July 2, 2020

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Oregon News

PGE Program will Transform Hundreds of Homes into a Virtual Power Plant

Portland General Electric Company is set to launch a pilot program that will incentivize installation and connection of 525 residential energy storage batteries that PGE will dispatch, contributing up to four megawatts of energy to PGE's grid. The distributed assets will create a virtual power plant made up of small units that can be operated individually or combined to serve the grid, adding flexibility that supports PGE's transition to a clean energy future. When the program launches this fall, incentives will be available to residential customers across PGE's service area—*Cision PR Newswire*, July 1, 2020: https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/pge-program-will-transform-hundreds-of-homes-into-a-virtual-power-plant-301086514.html

Portland General Electric Opens Salem Smart Power Center

Portland General Electric's new Salem Smart Power Center is an 8000-square-foot facility in Salem, Oregon, that offers a unique insider's view of a working smart grid demonstration project. Outfitted with a large-scale energy storage system, the center is designed to help PGE test how to store and better integrate variable renewable energy sources like solar and wind into the electrical grid—*T&D World*, June 13, 2020: https://www.tdworld.com/smart-utility/article/20963139/portland-general-electric-opens-salem-smart-power-center

Local Dog Training Facility goes Green, Installs Solar Panels

A local dog training facility is going green, installing new solar panels near their campus in Central Point. Dogs for Better Lives is unveiling its newly installed solar panels. "2 years ago we created (while

determining our values) the green team, and what the green team is tasked with doing is looking at how we can become more efficient and environmentally friendly," said Dogs for Better Lives CEO, Bryan Williams. The non-profit specializes in training autism assistance dogs, and facility dogs which work with doctors, therapists, and teachers. Dogs for Better Lives was granted $175,000 from Pacific Power and $25,000 from the Energy Trust of Oregon to help install the panels—Mariah Mills, *NBC KOBI5-TV*, June 11, 2020:
https://kobi5.com/news/local-news/local-dog-training-facility-goes-green-installs-solar-panels-130423/

US Solar Fund Closes Purchase of 61-MW Solar Portfolio in Oregon
US Solar Fund announced that it has finalized the acquisition of four near-complete solar parks totaling some 61 MW of direct current (DC) capacity in the US state of Oregon—Sladjana Djunisic, *Renewables Now*, June 4, 2020: https://www.renewablesnow.com/news/us-solar-fund-closes-purchase-of-61-mw-solar-portfolio-in-oregon-701521/

Clean Energy States Alliance Announces 2020 State Leaders in Renewable Energy
The Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA), a national nonprofit coalition of public agencies working together to advance clean energy, announced the recipients of the 2020 State Leadership in Clean Energy Awards. Since 2009, the biennial Leadership Awards have recognized outstanding state programs and projects that have accelerated the adoption of clean energy technologies. The six winners [including the Energy Trust of Oregon] were chosen by an independent panel of judges—Kelsey Misbrener*, Solar Power World*, June 9, 2020:
https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2020/06/clean-energy-states-alliance-2020-leaders-in-renewable-energy/

Washington News

Building Code Updates to Encourage Solar Power
Washington State is now encouraging higher adoptions of solar energy systems in homebuilding as part of its drive to eliminate fossil fuel-generated electricity from the grid. Upcoming changes to the International Building Codes include more energy credit option for builders who use solar, with the addition of one credit for each 1,200 kilowatt hours of annual power generation from an onsite solar power system or up to three credits for 3,600 kilowatt hours in annual power generation—Natasha Nellis, *The Business Journal*, June 18, 2020: https://www.spokanejournal.com/up-close/building-code-updates-to-encourage-solar-power/

Urban Microgrids: The Potential for Urban Energy Generation and Efficiency
In 2018, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan announced that the Miller Community Center would soon be home to a $3.3 million solar microgrid. This project is being funded by Seattle City Light and Governor Inslee's Clean Energy Fund. Construction is expected to be completed in 2020. The microgrid will feature a 200 kilowatt (kw/the output capacity), 800 kilowatt-hour (kWh/the storage capacity) battery energy storage system—by Shaun Kuo, *The Urbanist*, June 26, 2020:
https://www.theurbanist.org/2020/06/26/urban-microgrids-the-potential-for-urban-energy-generation-and-efficiency/

