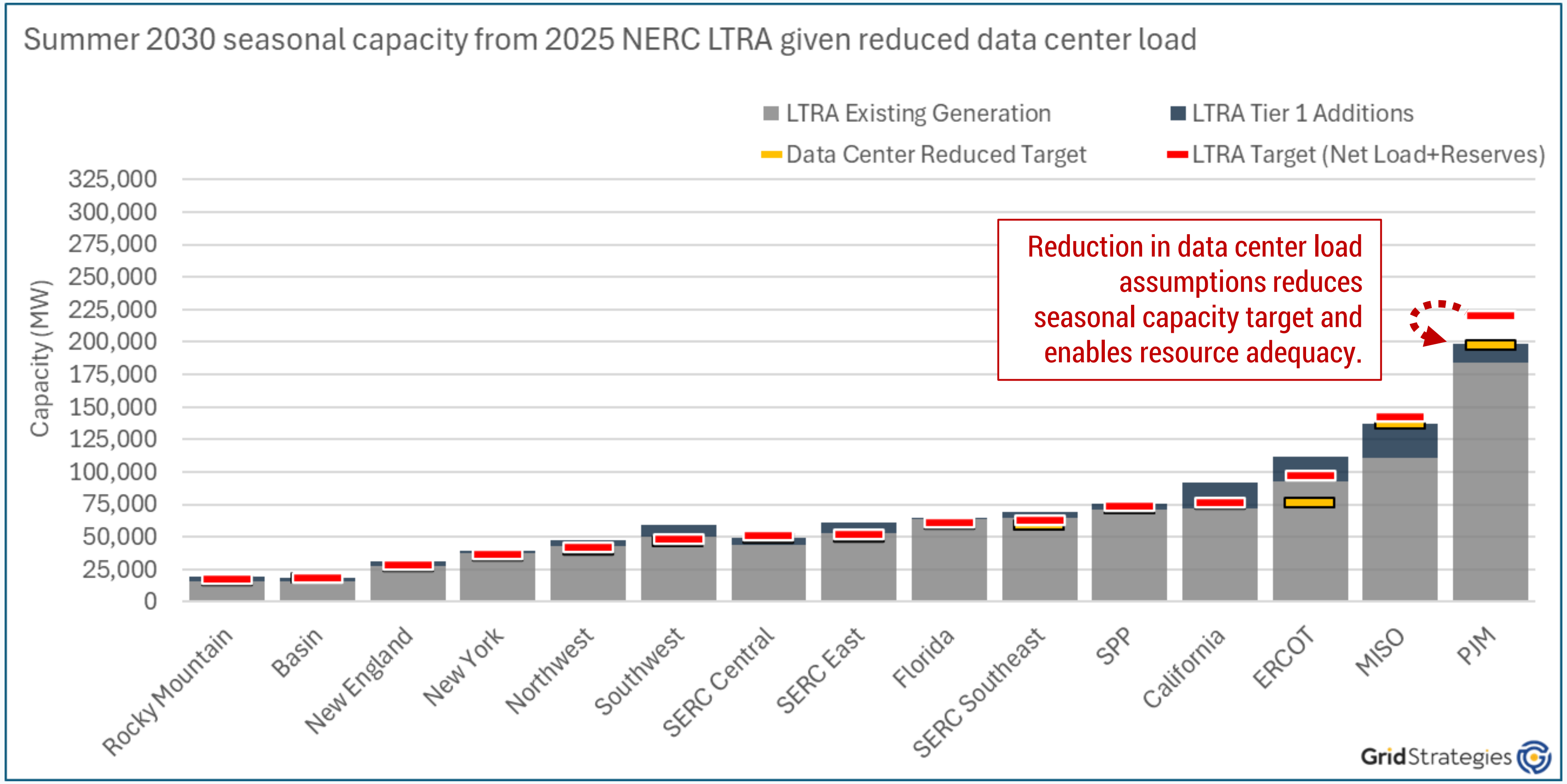
# Updating data center load forecasts based on chip-industry forecasts would allow nearly all regions to meet their 2030 target needs

NERC indicates that load growth in several regions is dominated by data centers. To highlight the impacts of uncertainty in data center growth projections in the LTRA, we introduce a scenario which reduces national 2030 data center growth by two-thirds. This reduction is distributed among the regions based on their individual forecasted data center load and is shown as a yellow target in the chart.

A one-third reduction is based on chip industry forecasts and an additional one-third is based on assumed use of on-site generation during peak demand.

Consideration of potential reductions in data center load growth enables all regions to meet their 2030 peak summer load and reserve needs.

Note: If no red target is visible, then the two targets appear to overlap. All regions' net load was reduced.

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SOURCE | NERC "ES&D" (2026); Wilson, J., et al. (2025); Thomas, M. (2026)

# Extreme Event Energy Adequacy

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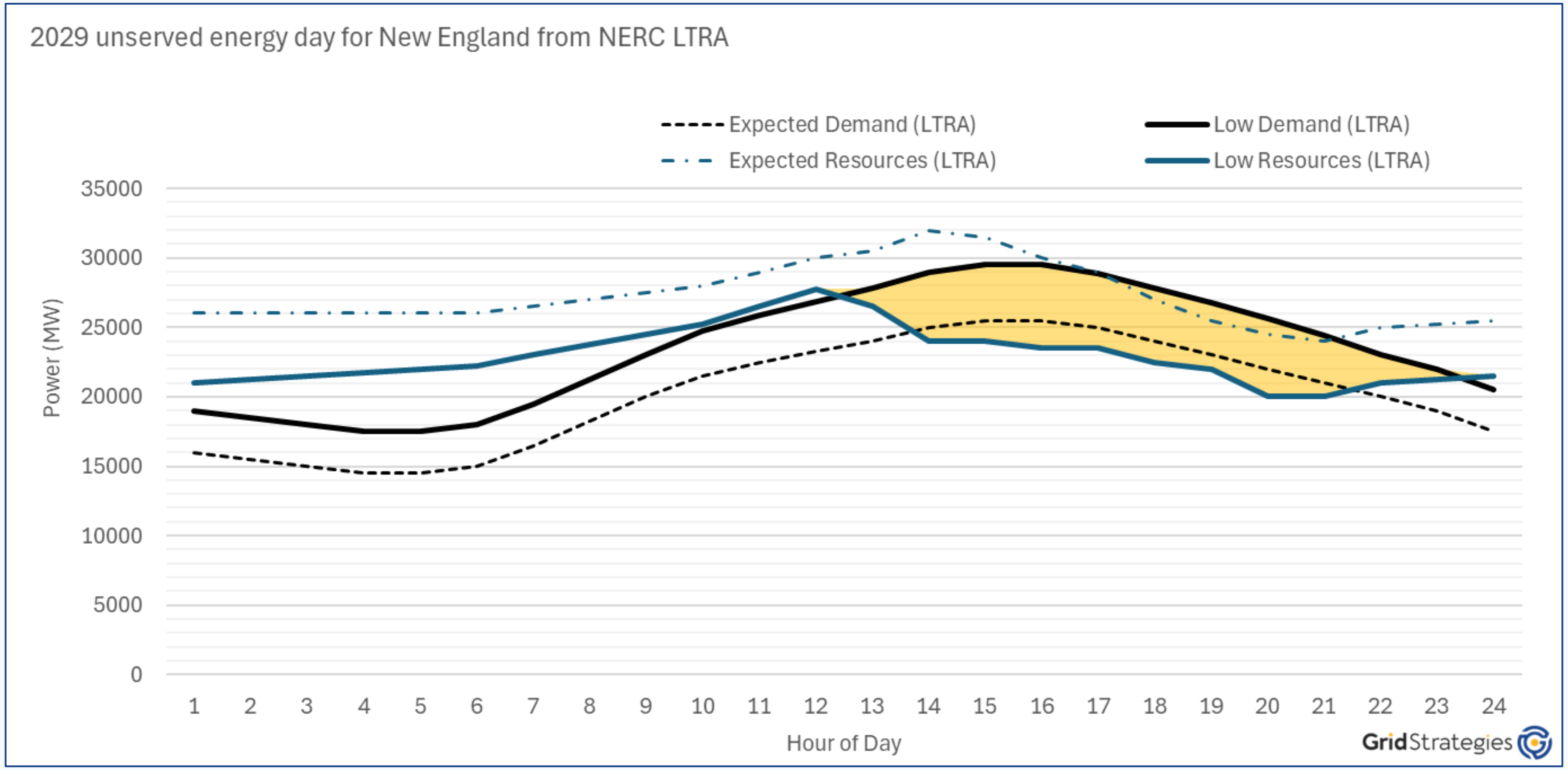
# Energy inadequacy risk during extreme events can exist even without seasonal capacity shortfalls. An increase in resource and interregional transfer capability also helps to alleviate extreme event risk.

The risk of energy shortfalls during extreme grid events can exist even without there being a risk of capacity shortfalls when considering only seasonal peak load. It is important to study both capacity and energy adequacy.

For example, NERC found energy shortfalls could occur during extreme heat days in New England,* even though it did not find seasonal capacity shortfalls.

Expected resource production is enough to meet expected demand (dotted lines) on most days, but sensitivity testing shows that the combination of lower-than-expected resources and high demand (solid lines) could result in energy shortfalls (yellow area). Energy shortfalls are often referred to as "unserved energy" or energy inadequacy.




*This figure is a recreation of the extreme event energy analysis shown in the LTRA for New England. We did not independently reproduce this analysis.

