



**June 6, 2019**

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

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## **Solar Plus News**

### **Oregon's First Career Fair**

On Tuesday, May 7, OSEIA hosted Oregon's first solar career fair. It was a great success because solar industry members showed up to talk about their roles in the industry. The makeup of over 160 registrants included students, job seekers, industry partners, and solar industry members which made it clear that there is a growing interest in solar jobs. OSEIA is looking forward to offering this event again in the future. Whether you are looking for a job in the solar industry or are hiring, consider using OSEIA's solar careers page: <https://www.oseia.org/careers>

## **Oregon News**

### **Oregon Further limits use of Prime Farmland for Solar Development**

The new rules by state land use authorities make it harder to put mid-to-large-scale solar on an estimated 6% of the state's land, and raise the question of whether the state is engaging in land conservation or indulging NIMBYism – Christian Roselund, May 24, *pv magazine*:

<https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2019/05/24/oregon-further-limits-use-of-prime-farmland-for-solar-development/>

### **Clock is ticking on Solar Farms to be completed after Oregon Adopts Strict Rules**

The clock is quickly ticking away on dozens of solar farms approved, but not yet built in the Willamette Valley. The state Land Conservation and Development Commission adopted new rules prohibiting solar farms being built on high-value farmland, and many previously approved solar farms are nearing the expiration under their conditional land use approvals. If they don't go forward soon, they won't be able to – Bill Poehler, *Salem Statesman Journal*, June 4, 2019:

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/silverton/2019/06/04/solar-farms-approved-marion-county-hard-deadline-permits-built/1263176001/>

### **Oregon Restricts Solar Development on Prime Farmland**

As Oregon's climate policies steer the state toward renewable energy like solar, its land use laws are putting up roadblocks. On Thursday, the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission approved new rules that restrict commercial solar development on millions of acres of high-value farmland across the state – *Oregon Public Broadcasting*, by Cassandra Profita, May 24, 2019: <https://www.opb.org/news/article/solar-development-farmland-oregon-ban/>

### **Solar Power comes to Wallowa County: \$49,000 in Grants Bring Renewable Energy Access to Multi-Family Housing Project**

Solar energy is about to shine on Northeast Oregon in an innovative way. Energy Trust of Oregon has awarded a \$10,000 grant to Wallowa Resources Community Solutions in partnership with Fleet Development for a pilot project that helps low and moderate-income Oregonians benefit from solar technology. Project developers also expect to receive a \$39,000 grant from the USDA's Rural Energy for America Program in the coming weeks. By Amanda Weis, *The Observer*, May 13, 2019: <https://www.lagrandeobserver.com/news/local/7157561-151/solar-power-comes-to-wallowa-county>

### **Sustainable Northwest Team Wins National Award for Solar in Rural Oregon**

Today, Sustainable Northwest's Making Energy Work for Rural Oregon Team announced that it won Best Nonprofit Project in the Solar in Your Community Challenge, a prize competition from the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Technologies Office that aims to expand solar electricity access. The team, alongside Hood River County, Douglas County Smart Energy, and Lake County Resource Initiative utilized the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative, along with other grants and incentives, to finance and install 120kW of solar on four separate nonprofit facilities in rural Oregon – Hannah Meganck, *SNW Blog*, posted May 22, 2019:

<http://sustainablenorthwest.org/blog/posts/snw-team-wins-national-award-for-solar-in-rural-oregon>

### **Years of Behind-the-Scenes Wrangling leads to Solar Glare Warning Sign**

When Ronald Reagan referred to America as a "shining city upon the hill," he didn't mean it literally. But the city of Pendleton has become uncomfortably shiny at times in the past year as commuters traveling eastbound on Interstate 84 are greeted by morning glare as they descend down the hill into town during the summer months. The blinding light is caused by a 58-acre solar farm on the southwest side of Airport Hill, a development completed in 2018. Antonio Sierra, *East Oregonian*, May 17, 2019:

[https://www.eastoregonian.com/news/local/years-of-behind-the-scenes-wrangling-leads-to-solar-glare/article\\_307c697e-78c6-11e9-8473-473a0c36a3a0.html](https://www.eastoregonian.com/news/local/years-of-behind-the-scenes-wrangling-leads-to-solar-glare/article_307c697e-78c6-11e9-8473-473a0c36a3a0.html)

### **SunPower is selling the former SolarWorld Factory in Oregon**

It started with a brochure, which made its way into the offices of the *Portland Business Journal*. And as confirmed by the company, SunPower will be selling the former SolarWorld factory in Hillsboro, Oregon which it bought last year, and then leasing back a portion of the factory, which *Portland Business Journal* put at around 200,000 square feet of the 465,000 square foot complex.