Avista Contracts POWER Engineers for Micro-Transactive Grid Project
By March 2021, Avista Utilities will energize a microgrid in Spokane, Washington's University District that allows buildings to share energy, which will minimize impacts on the power grid and create a local energy market. The project, known as a micro-transactive grid or MTG, will allow distributed energy resources (DER) to be traded from one building to another as needs shift, forming what Avista's calling a shared energy economy—*Smart Grid Observer*, June 15, 2020: http://www.smartgridobserver.com/current/Avista%20Micro-Transactive%20Grid%20to%20Study%20Energy%20Sharing,%20Resiliency.htm

Amazon Secures Naming Rights to Future Home of Seattle's New NHL Franchise, and Calls It Climate Pledge Area
Amazon announced that it has secured the naming rights to the new home of Seattle's NHL team and WNBA's Seattle Storm, and is calling it Climate Pledge Arena rather than the name of the company. In 2019, Amazon and Global Optimism announced The Climate Pledge, which calls on signatories to be net zero carbon across their businesses by 2040—a decade ahead of the Paris Agreement with significant investment from Amazon and Oak View Group, the venue is expected to be the first net zero carbon certified arena in the world and set a new sustainability bar for the sports and events industry. The arena will have all-electric operations and be powered with 100% renewable electricity, both from on-site solar panels and off-site renewable energy—Read *Amazon's Press Release* here for full details: https://press.aboutamazon.com/news-releases/news-release-details/amazon-secures-naming-rights-future-home-seattles-new-nhl

Dual Land Use: Co-Location of Solar and Farm Land

Pollinator-Saving Solar Panels: Good for Farmers, Good for Business
Just a few years ago, solar panels and farming were considered mutually exclusive. Although farmers could benefit financially by leasing some of their land for solar panels, they could no longer grow food crops there. Now it looks like farmers can get the best of both worlds by using that same land for pollinator habitats and other agricultural applications—Tina Casey, *Triple Pundit*, June 23, 2020: https://www.triplepundit.com/story/2020/pollinator-solar-panels/120691

Dual-Use Solar Farms Welcome Nature Back to the Land
Most ground-mount solar projects built in the United States are on gravel, turf or dirt. And therein lies the Catch-22 of solar projects. The draw of solar is its ability to provide clean power that preserves beautiful landscapes that are in danger from coal mines, oil wells and fracking. But mounting solar on gravel, dirt or turf ruins the natural ecosystem anyway. When solar was first starting, many engineers did not think about birds, bees and butterflies and why they are important. Now, businesses, cities and farmers are trying to do better—Jesse Klein*, GreenBiz*, June 10, 2020: https://www.greenbiz.com/article/dual-use-solar-farms-welcome-nature-back-land

Agrivoltaics Works Better with Leafy Greens, Root Crops
PV projects linked to agriculture have thus far shown the highest potential when combined with leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach, as well as with root crops such as potatoes, radishes, beets, and carrots. This is one of the conclusions of a recent research developed on agrivoltaics by U.S. scientist Chad Higgins from the Department of Biological and Ecological Engineering at Oregon State University—

Emiliano Bellin, *PV Magazine*, June 8, 2020: https://www.pv-magazine.com/2020/06/08/agrivoltaics-works-better-with-leafy-greens-root-crops/

Net Metering

Federal Jurisdiction of Net Metering

Executive Summary:

- The New England Ratepayers Association has petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to claim net metering is within FERC's jurisdiction.
- Historically, the practice of net metering by local utilities has been within the states' jurisdiction.
- The application of federal jurisdiction to the practice of net metering would result in additional regulatory burdens and increased costs as well as erode market confidence.