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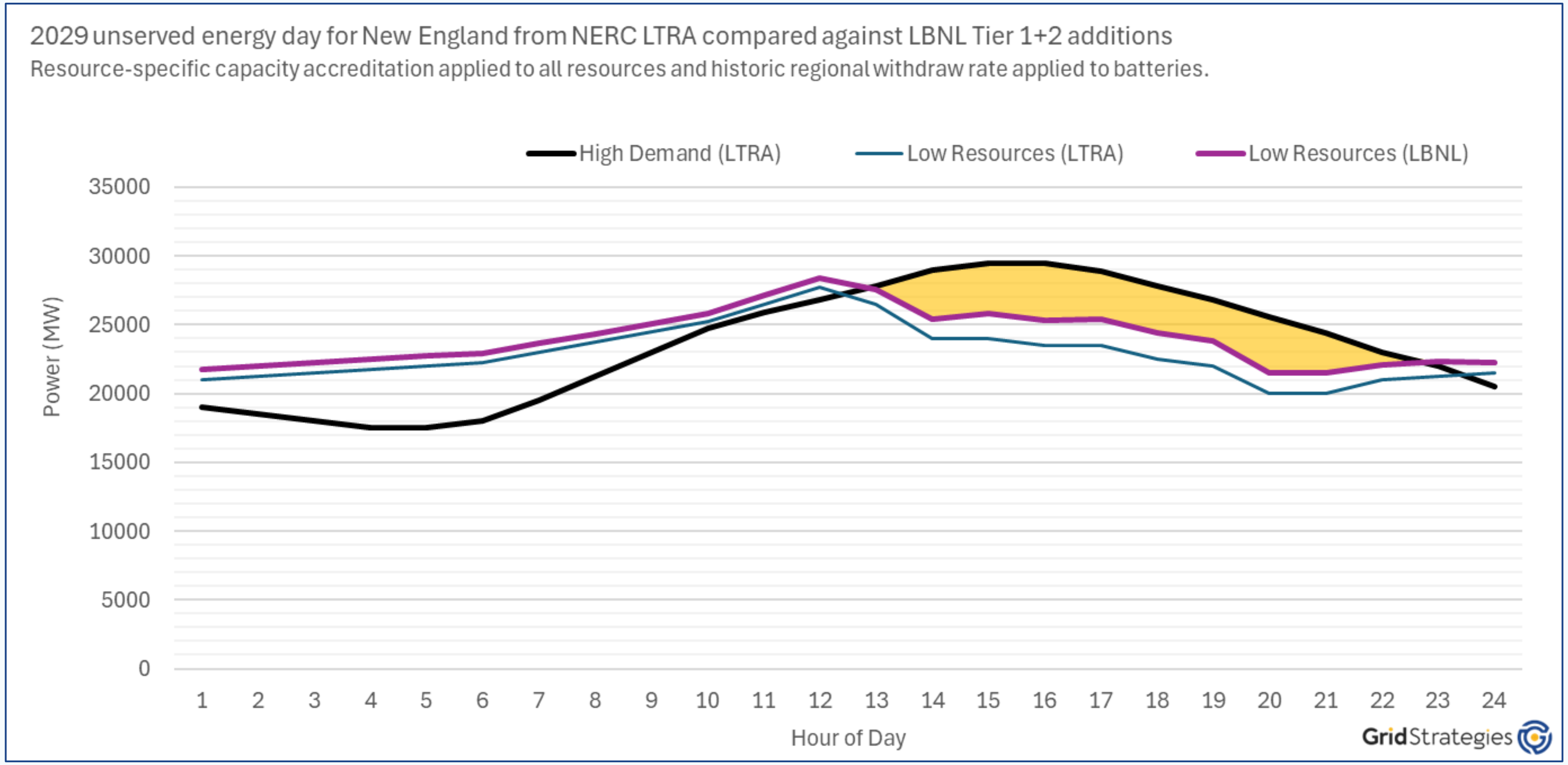
**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Using LBNL resource assumptions for New England greatly reduces unserved energy risk during peak load days.

LBNL data records more solar, offshore wind, and storage resources than the NERC data.* Lower-than expected production from the LBNL-identified resource mix (purple line) better matches the times of high demand (black) than the NERC-identified resource mix (blue).

Given accredited, likely-to-connect Tier 1 and 2 resource capacity from LBNL, the amount of potential unserved energy on peak summer days in New England is reduced by nearly 40% of that calculated using NERC data. If capacity had not been reduced by expected withdrawals, the unserved energy shown here would be completely resolved.

Diverse resource mixes—especially those matched to the load profiles of the region—provide major benefits to withstand extreme grid events.




*See the Methodology section for more details.

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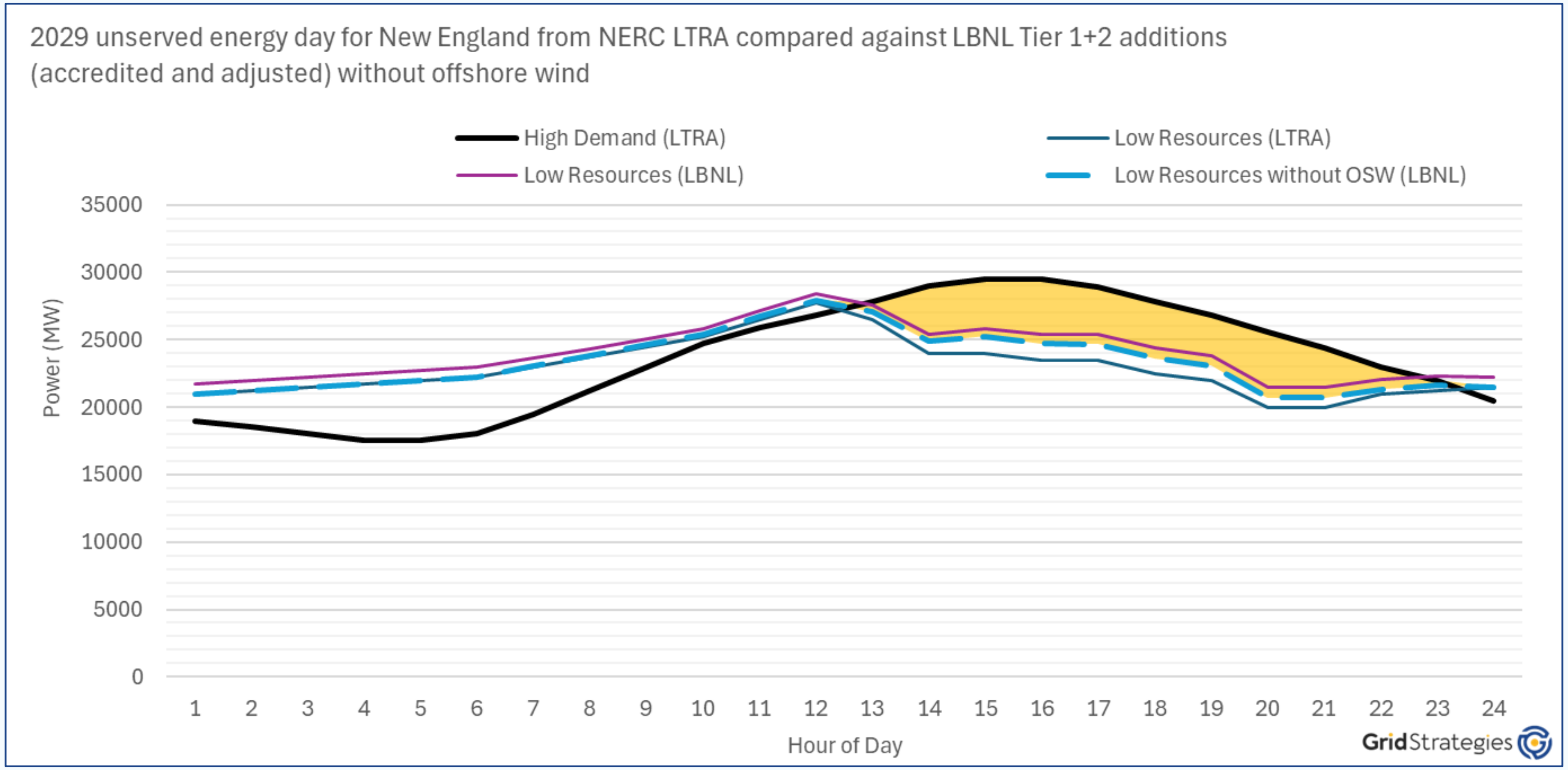
**SOURCE** | NERC “2025 LTRA” (2026); NERC “ES&D” (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# As with seasonal capacity adequacy, permitting and/or construction delays of resources with executed IAs are likely to exacerbate energy inadequacy risk during extreme grid events.

Delays of resources progressing through the queues or with executed IAs, whatever the cause, will exacerbate the risk of unserved energy during extreme grid events. Currently, offshore wind is facing additional permitting and construction hurdles. This is especially noteworthy for New England, where strong afternoon offshore wind output could directly reduce unserved energy risk during peak load hours.

Near-term unserved energy risk increases substantially given the delay or cancellation of planned offshore wind generation.

Given the low production of a resource mix without offshore wind (shown as the blue dotted line), the unserved energy risk is only reduced by 20% instead of 40% of that calculated in the LTRA.

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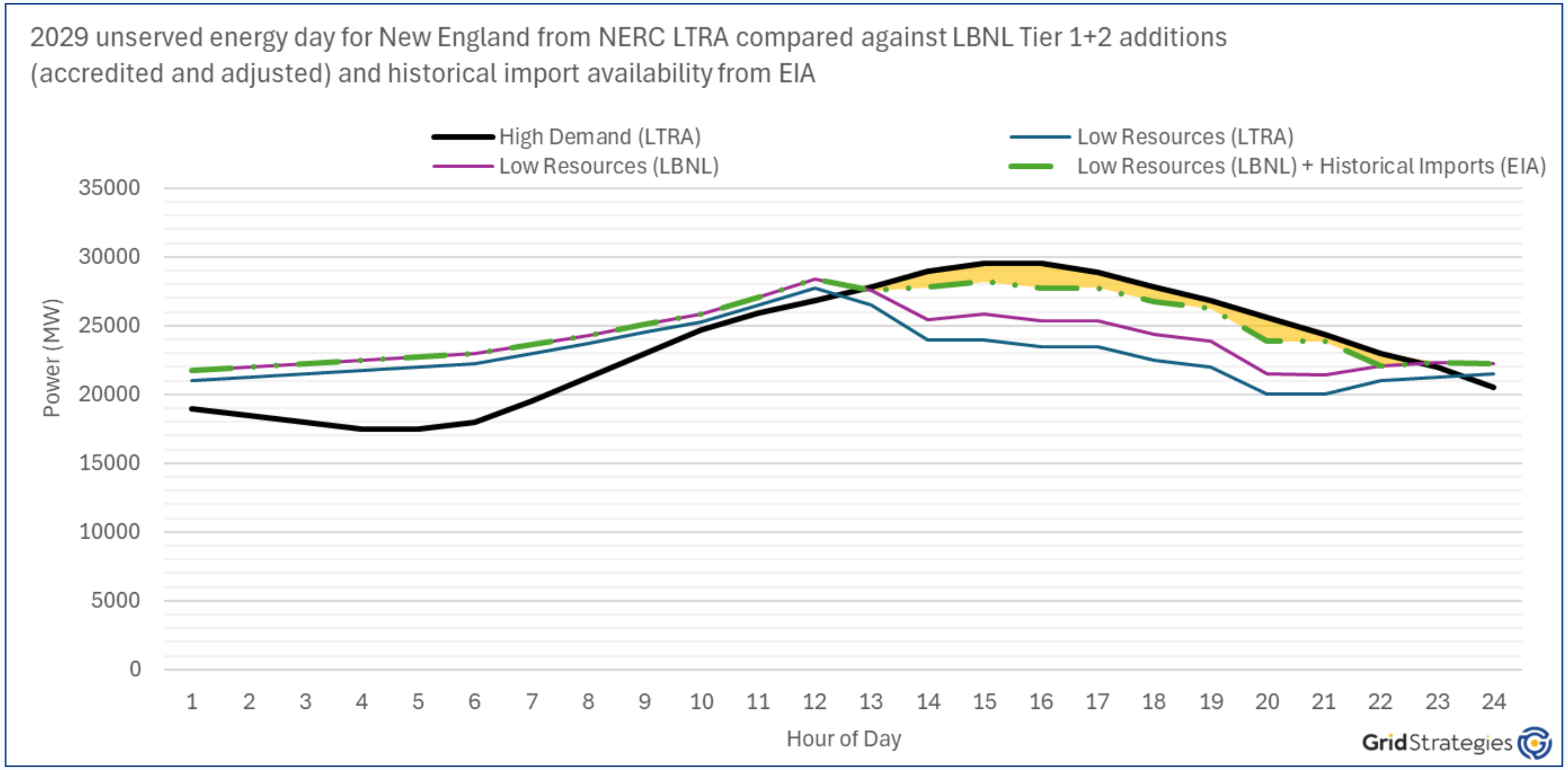
SOURCE | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Interregional transmission designed to move power between regions during times of grid stress further reduces unserved energy risk.

