



August 2023

Welcome to this month's issue of **Solar Newsbriefs**, brought to you by the Washington State University Energy Program. Please feel free to forward this issue to those of your colleagues interested in solar energy. For archives of past *Solar Newsbriefs*, visit

<http://www.energy.wsu.edu/solarnewsbriefs.aspx>

Oregon News

Affordable Housing Community Saves and Serves with Solar

How can affordable multifamily housing construction projects keep costs in check and still include solar? The Housing Authority of Jackson County discovered a way to make it happen... After HAJC successfully installed a small solar array at a property in 2019, they were enthusiastic about including something slightly bigger at their new development, the Freedom Square II multifamily complex in White City—Energy Trust of Oregon, Blog, June 29, 2023: <https://blog.energytrust.org/affordable-housing-community-saves-and-serves-with-solar/>

Cattle Agrivoltaics on US Ranch

Bear Valley Solar will deploy 240 kW of the 1.5 MW cattle-sited solar field pasture this year, with the first phase of construction ramping up this summer, developer David McFeeters-Krone tells **pv magazine USA**... David McFeeters-Krone, a founder of Rute Foundations and developer of a cattle farming agrivoltaics project in eastern Oregon, told **pv magazine USA** that his development, Bear Valley Solar Pasture, LLC, is currently engaged with a fourth-generation cattle grazer in Grant County, Oregon. The project is receiving oversight from Oregon State University's agrivoltaics program for land use management, water and soil studies on the farm's site—Michael Schoeck, *pv magazine*, June 30, 2023: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2023/06/30/beef-cattle-agrivoltaics-on-an-oregon-family-ranch/>

Bonneville Power Plans Transmission Upgrades to Connect 6 GW of Solar, Wind

The federally owned Bonneville Power Administration is “moving forward” with transmission projects budgeted at \$1.35 billion, with expected completion between 2025 and 2032, the utility said... If all the projects are built, they would provide 6 GW of additional capacity on BPA's transmission network... The planned transmission projects would upgrade existing BPA transmission lines that carry power from east of the Cascade Mountains to the Puget Sound area and Portland—William Driscoll, *pv magazine*, July 28, 2023: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2023/07/28/bonneville-power-plans-transmission-upgrades-to-connect-6-gw-of-solar-wind/>

Oregon Solar Incentives and Tax Credits (2023)

Oregon may not sound ideal for solar power due to its often cloudy and rainy weather. However, the state has experienced remarkable growth in solar installations. According to the [Solar Energy Industries Association \(SEIA\)](#), its eco-conscious culture has led to an investment of \$2.4 billion in renewable energy as of July 2023—Jessica Wimmer, *Architectural Digest*, July 26, 2023:

<https://www.architecturaldigest.com/reviews/solar/solar-incentives-oregon>

Solar Farm and Sheep Ranching Proposed for Linn County Site

An “agrivoltaic” solar facility on 1,588 acres in the Willamette Valley aims to defuse the conflict between renewable energy and farmland preservation, but it’s still sparking concerns.

Controversy Sparked by 1,588-Acre Oregon “Dual Use” Solar Project—Mateusz Perkowski, *Capital Press* republished in *The Bulletin*, July 27, 2023:

https://www.bendbulletin.com/localstate/environment/solar-farm-and-sheep-ranching-proposed-for-linn-county-site/article_525880b6-cf56-5d19-a23b-76a3569c212d.html

Oregon Solar + Storage Rebate Program will continue with Additional \$10 Million

The Oregon Department of Energy’s popular [Oregon Solar + Storage Rebate Program](#) will continue providing rebates for solar or solar and paired energy storage systems after an additional \$10 million investment by the Oregon Legislature... The program, which provides rebates to homeowners and organizations that serve Oregonians with low incomes, first launched in January 2020—Oregon Department of Energy, [Press Release], July 26, 2023:

<https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2023/7/26/oregon-solar-storage-rebate-program-will-continue-with-additional-10-million-investment> [Click here to see Oregon Solar + Storage Rebate Program Flyer.](#)

Washington News

First of Several Yakima County Solar Projects Ready to Start Construction

Four solar projects have been approved for the State Route 24 corridor of northeast Yakima County, and one of them is beginning construction this summer. Three others are expected to be built sometime next year... The Goose Prairie Solar Project has entered its construction phase, said Cody Burttschell of Brookfield Renewables, the site’s developer and operator—Joel Donofrio, *Yakima Herald-Republic*, July 5, 2023: <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2023/jul/05/first-of-several-yakima-county-solar-projects-read/>

Solar Development Maps: Where is there Less Conflict?

