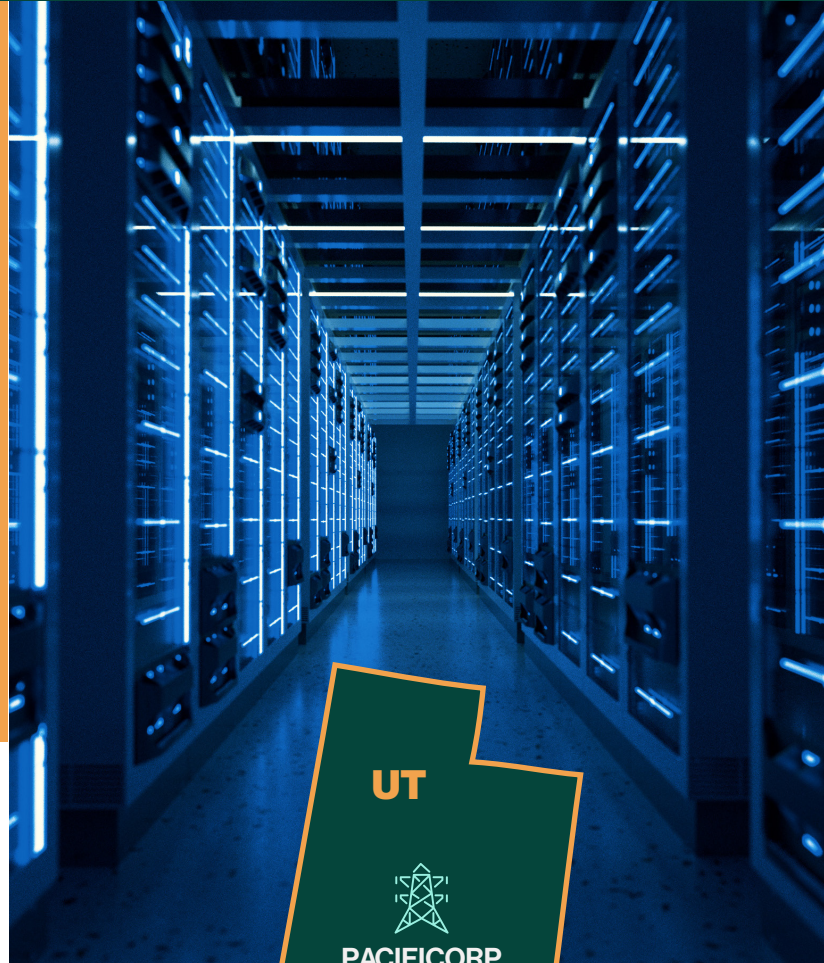


Seemingly overnight, artificial intelligence is now built into everything from iPhones and Google searches to online services like Amazon. As entire industries work to adapt to the sweeping change of AI, data centers — the buildings that serve as the engines of AI and cloud computing — pose explosive demands on Colorado’s energy and water.

KEY FINDINGS

- The collective annual energy demands of the utilities in WRA’s region are projected to be **55% higher in 2035**. This equates to an annual growth rate of 4.5% over the next decade.
- The growth projected in just the **next five years** surpasses the current system of electricity production – that took a century or more to build.
- If projections of data center load growth become reality, these new facilities in the Interior West could have an annual on-site water use of **21,600 acre-feet (7 billion gallons) in 2035**. This amount of water can serve the annual needs of up to 194,400 individuals.



PACIFICORP

PacifiCorp published an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) in 2023, an IRP Update in April 2024, and an IRP in 2025. Across those three filings, PacifiCorp’s load forecast has changed considerably. In its 2025 IRP, PacifiCorp excluded data center loads from its primary modeling effort but modeled a data center sensitivity to determine the resources needed if all potential data center interconnection requests materialize.

- The incremental additional data center load is approximately 6,000 megawatts in 2030 and 7,000 megawatts in 2035.
- PacifiCorp forecasts the need to add the following resources by 2038 in order to meet this potential load growth, in addition to the resources added under PacifiCorp’s preferred plan: 2,354 megawatts of methane gas peaking units; 3,872 megawatts of utility scale wind; 5,993 megawatts of utility scale solar; and 9,650 megawatts of additional energy storage.