As explained in slides 15-17, NERC only includes firm imports in its seasonal capacity or energy adequacy analysis. This ignores the likelihood of additional “non-firm” imports which are historically available to regions during extreme events. Non-firm imports are those which are not contracted for use during normal operations, but that neighboring regions can export to regions experiencing heightened stress.

Adding the imports which have been historically available to New England during extreme events further reduces expected unserved energy.

The combination of likely-to-connect generation from the interconnection queues and historically available non-firm import data nearly eliminates the unserved energy risk calculated using the LTRA assumptions.






**SOURCE** | NERC “2025 LTRA” (2026); NERC “ES&D” (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

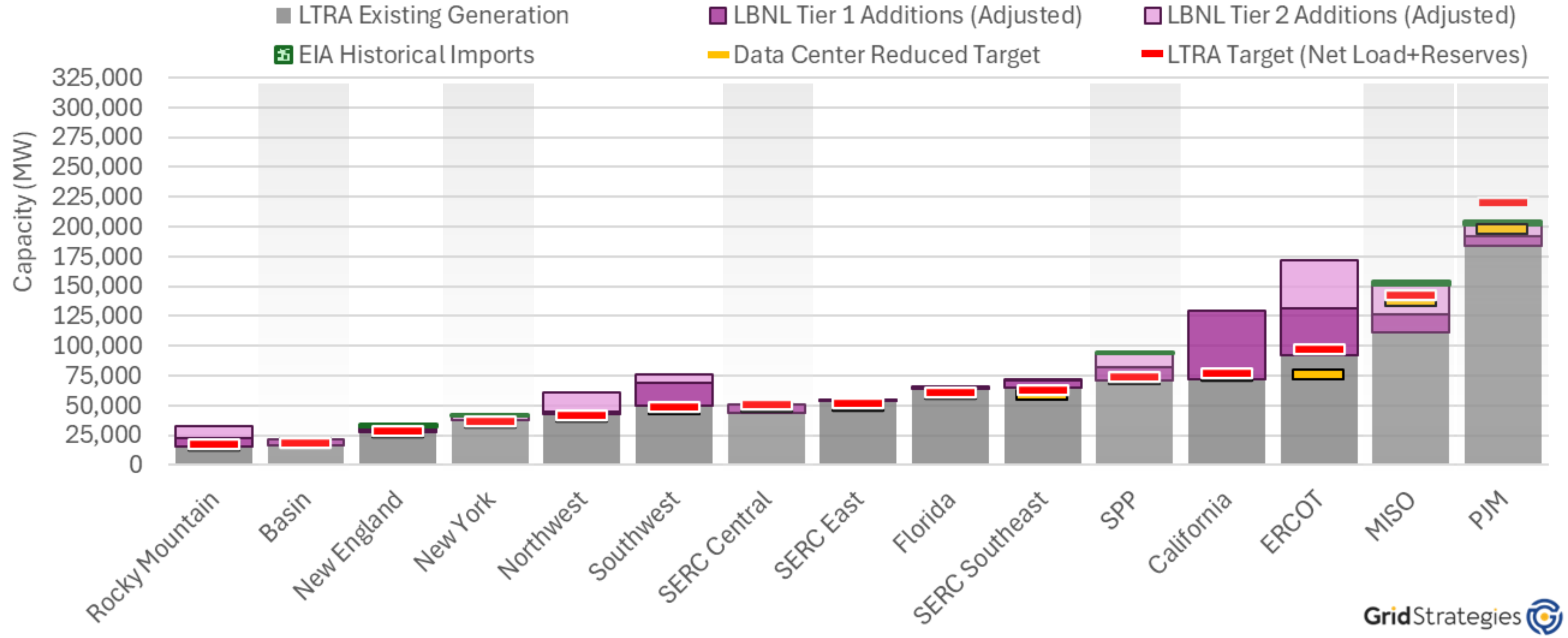
# Conclusions and Solutions

# In this analysis, we considered different assumptions for generation resource, interregional transmission, and demand than the LTRA. The combination of all three suggest all regions could be resource adequate.

The regional seasonal resource adequacy risks identified in the 2025 NERC LTRA are all resolved when evaluated under different input assumptions:

- Including generation that is actively working through the interconnection queues in each region (Tiers 1 & 2)
- Discounting all generation nameplate capacity by the resource and region-specific accreditation methods
- Discounting generation queue data by historic regional and phase-specific withdraw rates
- Consideration of historic non-firm imports during extreme events
- Including increased interregional transfer capability capacity (albeit low likelihood of 2030 in-service date)
- Reduced data center load to account for microchip industry supply chain constraints and generation flexibility

Summer 2030 seasonal capacity with queue additions from LBNL database (adjusted for expected withdrawals), interregional import capacity (adjusted for historical imports), and reduced data center load




GridStrategies

SOURCE | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# While reduced risk is likely given different assumptions, these results should not be taken for granted. Enacting existing solutions is needed to stave off future reliability risk.

Resource supply is available to meet rising needs but is encountering roadblocks. Potential solutions include:

- More efficient interconnection queues for all resources
- Permitting certainty and reduced construction delays for needed grid infrastructure
- Adopting reforms to increase coordination between transmission planning and generator interconnection

Additional import capability would help alleviate tight reserve margins. Potential solutions include:

- Appropriately valuing the resource adequacy (capacity) contribution of interregional transmission
- Comprehensive transmission planning processes that consider both firm and non-firm imports
- Acting on NERC's recommended interregional transfer capability additions

Tightening reserve margins are driven primarily by demand growth from large source loads, such as data centers. Potential solutions include:

- Reducing the uncertainty and lack of transparency in load forecasts
- Regulatory solutions to connect large loads reliably

# Methodology

# The NERC LTRA assesses each region's ability to meet both its future capacity and energy adequacy needs.

NERC's LTRA importantly captures potential reliability issues for a snapshot in time. Risk is defined by tightening reserve margins—the difference between electricity demand and available supply.

In its 2025 version, NERC identified several regions* as either **High** or **Elevated** risk of not being able to meet their future capacity and energy needs.