Not everyone loves renewable energy development, but a new project in Washington – and an upcoming project in Oregon – hope to pinpoint places where building solar farms should cause less conflict... More renewable energy projects will soon pop up – so Oregon and Washington can meet their carbon-free electricity goals. But where should all those projects go?—Courtney Flatt, KNKX NPR Network, July 15, 2023: <https://www.knkx.org/2023-07-15/new-maps-highlight-good-sites-for-solar-farms-but-with-less-conflict>

WSU: 'Very Small Area' with Low Conflicts over Solar

A Washington State University study identified 6.8 million acres in Eastern Washington as “highly suitable” for solar projects, but only 212,000 of those acres would have “low conflicts” with agriculture

or conservation... The sites with the least conflict are largely near cities, such as Kennewick, Moses Lake, Walla Walla and Yakima—Don Jenkins, *East Oregonian*, July 12, 2023:

https://www.eastoregonian.com/news/business/wsu-very-small-area-with-low-conflicts-over-solar/article_02a3a46f-b266-5fca-af12-35558c92595c.html

Washington Solar Incentives and Tax Credits (2023)

The Evergreen State has nearly \$1.5 billion invested in solar energy, according to the [Solar Energy Industries Association](#), and state incentives inspire more Washington residents to switch to renewable energy every year—Jessica Wimmer, *Architectural Digest*, July 20, 2023:

<https://www.architecturaldigest.com/reviews/solar/solar-incentives-washington>

DOE Partners With 9 Island and Remote Communities to Boost Resilience and Plan for Low-Cost Renewable Energy Systems

Unreliable power, lack of robust connections to mainstream power grids, and threats from strengthening storms are among the energy challenges faced by remote and island communities. Today, the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) [Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project \(ETIPP\)](#) is [announcing](#) nine new projects with remote and island communities building local energy systems that are sustainable, resilient, and reliable year-round.... Two partners included located in Washington State:

- **Nooksack Tribe, Washington**

The Nooksack Tribe sits at the end of power distribution lines in Deming, Washington, where it experiences frequent winter power outages that require emergency shelters. The community will conduct strategic energy planning to explore renewable and resilient energy technologies, including battery storage, microgrids, electric vehicle charging stations, and wind generators. The tribe will use their plan to prioritize renewable energy projects and pursue grant funding, with an aim to combat prolonged power outages.

- **Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Washington**

In Northwest Washington, the S'Klallam Tribe is often isolated from other communities by storms that take out power lines and wash out their single road for utility repair crews' access. The tribe will conduct energy planning, assessing their local energy resources, setting energy goals, identifying energy projects, and increasing the capacity of their staff to address the community's energy needs.

U.S. DOE, EERE, *Bulletin*, July 25, 2023:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEERE/bulletins/36714c5>

WA Site Once Dedicated to Powering Nuclear Weapons May Soon Generate Clean Energy

The Department of Energy is proposing leasing some never-used land at the [Hanford nuclear reservation site](#) in Eastern Washington for clean energy production.... Developments could include solar, wind, nuclear energy, hydroelectric, geothermal, clean hydrogen, and fossil resources that meet clean energy requirements through carbon capture and storage, DOE said on Tuesday—Annette Cary, *yahoo!finance* (originally published in the *Tri-City Herald*, electric vehicle charging stations, and the use of non-toxic materials and finishes throughout—Annette Cary, *Tri-City Herald* (republished Yahoo

Finance), July 25, 2023: <https://ca.finance.yahoo.com/news/hanford-land-wa-leased-wind-182819789.html>

Washington Mass Timber Library Unites Divided Communities; Achieves Sustainability

A public library in La Conner in Skagit County, Washington, formed a project-altering partnership with the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, while the cross-laminated timber (CLT) structure of the library contributed to the project's sustainability outcomes... Other sustainable design strategies include extensive use of daylighting, onsite power generation with a rooftop photovoltaic (PV) system, a highly efficient building envelope and HVAC system, electric vehicle charging stations, and the use of non-toxic materials and finishes throughout—*The Construction Specifier*, July 25, 2023:

<https://www.constructionspecifier.com/washington-mass-timber-library-patches-differences-achieves-sustainability/>

This New Program Flips the Way We Find Land for Turbines and Solar Panels in Rural WA

