SEEA ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

Charting the Demand-Side Energy Transition

Executive Summary

From Vision to Velocity · June 1–4, 2026 · Reston, VA



In early June 2026, more than 60 leaders from across the Southeast's demand-side energy ecosystem gathered in Reston, Virginia for SEEA's Annual Member Meeting. They came not for a conference, but for a two-and-a-half-day working session built around a single question: *how does this network help the energy transition happen well, and for the benefit of all in this region?* Over three days, the room moved from imagining a shared future to committing to concrete, collaborative projects. This recap captures what was created, and why it matters to the broader industry.

The Working Session: A Three-Day Arc

The meeting was designed as a divergent-to-convergent journey, opening wide to surface what matters most, then narrowing to a select few priorities worth building together.

DAY 1
Charting the Transition
Build shared context, surface perspectives, and name the region's "north stars."

DAY 2
From Naming to Making
Move from naming challenges to forming collaborative projects.

DAY 3
Momentum
Decide what each of us will do — alone and together.

Day 1 — Charting the Energy Transition

The first day opened by imagining the future members are actually working toward, then setting direction on the outcomes worth chasing together. Five “north star” themes emerged for the region:

- A region that leads the transition — recognized nationally as a model for a well-managed, equitable energy transition.
- Customers and communities at the center — affordability, access, and benefit across residential, LMI, commercial, and industrial customers.
- A modernized, flexible grid — demand-side resources, storage, and coordinating technologies woven into how the region plans and operates.
- A network that moves together — collaboration over competition, solving what none could alone.
- A future-ready energy workforce — skills, training pipelines, and next-generation talent keeping pace with demand.

In a direction-setting exercise, members weighed twenty illustrative goals. Weatherizing homes drew the most energy by far, with the broadest cross-constituency backing. Yet the group didn’t simply advance the most popular outcome. Instead, members converged on the two conditions that unlock nearly everything else:

- Workforce and contractor capacity — the trade-ally network and demand-side workforce that turns program design into actual installs.
- A regional narrative shift — so demand-side resources are routinely referenced alongside supply-side options in utility integrated resource plans and legislative testimony.

Where the energy concentrated

Illustrative direction	Who showed up
Weatherize & pre-weatherize LMI homes	Broad, across the membership
Build & credential the demand-side workforce	Utilities & implementers
Mobilize public & private capital	Implementers, state offices, manufacturers
Multi-state DSR procurement framework	Broad, across the membership

These were illustrative prompts used to spark concrete action — not commitments.



The direction-setting dot vote — where members marked the goals that mattered most.

Participants can interact with the entirety of the small group conversations that led to the prioritized direction, including the ability to chat with the report and underlying data.

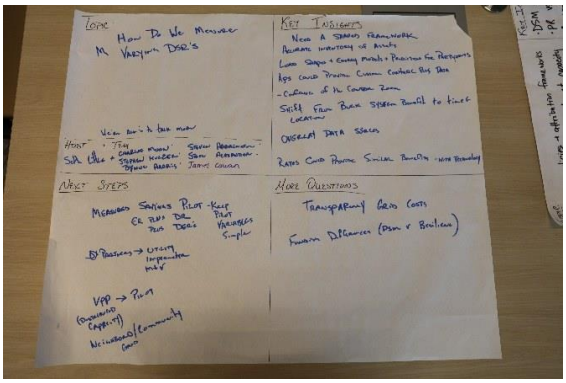
Narrowing the Field of Needs →

A mapping exercise across six lenses (policy, customer, program design, technology, workforce, and finance) surfaced the network's sense of identity: a "build zone" of work members can deliver themselves (program design, grid-edge technology, customer engagement), and a "collective-leverage zone" (policy, capital, workforce) where no single member can move alone, but the region can if it moves together.

Day 2 — From Naming to Making: Priority Projects

Day 2 turned direction into things people could actually build. After an inversion exercise that flipped "how could we make this fail?" into fresh possibilities, members proposed seven concepts, then focused on the five where shared energy ran deepest. Every one is an outcome no single organization could deliver alone:

1. **Workforce Development —** a sustainable, regional model for building and retaining demand-side talent and careers. First step: a regional stakeholder taskforce and a pilot with champions.
2. **Regional Technical Reference Manual (TRM) —** shared, Southeast-tailored measurement and program-design guidance that helps states without a TRM and reduces fragmentation. First step: members share the TRMs they use today.
3. **DSM + Hyperscalers —** attribution frameworks for data-center operators to help fund and meet capacity needs through demand-side management on the existing grid. First step: one utility and one hyperscaler to prove the mechanism.
4. **Regional Shared Education Resources —** common customer-education and marketing tools that make demand-side management familiar and accessible at scale. First step: assemble a core team and pool isolated efforts.
5. **Measuring DSRs —** a consistent regional approach to measuring and valuing the full range of demand-side resources. First step: a simple measured-savings pilot with utility, implementer, and M&V partners.



A Pro-Action Café working chart from the priority-project session.

To close the second day, each priority project named specific actions and sequenced them onto a shared 2026–2027 roadmap. It's less a finished plan than a set of owned starting points.

Participants can interact with the entirety of this three round conversation here, including the ability to chat with the report and underlying data.

Three Rounds of Conversation →

(There's also the opportunity to listen to an AI generated podcast summarizing the three rounds – a podcast that made the entire room laugh and groan for its awkward and overly dramatic voicing.)

Day 3 — Momentum: What We're Taking Back

SEEA will coordinate the start-up of working groups, then lead project scoping and the sourcing of funding for the work and pilots designed.

Members interested in lending time, expertise, or funding can connect with a project host or SEEA to join a kickoff. Progress will be revisited at the Southeast Energy Summit, November 16–18 in Biloxi, MS.

Why the Network Is the Differentiator



One theme ran through every session: SEEA is positioned as the one network able to convene across stakeholder types regionally — a trusted, neutral space where utilities, regulators, manufacturers, and implementers can name what's broken and turn that candor into shared solutions. As the region confronts fast-ramping data-center load, affordability pressure, and the push to treat demand-side resources as dispatchable infrastructure, the meeting made the value of membership concrete: this is where the people who rarely sit at the same table build what none of them could alone.

This is what a working network looks like when it stops talking and starts building — and it's why a seat at this table is worth having.

The 2026 Annual Member Meeting was made possible by host ICF, co-host TVA, and a generous roster of sponsors across the Southeast.