**Seasonal capacity shortfall risk**: MISO, PJM, and SERC-Central (with SPP and Basin on the margin)

**Extreme event energy shortfall risk**: MISO, PJM, New England, New York, SERC-East, Basin, Northwest, and ERCOT

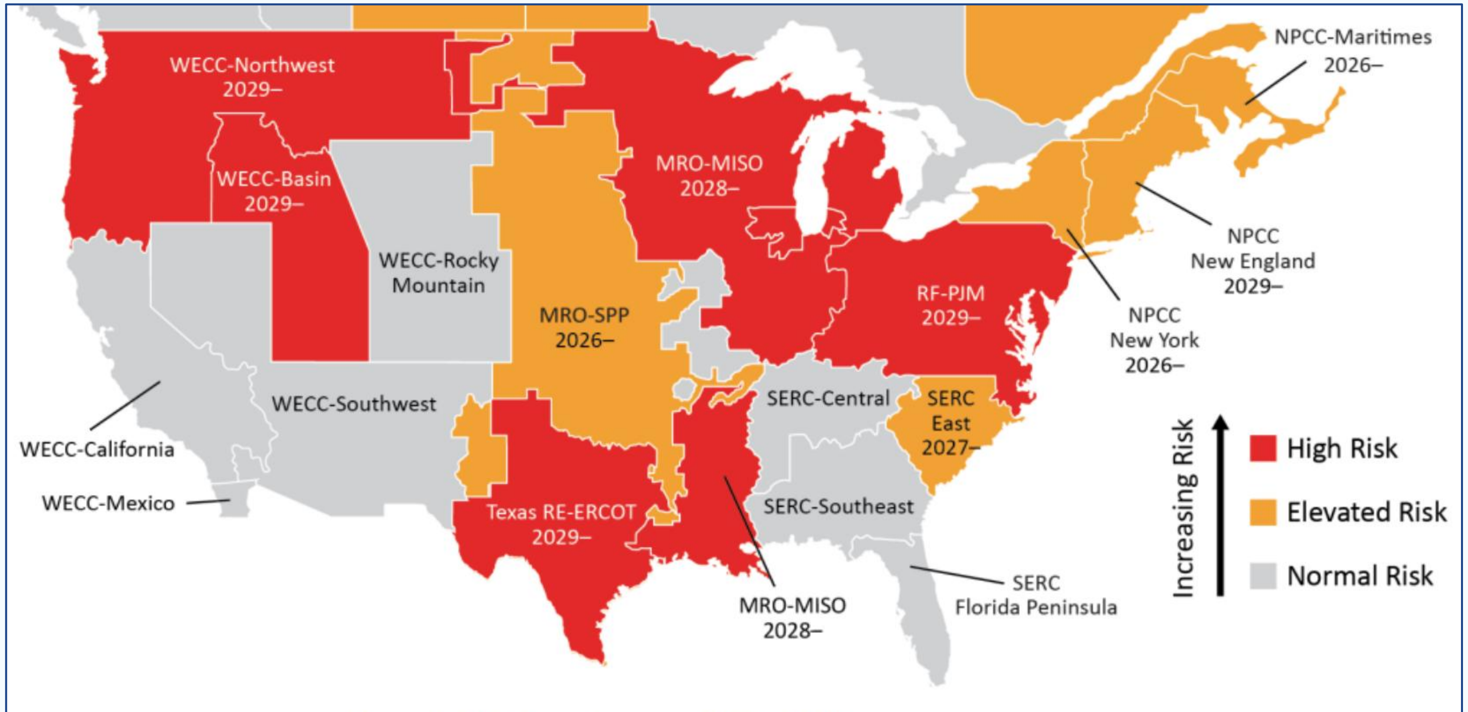


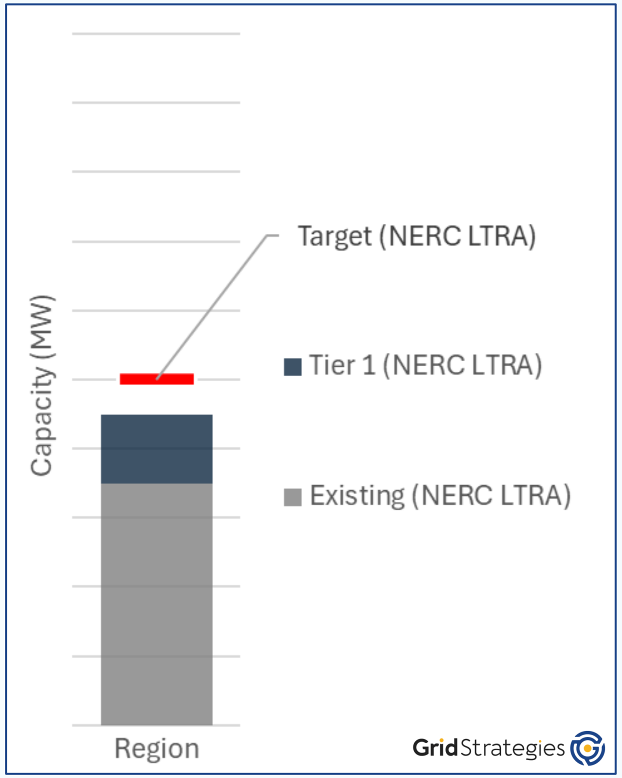

**Figure 1: Risk Area Summary 2026–2030**
Shows highest risk classification that occurs in the first 5 years and states initial year of occurrence

*NERC did not mark SERC-Central as elevated risk despite showing large seasonal shortfalls while SPP was marked as elevated risk despite having neither seasonal capacity shortalls nor extreme event energy shortfalls.

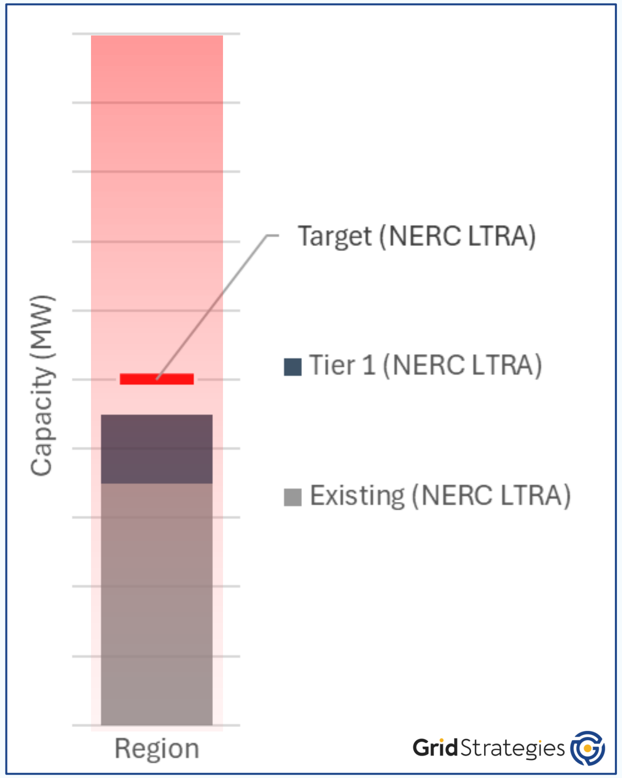
# Illustrative walkthrough of seasonal capacity slides

Bar charts showing the existing (light grey) and future (dark blue) resource capacity in each region using NERC LTRA data. The target capacity (red line) is also shown. These charts were created by Grid Strategies using NERC data.

A red highlight is used to signify a shortfall between the existing + future resource capacity and the needed target to meet future load and reserves. A yellow highlight would be used to signify a "near miss."



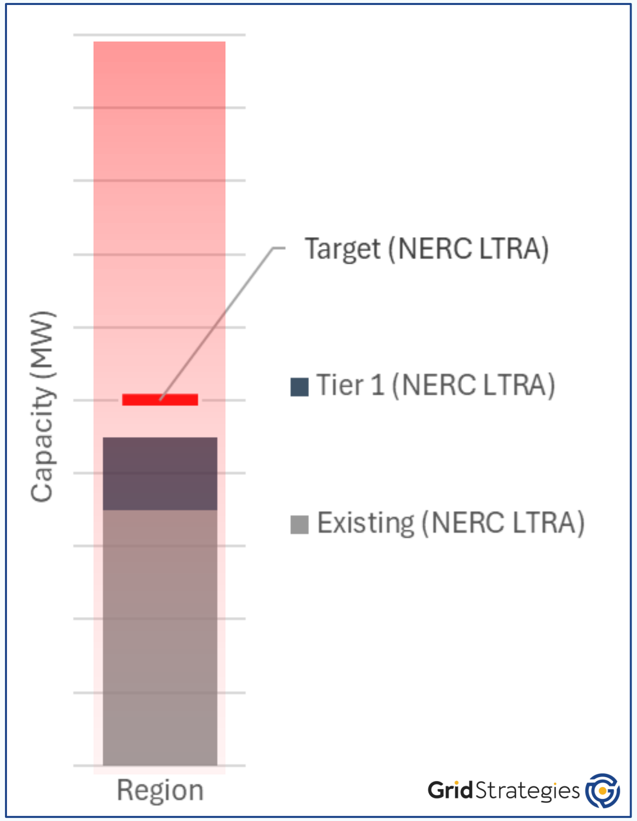

Highlight important features of chart



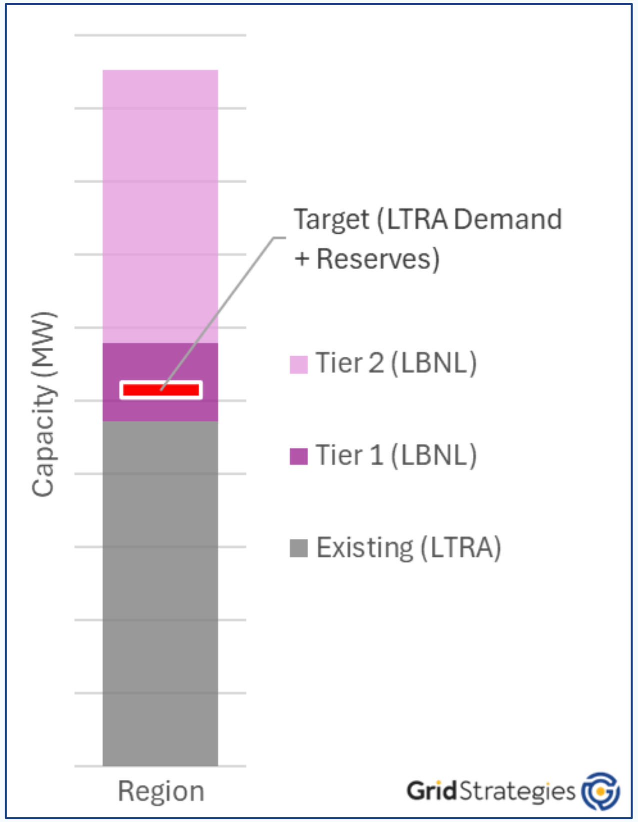
# Illustrative walkthrough of seasonal capacity slides

Replace the NERC LTRA resource capacity data with accredited LBNL interconnection queue data (purple) for comparison. Existing and target data is from LTRA and remains unchanged unless specified.

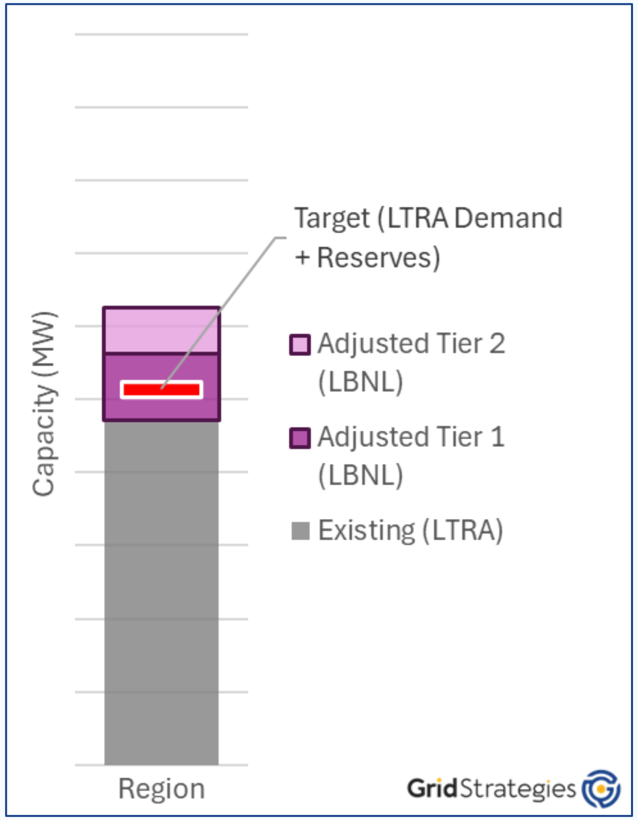
To avoid overcounting queue generation, the LBNL data is discounted based on regional- and study phase-specific withdraw rates.