The passage of the Clean Energy Transformation Act in 2019 was a watershed moment for Washington State... The landmark bill charts a path to 100% clean electricity by 2045, slashing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the growth of renewable energy sources like solar... The landmark bill charts a path to 100% clean electricity by 2045, slashing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the growth of renewable energy sources like solar—Deborah Jensen, *Tri-City Herald*, republished *Yahoo News*, July 28, 2023: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/program-flips-way-land-turbines-174538668.html>

Puget Sound Energy Fishline Food Bank and Comprehensive Services Celebrate New Solar Array

The panels are installed, solar energy is flowing and the ribbon is ready to be cut at Fishline Food Bank & Comprehensive Services' new solar array, funded through Puget Sound Energy's Green Power and Solar Choice programs... The \$100,000 granted to Fishline [earlier this year](#) was used to purchase the 29kW solar array, which not only reduces Fishline's carbon footprint, but also reduces its operating costs. This installation will generate an estimated 31,000-kilowatt hours annually, replacing an estimated 35 percent of Fishline's annual electricity use with solar energy—Puget Sound Energy, [Press Release], July 31, 2023: <https://www.pse.com/en/press-release/details/Puget-Sound-Energy-Fishline-Food-Bank-and-Comprehensive-Services-celebrate-new-solar-array>

National News

DOE Awards \$7M to Small Solar Businesses

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) [awarded funding to 15 small solar companies](#) through the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) [2023 Phase I Release 2 funding opportunity](#) ... Funded through DOE's SBIR and STTR programs, the selections are for Phase I research and development projects with a focus on establishing technical feasibility for proposed innovations—*EE Online*, July 12, 2023:

<https://electricenergyonline.com/article/energy/category/solar/142/1032314/doe-awards-7m-to-small-solar-businesses.html>

DOE Releases US\$45 Million to Bolster Solar Manufacturing and Dual-Use PV

The US Department of Energy (DOE) has released US\$45 million in funding to support domestic solar

manufacturing and dual-use PV projects, US\$18 million of which is issued under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law... [Among the awardees] StorEdgeAI (Bothell, WA). The SBIR/STTR programs encourage U.S. small businesses to engage in high-risk, innovative research and technology development with the potential for future commercialization—Will Norman, *PV Tech*, July 7, 2023: <https://www.pv-tech.org/doe-releases-us45-million-to-bolster-solar-manufacturing-and-dual-use-pv/>

U.S. Department of Energy's NREL Scientists have Developed a Bifacial Perovskite Solar Cell that Allows Sunlight to Reach Both Sides

A bifacial [perovskite solar cell](#), which allows sunlight to reach both sides of the device, holds the potential to produce higher energy yields at lower overall costs, according to scientists at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)—NREL, *News*, July 17, 2023: <https://www.nrel.gov/news/press/2023/news-release-bifacial-perovskite-solar-cells-point-to-higher-efficiency.html>

Solar for All Grant Opportunities

The EPA's \$7 billion Solar for All grant competition will award up to 60 grants to states, territories, tribal governments, municipalities, and eligible nonprofits to create and expand low-income solar programs that provide financing and technical assistance, such as workforce development, to enable low-income and disadvantaged communities to deploy and benefit from residential solar. Notice of intent to apply due Aug. 28 for tribes. For more information: <https://www.epa.gov/greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund/solar-all>

Solar Jobs Census: Utility-Scale Jobs Dipped in 2022 while Residential Boomed

The U.S. solar energy workforce grew by 3.5% in 2022 alongside a jobs boom in clean energy storage, according to the 13th annual [National Solar Jobs Census](#) released by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC)—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, July 19, 2023: https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2023/07/utility-scale-solar-jobs-dipped-residential-boomed-2022/?utm_medium=email

Chart: Wind and Solar are Outperforming Coal on US Grid this Year

The U.S. electric grid is dangerously dependent on fossil fuels — but the century-long reign of the country's dirtiest power source may be ending... In the first half of this year, wind and solar generated more power than coal in the U.S., per data from [Ember](#). Wind and solar produced 343 terawatt-hours (TWh) total between January and June 2023, while coal produced 296 TWh over the same period—Dan McCarthy, *Canary Media*, July 23, 2023: https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/clean-energy/chart-wind-and-solar-are-outperforming-coal-on-us-grid-this-year?utm_medium=email

DOE Announces \$20 Million to Minimize Solar PV Waste and Streamline Recycling

The US Department of Energy on Friday announced \$20 million in funding for higher-quality solar technology, for more-recyclable and longer-lasting solar panels... The funding aims to speed up solar deployment across the US as well as address care of panels and solar technology across their life cycle, according to a press release—David Lumb, CNET, July 21, 2023: <https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/energy-department-touts-20m-in-funding-for-solar-panel-recycling/>