Read the full article by: Ewelina Czapla, *American Action Forum*, June 17, 2020: https://www.americanactionforum.org/insight/federal-jurisdiction-of-net-metering/

Morning Brief: NERA Anti-Net Metering Petition Update, Renewables Top Nuclear and Coal Again

More than 450 organizations, 57,000 individuals and 37 states submitted comments opposing a petition that could set a national precedent and end [net metering]. FERC has not yet set a date to rule on the petition, which was filed by the New England Ratepayers Association in April"—*PV Magazine*, Eric Wesoff, June 29, 2020: https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2020/06/29/morning-brief-nera-anti-net-metering-petition-update-renewables-top-nuclear-and-coal-again/

Coronavirus Impact on Solar Industry

WoodMac: Solar and Storage Prices Falling Faster Than Expected Due to COVID-19

The fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and the looming threat of recession are expected to drive down pricing for front-of-the-meter solar and storage systems even faster than expected. The fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and the looming threat of recession are expected to drive down pricing for front-of-the-meter solar and storage systems even faster than expected—Molly Cox, *GTM*, June 30, 2020: https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/covid-19-is-pushing-down-front-of-the-meter-solar-and-storage-pricing

Coronavirus Won't Stop US Solar Growth in 2020, But Rooftop Installers Take Serious Hit

The U.S. solar market is expected to achieve record installations in 2020 despite the impact of the coronavirus crisis, even as the distributed solar segment takes a big hit. The U.S. solar market logged its largest first quarter of installations on record by a significant margin, according to new data released Thursday by Wood Mackenzie and the Solar Energy Industries Association. But the numbers confirm what the solar industry has feared: Distributed solar has been seriously affected the coronavirus, and no part of the industry has been entirely insulated—Emma Foehringer Merchant, *GTM*, June 11, 2020: https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/coronavirus-solar-growth-in-2020-but-with-significant-cuts-to-distributed-solar

Reports

Investigating City Commitments to 100% Renewable Energy Local Transitions and Energy Democracy

Cities of all sizes around the country are taking control by pledging to reach community-wide goals of

100% renewable energy. However, many of these cities are unsure of how to meet these commitments. Although the renewable energy potential throughout the U.S. is strong, cities are facing other types of challenges that are hindering their ability to progress swiftly to meet the commitment— Maria McCoy, *Institute for Self Reliance*, June 10, 2020: https://ilsr.org/report-city-commitments-100-percent/?utm_source=Energy+Self-Reliant+States&utm_campaign=59031f9a69-Energy_Self_Reliant_States_1_12_151_8_2015_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_86e661ed1e-59031f9a69-83182593

Upcoming Conferences, Webinars, etc.

State Leadership in Low-and-Moderate-Income Solar Energy, Featuring Massachusetts, Michigan and Oregon : Thursday, July 23, 2020

CESA's 2020 State Leadership in Clean Energy Awards recognized three impressive programs that support low- and moderate-income communities.

- The **Mass Solar Loan Program**, from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, offers special incentives and fosters partnerships with local banks and credit unions to increase access to financing for solar PV ownership.
- The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's **Michigan Solar Communities – Low- to Moderate-Income Access Program** uses a community solar model to enable customers to access solar, obtain weatherization services, and save on their electric bills.
- Energy Trust of Oregon's **Inclusive Innovation Project** makes solar affordable and accessible for customers with lower incomes, rural customers, and communities of color.

For more information and to register: https://www.cesa.org/event/state-leadership-in-low-and-moderate-income-solar-energy-featuring-massachusetts-michigan-and-oregon/

GoGreen Conference, Seattle, WA, *Postponed* to September 8, 2020

GoGreen empowers business decision makers with sustainability strategies, tools and connections to create positive change within their organizations by facilitating environmental, economic and social performance improvement through topics and best practices covered at each conference. Join this action packed day of driving social and sustainable change in your organization! To learn more and to register: http://seattle.gogreenconference.net/

Oregon Solar Energy Conference: It is Going Virtual! *Rescheduled* to October 6-8, 2020

The Oregon Solar Energy Conference has been described by some as the nation's best regional solar conference. In 2019 over 500 attendees representing over 220 companies were present. The conference offered over 20 hours registered for NABCEP CE. Check it out in 2020. To submit session proposals and for further information see: https://www.oseia.org/osec/ Click here to register for the concurrent and FREE Oregon Solar Career Expo: https://www.oseia.org/osec/careerexpo

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

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