Replace NERC data with resource-accredited LBNL data




Reduce LBNL data based on expected withdraws

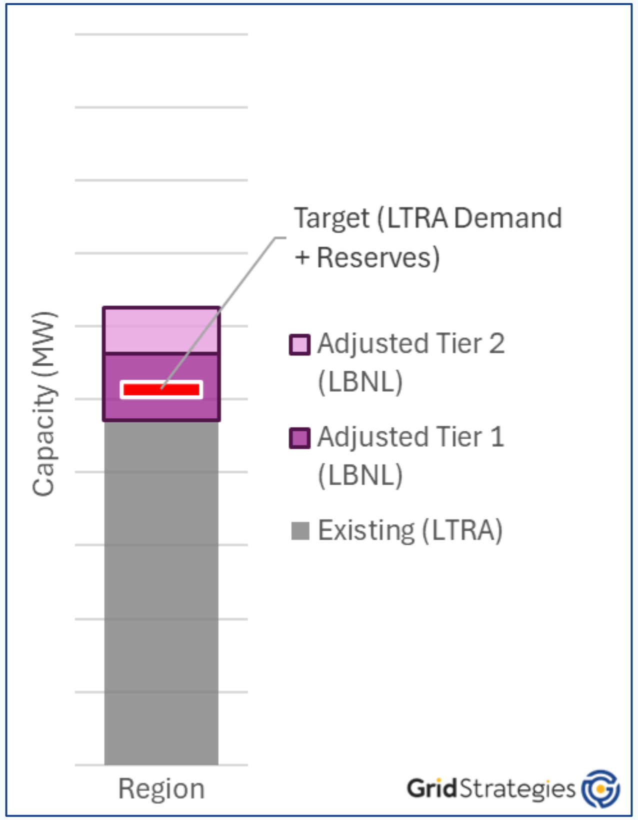



Note red highlight is removed because adequacy has been achieved

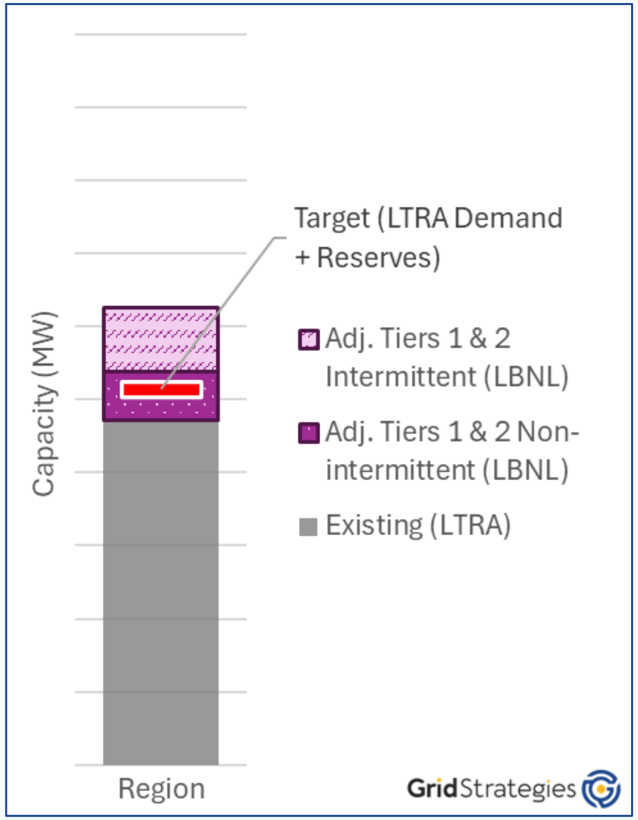
# Illustrative walkthrough of seasonal capacity slides

Analyze the LBNL resource data to gain insight into future capacity risk. Purple is still used for LBNL data while different bar borders or pattern are used to indicate interesting features of the data.

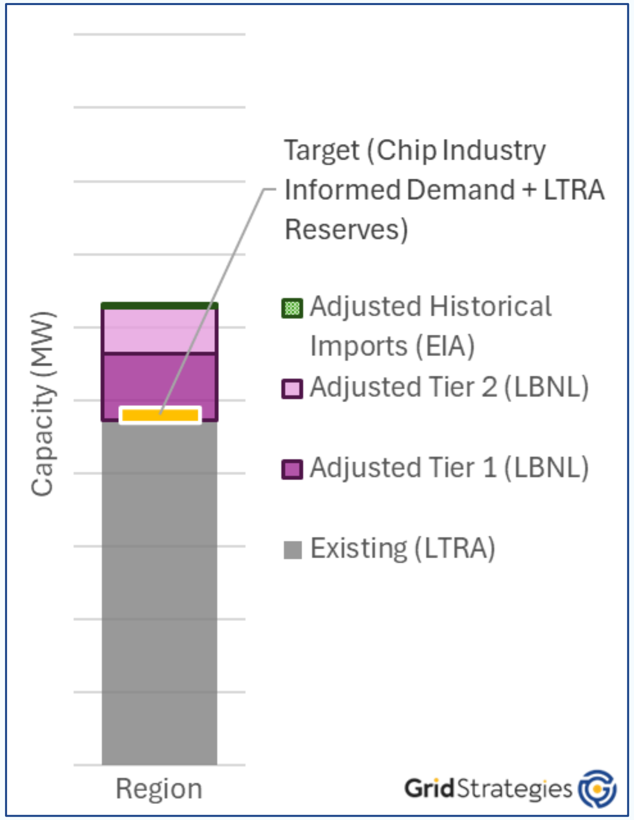
Interregional transfer capability data is adjusted using EIA data to better illustrate available capacity. In some cases, the expected load is changed to match demand forecasts from other sources.




Look at different features of LBNL data




Continue to add more data for analysis



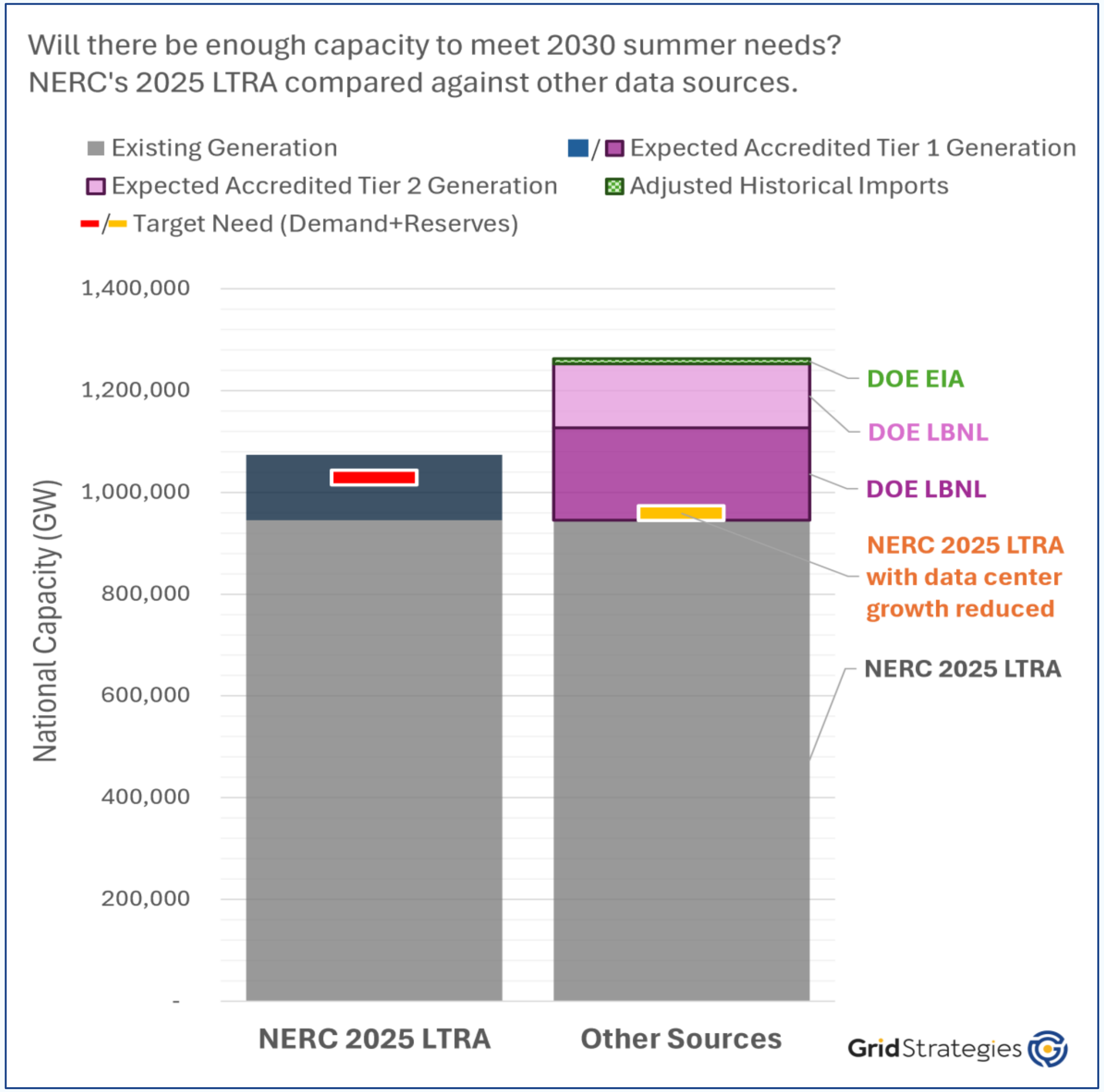
# Summary slide of seasonal capacity differences in 2030

On Slide 6, the comparison of NERC 2025 LTRA analysis against our analysis using other sources is meant as an illustrative comparison of the national risk given the use of different credible data sources.

The NERC 2025 LTRA bar was made by summing the forecasted 2030 summer load + reserves (target), existing generation, and Tier 1 data for each region directly from the NERC data.

The target value shown in “Other Sources” was created by applying a one third derate to known data center load growth in all regions. The one-third derate factor is the ratio of estimated data center growth in 2030 from chip shipments to the estimated growth from utility roll-ups as used by LTRA (Wilson, J., et al. 2025). Another one-third derate factor is from the assumption that many data centers are likely to use some form of on-site generation or storage to curtail their peak demand (Thomas, M., 2026). The known data center load growth is from Grid Strategies analysis of total system load growth that is attributable to data centers (Wilson, J., et al. 2025). The impact of this data center growth reduction scenario on individual regions is shown in slide 24.

The generation resources shown in “Other Sources” is the sum of resources available in the LBNL dataset that are reasonably expected to connect by 2030. Adjusted historical imports represent the non-firm imports that have been available during grid stress events from the Energy Information Administration. More detail on the other sources data is provided in subsequent slides.




SOURCE | NERC “2025 LTRA” (2026); NERC “ES&D” (2026); Wilson, J., et al. (2025); Thomas, M. (2026); Rand, J. et al. (2025); EIA, “About the EIA-930 data” (accessed Feb. 2026)

# Analysis using LBNL data: Regional assessment areas

The DOE's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory collects data from the generation interconnection queues for seven ISOs / RTOs and 49 non-ISO balancing areas (including utilities and Power Marketing Administrations), representing roughly 97% of currently installed U.S. generating capacity. This data is compiled annually with help from Interconnection.fyi and is posted for public view at emp.lbl.gov/queues. The 2025 dataset includes data through the end of 2024.