**11% higher in 2030
(3.6-million-megawatt
hour increase)**

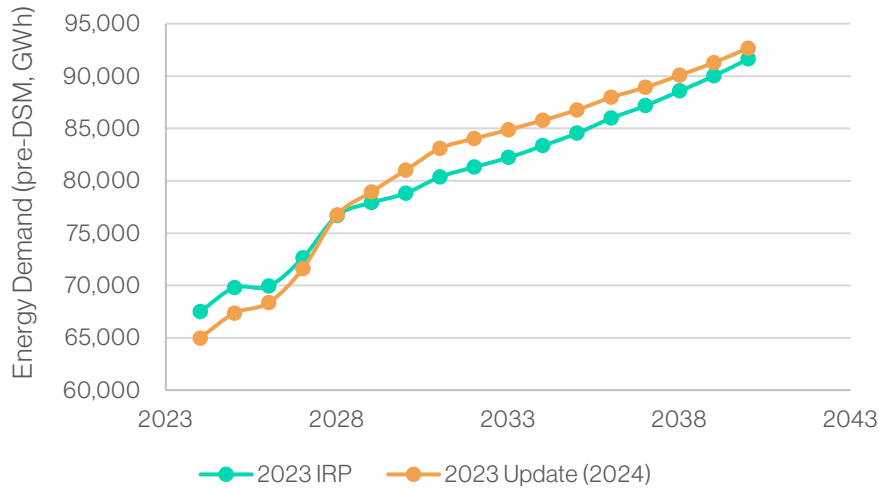
Increase in PacifiCorp’s annual energy demand forecast for Utah in the 2024 update, compared with the 2023 IRP forecast.



**8% increase
(511 megawatts)**

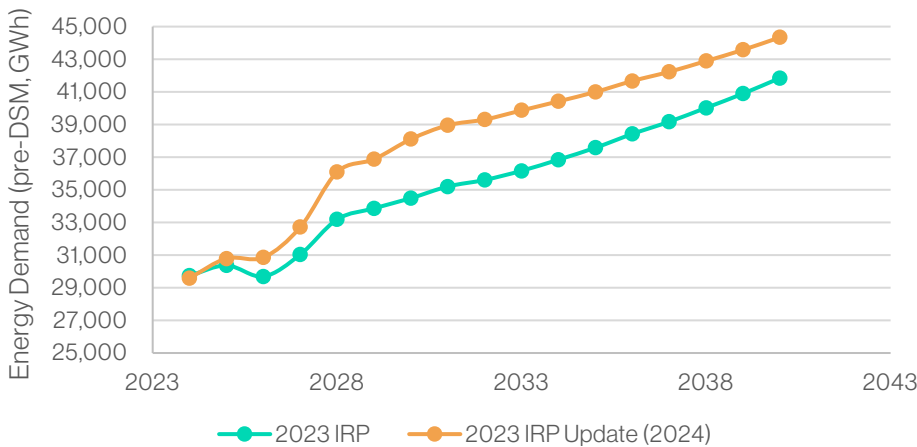
PacifiCorp’s projected peak demand in Utah in 2030.

Annual Energy Demand, PacifiCorp



PacifiCorp's annual energy demands under the base case load forecast in the 2023 IRP and the 2023 IRP Update, which was published in 2024.

Annual Energy Demand, PacifiCorp's Utah Service Territory



Annual energy demand in PacifiCorp's Utah service territory under the base case load forecast in the 2023 IRP and the 2023 IRP Update, which was published in 2024.

As AI usage increases and data centers expand, we must meet new energy demands with clean energy and rapidly decarbonize the rest of our energy infrastructure, while also understanding the impact these centers have on our already stretched water supplies in Utah.

We need policies that advance clean energy, preserve scarce water resources, and protect electricity customers. With the right policies in place, data centers can catalyze investments in innovative clean energy resources while driving broader system transformation.

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Access WRA's
full report.