Reports

Single-Family Home LMI Solar Program – Program Design Guidance: A Solar for All Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund-Compliant Solar Program Design for States

To facilitate the design and launch of LMI solar programs by states and to leverage existing funding opportunities from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Clean Energy States Alliance has produced this guidance note along with a standard request for proposals (RFP) that can be used by states and other relevant stakeholders to design and launch Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund-compliant LMI programs in their state—Vera Bourg-Meyer and Allie Garrett, *Clean Energy States Alliance*, July 7, 2023.:

<https://www.cesa.org/resource-library/resource/single-family-home-lmi-solar-program-design-guidance>

US-Made Wind and Solar Components are Now Cheaper than Imports

Dartmouth and Princeton researchers just released a study called, “[Effects of Renewable Energy Provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act on Technology Costs, Materials Demand, and Labor](#)” that was funded by the BlueGreen Alliance, which unites labor unions and environmental organizations. The report examines the estimated impacts the Inflation Reduction Act will have on the US wind and solar industries. Specifically, the report analyzes the impacts of the Inflation Reduction Act’s 45X Advanced Manufacturing Production Tax Credit (45X MPTC), as well as the clean electricity production and investment tax credits—Michelle Lewis, *electrek*, June 12, 2023: <https://electrek.co/2023/06/12/us-made-wind-and-solar-components-are-now-cheaper-than-imports/?emci=1f606fa2-992c-ee11-b8f0-00224832eb73&emdi=d7120751-cb2f-ee11-b8f0-00224832eb73&ceid=3532876>

Conferences and Events

Transforming the Energy Landscape for All, University of Colorado Boulder, August 8-11

The American Solar Energy Society’s cutting-edge conference series introduces attendees to the leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs moving the industry forward. With the solar energy and energy efficiency sectors changing at an unprecedented pace, this conference helps participants understand the changes and uncover the billion-dollar opportunities. For more information and to register:

<https://ases.org/conference/>

Here Comes the Sun: Innovative Community Solar Systems – August 15 (Webinar)

Community solar makes the benefits of solar energy accessible and creates a renewable energy pathway for those unable to install traditional rooftop solar systems. By utilizing this strategy, communities can enhance resilience, workforce development, and cost savings while increasing solar energy accessibility for low- to moderate-income households. Join this webinar to learn more about the benefits of community solar, get resources from the DOE’s Solar Energy Technologies Office, and find out how Better Buildings partners are planning and implementing best practices to encourage equitable community solar systems—US Dept. of Energy, Better Buildings. For more information and to register:

<https://betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov/webinars/here-comes-sun-innovative-community-solar-systems>

Solar for All Public Workshop August 22 10:00 AM (Zoom)

The Washington State Department of Commerce will hold a public workshop related to the federal Solar

for All grant competition. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the [Solar for All](#) grant competition in June 2023, funded through the federal Inflation Reduction Act's (IRA) Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF). Washington is eligible to apply for this competitive grant intended to support access to solar for low-income residents. Applications for this competition are due late September 2023 and the Department of Commerce plans to apply on behalf of Washington. For more information and to register: [Click here](#).

RE+ Tech, Las Vegas, September 11-14

RE+ Tech is the event for the technical and scientific communities to present and share innovative research in solar, storage, and smart energy industries at North America's largest clean energy event. (formerly called SPI, ESI, and Smart Energy Week). This event-within-an-event showcases scientific content from industry leaders and provides a hub for science and tech trailblazers to come together, share research, and innovate tomorrow's clean energy solution. For more information and to register: <https://www.re-plus.com/re-plus-tech/>

2023 Washington State Solar Summit, Seattle, October 20

Hosted by the Solar Washington, the Washington State Solar Summit is an important annual information gathering and networking event for industry stakeholders including manufacturers, installers, utilities, municipalities, legislators/policy makers, educators, students, tribal members, advocacy organizations/nonprofits, distributors, engineers, financial lenders, consultants and more. For more information and to register: <https://www.solarwa.org/2023solsummit>

Oregon Solar + Storage Conference, Portland, November 7-9

This year 2023 OSSIA Conference is going to be bigger and better than ever: Networking, Career Fair, Continuing Education, Energy Trust of Oregon programs, What's new for Oregon Solar, grants, programs codes, and more. Registration now open. For more information, see the OSSIA Conference website: <https://www.orssia.org/osec>

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