The 56 entities in the LBNL database were mapped to the NERC LTRA assessment areas by geography (maps to the right). The non-RTO utilities were mapped as follows:

**WECC California**
- LADWP
- SMUD
- WAPA-SN

**WECC Rocky Mtn**
- CLPT
- BHCT
- CSU
- PacifiCorp
- PRPA
- PSCo
- TSGT
- WAPA-RM

**WECC Northwest**
- Avista
- BHP
- BPA
- CPUD
- GrantPUD
- MPC
- NWMT
- PGE
- PSE
- TPU
- WAPA-IS

**WECC Basin**
- IdahoPower

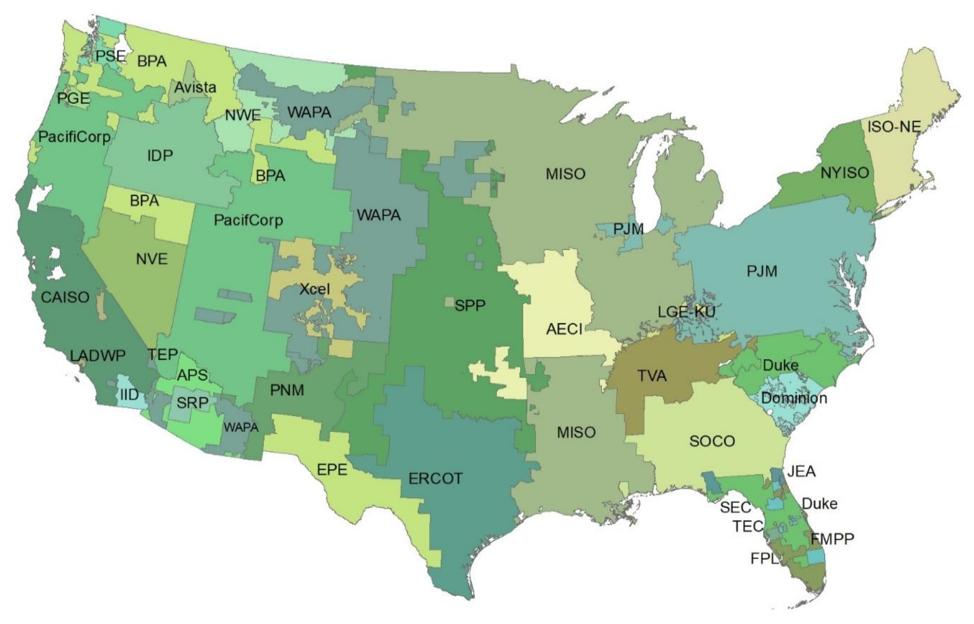
**WECC Southwest**
- APS
- EPE
- IID
- N-C
- NVE
- PNM
- SRP_ANPP
- SRP
- SRP_Gila
- SRP_PV-PC
- SRP_SWV
- TEP
- WAPA-DSW
- WAPA-MPP

**SERC Central**
- AEC
- LGE-KU
- TVA

**SERC Southeast**
- GTC
- SOCO

**SERC Florida**
- OUC
- TEC
- Duke (FL)

**SERC East**
- Dominion
- S-C
- Duke (non-FL)



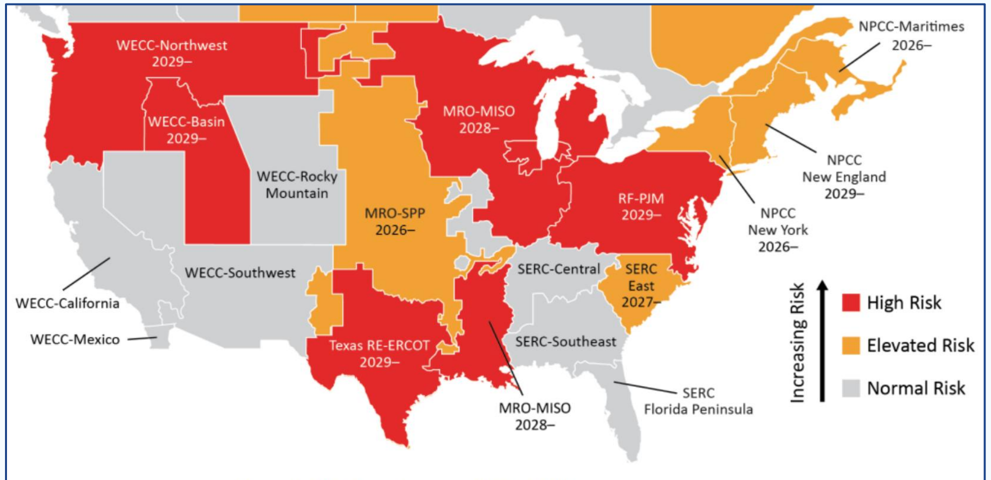




**Figure 1: Risk Area Summary 2026–2030**
Shows highest risk classification that occurs in the first 5 years and states initial year of occurrence

Grid Strategies

**SOURCE** | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026) and Rand, J. et al. (2025)

# Analysis of LBNL data: Generation tier status

LBNL interconnection data is organized by its queue status and study phase in the interconnection queues. Queue status refers to if the facility is completed, withdrawn, or actively progressing through the queues.

NERC organizes in-development generation resources by Tiers, where:

- Tier 1 are resources with executed interconnection agreements
- Tier 2 are any resource that is in the study process, and
- Tier 3 are those that have submitted interconnection requests but are not yet under study.

The cross-walk between LBNL's "Queue Status" and "IA Status Clean" fields and the NERC Tiers used in this analysis are shown to the right. Interconnection requests marked as Active in the Queue Status are organized into Tiers based on their IA Status.

Resources considered in to be in advanced Tier 2 status were those with either "IA Pending" or "Facility Study" status in the LBNL data. Suspended interconnection requests are considered Tier 2 because they have already completed some study phases but have paused their continuation of progress. Requests that un-pause often enter at the same study stage. Requests of Unknown or N/A status are considered Tier 3 because their existence in the database indicates an interconnection request has been made, but whether studies have begun cannot be said for sure.

| LBNL Queue Status | NERC Tier |
|---|---|
| Active | (see IA Status) |
| Withdrawn | Cancelled |
| Operational | Operational |
| Suspended | Tier 2 |
| Unknown | Tier 3 |

| LBNL IA Status Clean | NERC Tier |
|---|---|
| Withdrawn | Cancelled |
| Operational | Operational |
| IA Executed | Tier 1 |
| Construction | Tier 1 |
| IA Pending | Tier 2 |
| Facility Study | Tier 2 |
| Cluster Study | Tier 2 |
| System Impact Study | Tier 2 |
| Feasibility Study | Tier 2 |
| Combined | Tier 2 |
| In Progress (unknown study) | Tier 2 |
| Suspended | Tier 2 |
| Not Started | Tier 3 |
| N/A | Tier 3 |

# Analysis using LBNL data: Expected withdraw rates

To reduce the likelihood of overcounting generation resources that may not interconnect, we reduced all Tier 1 and 2 resource data in the LBNL queue dataset given region- and status-specific historic withdraw rates.

LBNL publishes the completion rates (as of 2024) of all resources in the regional queues that entered the queue between 2000 and 2019. The withdraw rates vary regionally between 64% and 85%. LBNL also provides information about the queue study phase that projects were in when they withdrew. In general, fewer projects withdraw once they reach advanced stages of the interconnection queue process.

Applying the regional withdraw rates to all generation without regard for its queue location would overly discount generation in Tier 1 and advanced Tier 2 status. Instead, we adjust the amount of generation that is expected to withdraw from each Tier separately. See illustrative figure to the bottom right.

We first calculate the total amount of expected regional withdraws by applying the appropriate withdraw rate to the sum of all Tiers 1, 2, and 3 generation in each region's queue. We assume that 15% of generation in Tier 1 status will withdraw, equivalent to the share of withdrawn requests between 2019 – 2023 in the IA executed phase from LBNL's analysis. Because no generation in Tier 3 is expected to interconnect by 2030, we assume 100% of Tier 3 generation withdraws for every region. The difference between the total amount of expected regional withdraws and that which is assumed to withdraw from Tiers 1 and 3 in each region is applied to the Tier 2 data.

**LBNL: Historical completion by region for requests submitted 2000-2019 (as of 2024)**

| Region | Active | Operational | Withdrawn |
|---|---|---|---|
| CAISO | 14% | 9% | 77% |
| ERCOT | 14% | 22% | 64% |
| ISO-NE | 8% | 18% | 74% |
| MISO | 9% | 15% | 76% |
| NYISO | 7% | 8% | 85% |
| PJM | 8% | 14% | 77% |
| SPP | 9% | 14% | 76% |
| Southeast | 5% | 9% | 85% |
| West | 13% | 9% | 79% |

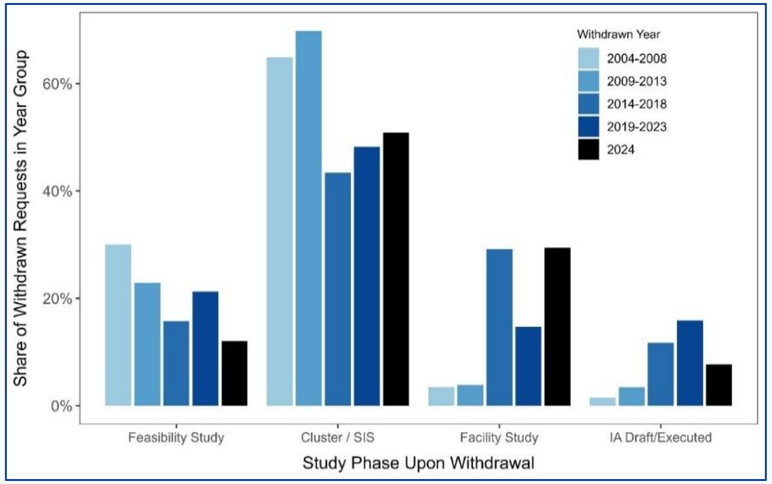
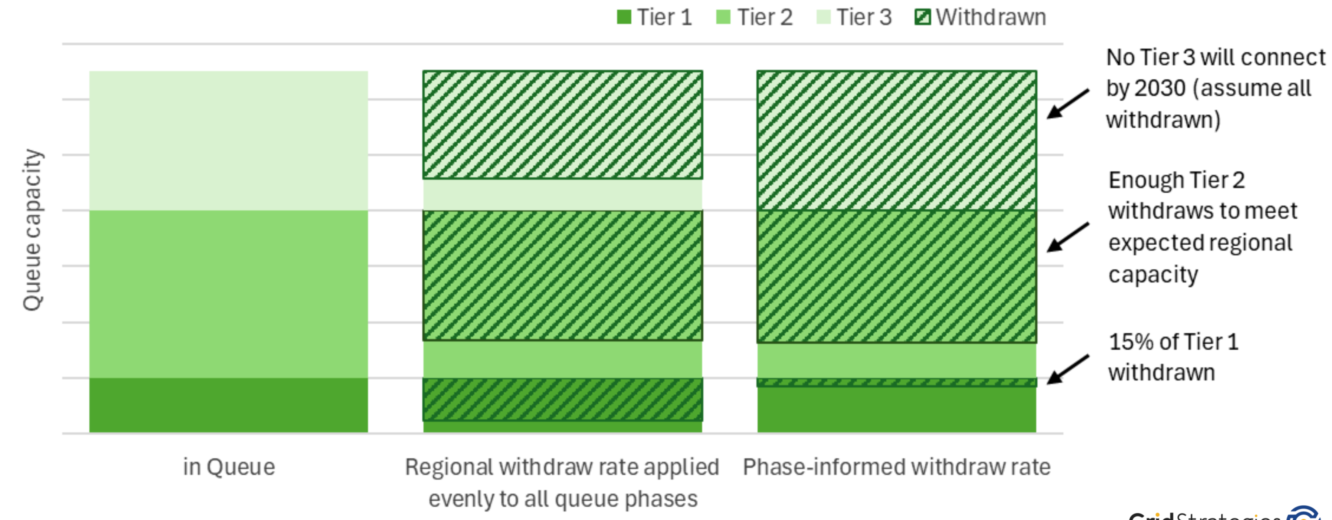



Illustration of two different methods to apply regional withdraw rates to interconnection queue data. The same amount of generation capacity withdraws in both methods.