SunPower says that it will continue assembly of its P-Series modules at the portion of the factory that it will lease back from any new owners. Christian Roselund, *pV magazine*, May 17, 2019: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2019/05/17/sunpower-is-selling-the-former-solarworld-factory-in-oregon/>

## **Washington News**

### **Washington's 100% Clean Electricity Law Touted as Nation's Strongest — but how will it work?**

Daniel Schwartz, the director of the University of Washington's Clean Energy Institute, talks with environment reporter Bellamy Pailthorp to learn more about the clean-electricity transition. He's been tracking these regulations and thinks they will work – KNKX (radio station), by Bellamy Pailthorp, May 14, 2019:

<https://www.knkx.org/post/washingtons-100-clean-electricity-law-touted-nation-s-strongest-how-will-it-work>

### **Businesses Invest in Solar Power, but Incentives Declining**

When the owners of Harmony Fields in Bow built a barn for their sheep last year, they saw it as a long-term investment. Installing a solar panel array atop the barn fit into that investment plan, co-owner Jessica Gigot said. “We wanted to save on (electricity) costs because we would be running a lot of equipment, and we wanted to make sure we were generating something,” Gigot said – Jacqueline Allison, *Skagit Valley Herald*, May 29, 2019:

[https://www.goskagit.com/news/local\\_news/businesses-invest-in-solar-power-but-incentives-declining/article\\_a8d91455-445d-5c4a-863d-af1a0dadbcd5.html](https://www.goskagit.com/news/local_news/businesses-invest-in-solar-power-but-incentives-declining/article_a8d91455-445d-5c4a-863d-af1a0dadbcd5.html)

### **Spokane Tribe Celebrates Children of the Sun Solar Initiative with GRID Alternatives**

The Spokane Tribe of Indians is bringing together tribal leaders and project partners to celebrate the Children of the Sun Solar Initiative (COSSI). In 2016, the Cayuse Mountain Fire burned more than 18,000 acres, destroyed 14 tribal homes, cut power to main administrative buildings and water supply and endangered residents on the Spokane Indian Reservation. In response, the Tribe embarked on an investment in 650 kilowatts of solar capacity, and eventually battery storage, that will save more than \$2.8 million over 35 years, strengthen community resilience, create new economic opportunity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions – Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, May 17, 2019:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2019/05/spokane-tribe-celebrates-children-of-the-sun-solar-initiative-with-grid-alternatives/>

### **Spokane Tribe Celebrates Installation of its Solar Initiative, a Step toward Energy Sovereignty**

The Spokane Tribe of Indians, whose name has been poetically interpreted as Children of the Sun, is reinforcing its ties with the natural resource with a brand new 650-kilowatt solar installation – Samantha Wohlfeil, *Inlander*, May, 21, 2019:

<https://www.inlander.com/spokane/spokane-tribe-celebrates-installation-of-its-solar-initiative-a-step-toward-energy-sovereignty/Content?oid=17653318>

### **Her 'Small but Mighty' Solar Rover Powers Events around Seattle**

Meet Jennifer Brandon, a former real estate agent turned solar-energy designer and installer whose Northwest Solar Rover is a portable, off-grid source of power. **What do you do?** I power events in the Pacific Northwest with my hand-built, small-but-mighty, off-grid, solar-powered generator: by Michelle Archer, *Seattle Times*, May 23, 2019:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/explore/careers/her-small-but-mighty-solar-rover-powers-events-around-seattle/>

## **Co-location of Solar and Agriculture**

### **Agrovoltaic Land Management Opportunities**

As the energy the U.S. receives from solar power increases, more land is allocated to hosting the solar panels that produce it. And in many cases, landowners have written off the grasses and plants below the panels. But that may not have to be the case – new research about the viability of such land is proving how productive this vacant space could be – *Mother Earth News*, by Amanda Sorell July/July 2019: <https://www.motheearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/agrovoltaic-land-management-zm0z19jjzbut>

### **Grass-Fed Beef Meets Big Solar**

First Solar has completed the 280 MWac California Flats solar project, co-located with a 73,000-acre cattle ranch which raises grass-fed beef for Whole Foods. This is the biggest demonstration of the synergies between grazing and solar that we've seen to date – Christian Roselund, *pV magazine*, May 28, 2019: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2019/05/28/grass-fed-beef-meets-big-solar/>

## **Conferences, Reports, Webinars**

### **2019 CleanTech Innovation Showcase, June 24 in Seattle, WA**

Seattle-based CleanTech Alliance is announcing the sixth annual 2019 CleanTech Innovation Showcase (Showcase) at Bell Harbor International Conference Center in Seattle on June 24 – this year with participation from outside North America. The Showcase will be especially important this year in light of proposed legislation to support Washington State's transition to carbon-neutral energy by 2030 and carbon-free energy by 2045. For more info and to register see:

<https://www.cleantechalliance.org/2019/04/02/cleantech-leaders-to-gather-in-seattle-from-across-the-nation-and-world/>

### **Up to the Challenge: Communities Deploy Solar in Underserved Markets**

Analysis of approaches and business models for supporting low-income solar deployment at the local level – by Jeffrey Cook, and others, NREL, May 2019:

<https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy19osti/72575.pdf>

Register for the webinar featuring the authors of the report on July 10, 2019, 10-00-11 AM PDT. This webinar will discuss new research on low-income community solar projects and programs.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4513638567343803651>

**16<sup>th</sup> Annual NW SolarFest, July 27, 2019 at Shoreline Community College, Seattle, WA**

This event covers building a better future through sustainability, renewable energy, and common sense solutions. For more information: <https://shorelinesolar.org/>

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**Want to Contribute?** If you have information on events, publications or other solar topics that you would like mentioned in an upcoming issue of *Solar Newsbriefs*, please contact Anne Whitney at [whitneya@energy.wsu.edu](mailto:whitneya@energy.wsu.edu)

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