Grid Strategies

SOURCE | Rand, J., et al. (2025)

# Analysis using LBNL data: Resource type

LBNL interconnection data is organized by generation resource type. When multiple resource types (e.g., gas and battery storage) are combined into one interconnection request, LBNL lists each resource type. The LBNL database includes a "type_clean" field, which summarizes all types of resources included in the interconnection entry.

These "clean" resource types are organized into a fewer number of categories in our analysis for simplicity. The cross-walk is provided in the two tables to the right.

| LBNL Clean Type | Resource Type |
|---|---|
| Battery | Battery |
| Offshore Wind+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Other+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Solar+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Solar+Other+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Solar+Wind+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Wind+Battery | Battery Hybrid |
| Geothermal | Geothermal |
| Solar+Other | Hybrid |
| Solar+Wind | Hybrid |
| Wind+Other | Hybrid |
| Hydro | Hydro |
| Offshore Wind | Offshore Wind |
| Other | Other |
| Hydrogen | Other Storage |
| Other Storage | Other Storage |
| Solar | Solar |
| Battery+Other Storage | Storage Hybrid |
| Other+Battery+Other Storage | Storage Hybrid |
| Solar+Battery+Other Storage | Storage Hybrid |
| Solar+Wind+Other Storage | Storage Hybrid |
| Wind | Wind |

| LBNL Clean Type | Resource Type |
|---|---|
| Coal | Coal |
| Gas+Battery | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas+Battery+Diesel | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas+Coal | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas+Diesel | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas+Oil | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas+Other | Firm Hybrid |
| Geothermal+Battery | Firm Hybrid |
| Hydro+Battery | Firm Hybrid |
| Oil+Battery | Firm Hybrid |
| Oil+Coal | Firm Hybrid |
| Oil+Other | Firm Hybrid |
| Other+Coal | Firm Hybrid |
| Other+Diesel | Firm Hybrid |
| Solar+Diesel | Firm Hybrid |
| Solar+Gas | Firm Hybrid |
| Solar+Gas+Battery | Firm Hybrid |
| Solar+Geothermal | Firm Hybrid |
| Solar+Hydro | Firm Hybrid |
| Wind+Gas | Firm Hybrid |
| Gas | Gas |
| Diesel | Oil |
| Oil | Oil |
| Nuclear | Nuclear |

# Analysis using LBNL data: Accredited capacity

No resource will produce electricity at its rated capacity ("nameplate") all the time. To account for this, regions apply an accredited value to a resource to indicate a percentage of the nameplate capacity that can be expected to perform during peak demand. The accredited value of a resource varies by fuel type, season, year, and geographic location.

Each region calculates accredited capacity differently. Some consider historic forced outages of a resource type (which tend to overestimate availability) while others use modeling tools to determine how much load a resource can be expected to carry in future years given numerous system dynamics.

The LBNL interconnection queue database provides nameplate values for all generators in the queues. To ensure only a reasonable amount of new resources are accounted for in our analysis, we seasonally accredit each resource type based on the region-specific method used locally for resource accreditation. If a region does not use seasonal or resource-specific accreditation, a neighboring region's method is used.

Unless otherwise noted:

- Battery Hybrid resources are equivalent to battery resources' accredited values
- Firm Hybrid resources are the average of firm resources' accredited values
- Hybrid resources are the average of wind and solar resources' accredited values
- Other resources are the average of any remaining resources' accredited values not otherwise listed

| Region | Accreditation Method & Source | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| MISO | 2025-2026 DLOL | Summer & winter values. Battery resource uses storage (blended) and storage hybrid uses pumped storage DLOL. MISO values are also used for all other regions' resources that are not otherwise noted. |
| SPP | ELCC for Summer 2026 | Summer values for battery (6-hr), solar, and wind resources. Values also used for WECC-Basin & CAISO summer battery. |
| SPP | ELCC for Winter 24/25 | Winter values for battery (6-hr), solar, and wind resources. Values also used for WECC-Basin & CAISO summer battery. |
| SPP | 25/26 EFORd | Summer & winter values used for all non variable resources. Oil and other resources are RICE with on-site storage, gas is CC. Values also used for ERCOT other; WECC summer other storage. |
| ISO-NE | CAR-SA: Impact Analysis 1/14/26 | Summer & winter values. Used for solar, wind, and hydro resources |
| ISO-NE | 2025 Capacity, Energy, Loads, and Transmission (CELT) Report | Summer & winter values. CELT used for battery, battery hybrid, coal, gas, nuclear, offshore wind, oil, other, and other (pumped) storage resources. |
| NYISO | 2025-2026 Final Capacity Accreditation Factors | Summer values used for both seasons. Rest of state values used for battery (6-hour), hydro, offshore wind, other, other storage (pumped storage), solar, wind. |
| NYISO | 2024 Review of EFORd | Summer & winter values. NYCA values used for coal (steam turbine), gas (CC), nuclear (steam turbine), oil (jet engine). NYISO values are also used for SERC-E summer battery and summer wind. |
| PJM | 2027/2028 ELCC Class Ratings | Summer values used for both seasons for all resources. Battery is 6-hour CSR, battery hybrid is configuration 3, gas is CC, other is waste-to-energy, other storage is other unlimited resources, solar is fixed-tilt, storage hybrid is configuration 1. PJM values also used for SERC-E hydro, nuclear, oil, other, and other storage resources. |
| ERCOT | 25/29 CDR | Summer & winter values for battery (6-hr), other storage (12-hr), solar, and wind. Values also used for SERC-FP and SERC-SE battery. |
| SERC | 2025 CRP Chapter 3 | Winter values used for both seasons. 2030 Reference case used for battery (standalone BESS), battery hybrid (synergistic BESS), offshore wind (avg. ELCC for first 800MW), solar (avg. ELCC for first 10 GW of standalone), wind (avg. ELCC for DEP and DEC for first 300 MW). |
| SERC | 2023 Wind ELCC Study | Average ELCC of 5GW and 15GW standalone solar used for all SERC regions' summer solar. |
| Southwest | E3 2023 Resource Adequacy in the Desert Southwest | 2033 values also used for WECC regions' winter battery, summer hydro, summer nuclear, winter and summer wind (unless otherwise stated). |
| Northwest | E3 2025 Resource Adequacy and the Energy Transition in the Pacific Northwest: Phase 1 Results | Winter values for Greater Northwest used for WECC regions' gas, other storage, solar, wind (unless otherwise stated). |
| Northwest | E2 2019 Resource Adequacy in the Pacific Northwest | Winter values for 2030 Reference scenario used for WECC regions' coal, geothermal, hydro, nuclear (unless otherwise stated). |
| CAISO | 2026 Net Qualifying Capacity (NQC) for RA Resources | Summer and winter values used for CAISO geothermal, hydro, other (biomass), solar, wind. Values also used for other WECC regions' other, solar, hydro and geothermal (unless otherwise stated). |
| National | NREL VRE ELCC Study | Median offshore wind used for SERC-FP (SERC), ERCOT, WECC-NW (NorthernGrid), CAISO |

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# Adding historically available interregional transfer capability to the seasonal capability analysis

The EIA historical imports included in the charts on slides 16 and 29 take the difference between the historical import availability (2015 and 2025) from the U.S. EIA Form 930 data and the 2030 firm import assumptions in the LTRA. The last column subtracts imports from demand in all peak hours over the last decade and shows the minimum reduction in in-region generation due to imports.

For New York, an additional 1,250 MW of import availability was added to the EIA Form 930 data to account for the energization of the Champlain Hudson Power Express transmission line.

**Comparison of on-peak net imports in four regions as assumed by LTRA against actual, in MW. Exports are negative.**

| | LTRA 2026 Assumption | LTRA 2030 Assumption | Historical Availability (2015-2025) |
|---|---|---|---|
| MISO | 2,809 | 2,509 | 5,344 |
| SPP | -18 | -78 | 1,421 |
| ISONE* | 567 | 84 | 2,464 |
| NYISO | 3,405 | 3,486 | 2,730† |
| PJM | 3,840 | 0 | 2,937‡ |

*Data for New England (ISONE) predates completion of the 1200 MW New England Clean Energy Connect with Hydro Quebec, so on-peak imports will likely be higher going forward.

† EIA data for New York does not include the Champlain Hudson Power Express, a 1,250 MW line connecting Quebec to New York City that is slated for completion in 2026. Once that is included, NYISO imports should be roughly in line with the LTRA.

‡ The EIA data show PJM was exporting during most peak demand periods over the last decade, so it is not possible to estimate the historical availability of imports for PJM. PJM administratively sets its capacity benefit of ties (non-firm imports) at 1.5% of nameplate generation procured in the capacity market, calculated here as 1.5% for 195,831 MW in the 2025/2026 Base Residual Auction. In its 2023 reserve margin analysis, PJM calculated 6,474 MW in total diversity benefit with its neighbors, much higher than the capacity benefit of ties shown in the table.



**SOURCE |** EIA, "About the EIA-930 data" (accessed Feb. 2026); PJM, "2025/26 Base Residual Auction Report" (2024); Brooks, A. et al. (2025)

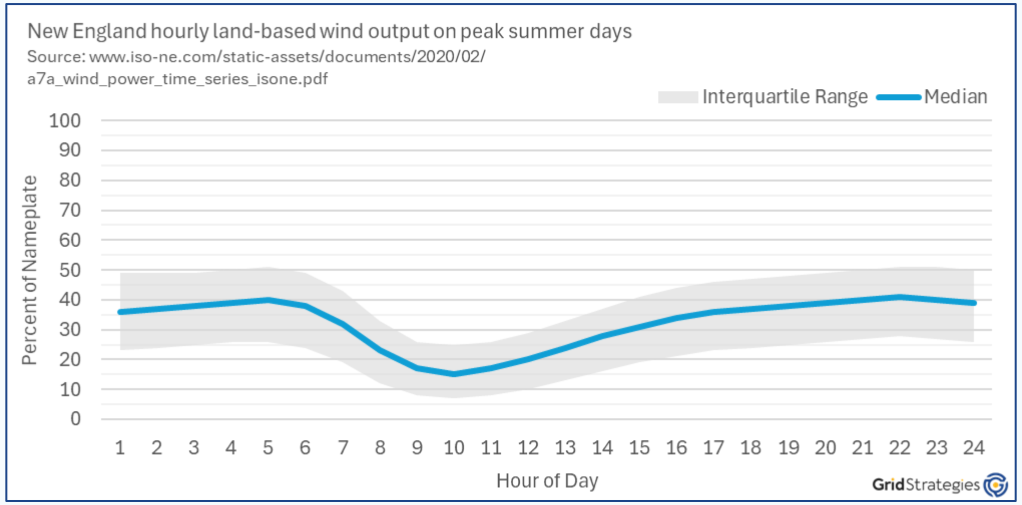
# Analysis using LBNL data: New England wind and solar production

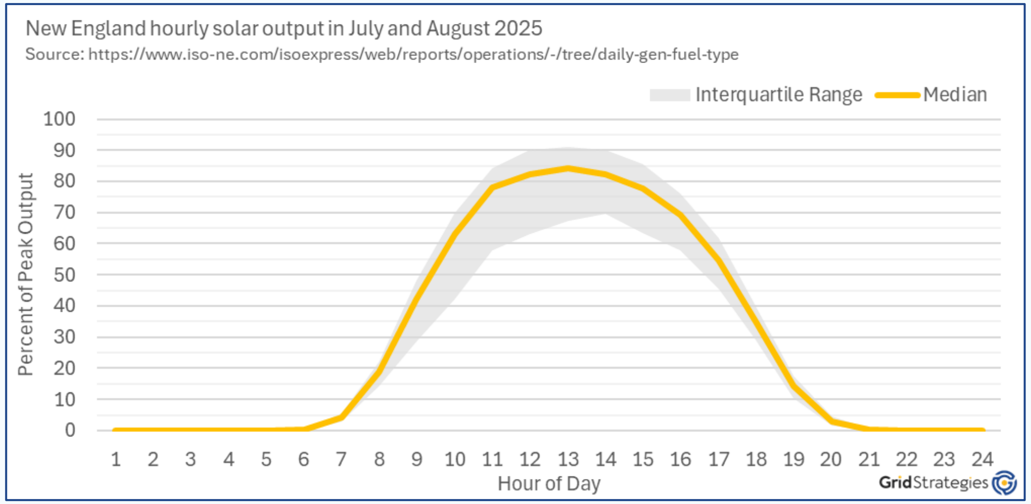
In order to use LBNL data for energy analysis for New England, we compare the amount of Tier 1 and Tier 2 LBNL data against NERC (slide 46). This required an understanding of the generation output in New England during summer months for different resource types.

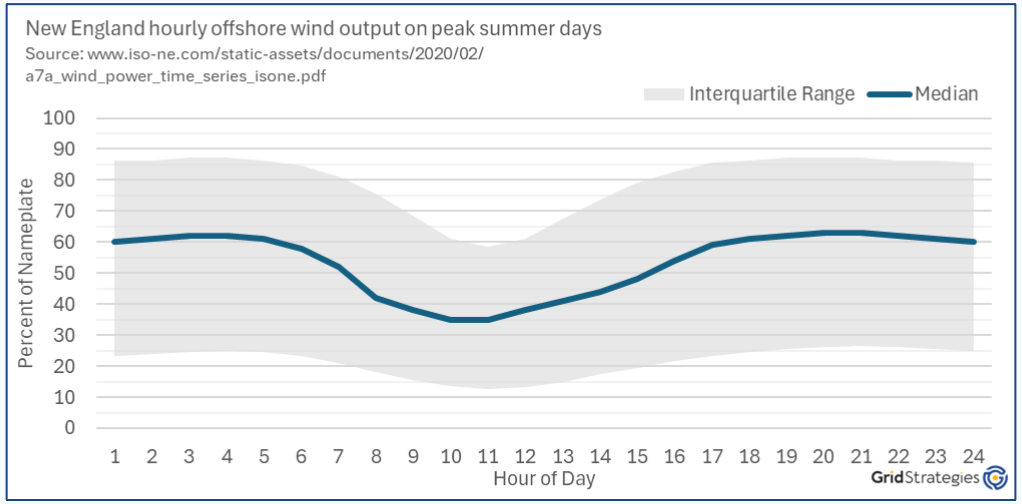
On the right are the hourly median and interquartile range for wind and offshore wind production in New England during peak demand days. This data was collected between 2012 and 2018 by ISONE to help them understand wind output during times of grid stress.

Also shown is the median and interquartile range for average hourly solar output in July and August of 2025, also from data collected by ISONE.

The hourly median data was used to estimate the output of both land-based and offshore wind in New England during peak summer 2029.

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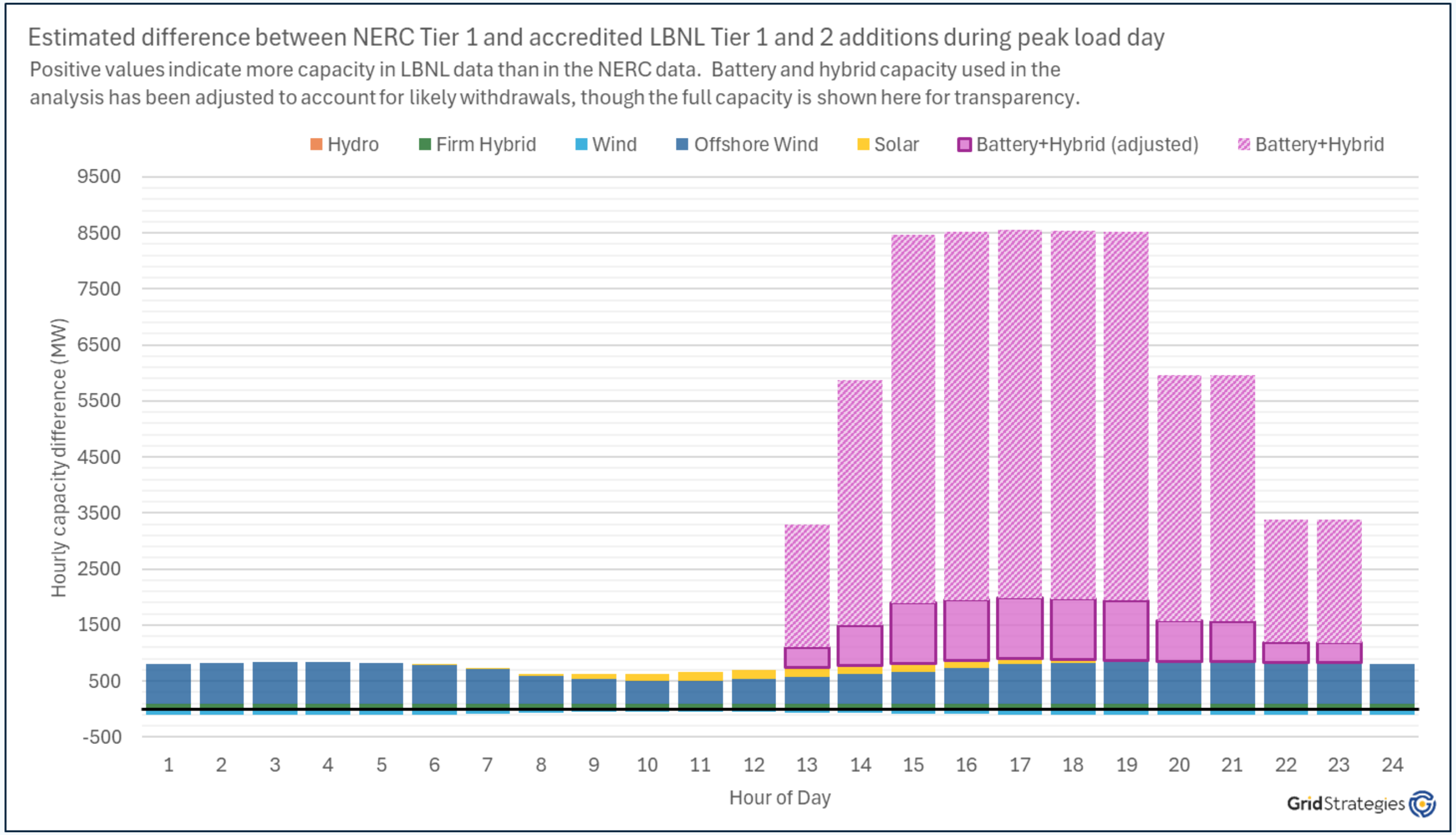
**SOURCE** | Judd, S. "Wind and Power Time Series Modeling of ISO-NE Wind Plants" (2020); ISONE "2025 Hourly Solar Generation" (2026)

# Analysis using LBNL data: New England hourly production

Shown here is the potential change in hourly energy output for New England on peak load days given the different resource mixes between the LBNL and NERC data. Positive values indicate LBNL recorded more capacity for that resource type while negative values indicate NERC recorded more capacity.

As explained on slide 45, we adjusted the hourly production of each resource type to match expected peak day behavior, given regional resource accreditation methods. Battery and battery hybrid resources are expected to discharge at partial capacity for all hours of unserved energy, modulating their output so that no one resource discharges for longer than 6 hours. Given the large quantity of battery and hybrid resources in the LBNL data, these resources were additionally discounted by the historic withdraw rate of the region.

Given the data available, we cannot replicate the energy inadequacy analysis presented in the LTRA exactly. We provide this rough estimate to understand how different generation assumptions would impact unserved energy results.

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SOURCE | NERC "2025 LTRA" (2026); NERC "2024 LTRA" (2025); NERC "ES&D" (2026); Rand, J. et al. (Aug. 2025)