Solar Newsbriefs

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Energy Program

June 1, 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

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Oregon

Portland Shelter Tackles Housing Crisis and Climate Change Together

Homelessness and climate change are two of the biggest challenges facing Oregon today, and a Portland family village campus called Path Home is tackling both of them head-on. The facility is expanding its footprint to help even more of the city's most vulnerable, while aiming to power that service through 100% renewable solar energy—Chris McGinness, KGW8, April 8, 2023: https://www.kgw.com/article/news/local/good-energy/portland-shelter-homeless-crisis-climate-solar/283-f9ab5631-b0a9-4f61-b75b-bb3107895960

Solar Ambassadors to Make Solar More Accessible for Communities of color

Solar is the future of clean energy, and it's time for everyone to have access to its benefits. That's why Energy Trust is working with community-based organizations in Oregon to make solar more accessible to Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities… The Solar Ambassador pilot program is being developed through the Solar Energy Innovation Network, which is a U.S. Department of Energy program that helps communities develop transformative ways of adopting solar energy—Energy Trust of Oregon, Blog, April 21, 2023: https://blog.energytrust.org/solar-ambassadors-to-make-solar-more-accessible-for-communities-of-color/

County Authority over Oregon Solar Projects Gains Ground

County governments could approve solar farms up to 3,840 acres under legislation that's gaining ground in Oregon, potentially doubling the size of projects under local jurisdiction… Under current law, solar projects bigger than 1,920 acres come under a state siting process that some energy developers consider too complicated and time-consuming, particularly in light of Oregon's renewable energy push—Mateusz Perkowski, *Capital Press*, April 21, 2023: https://www.capitalpress.com/state/oregon/county-authority-over-oregon-solar-projects-gains-ground/article_f1bb179a-e08f-11ed-9e0d-67aef597faf4.html

Report Provides Guidelines for Siting Renewables Responsibly in OR
Oregon needs more renewable energy but also should be aware of where it sites new projects. A new report provided guidelines for choosing the best locations… In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed a law requiring electricity to come from non-emitting sources by 2040. New wind and solar facilities will need to be built where these resources are plentiful and also where there is access to transmission lines—Eric Tegethoff, *News of Oregon*, May 3, 2023: https://newsoforegon.com/report-provides-guidelines-for-siting-renewables-responsibly-in-oregon/

The Northwest Needs More Midsize Solar
To meet climate targets, the Northwest needs to build unprecedented amounts of wind and solar power and the electric transmission lines to carry it… Utility-scale renewable projects—like acres-large solar installations or miles-long corridors of wind turbines—and the electric wires that connect them to cities and towns increasingly inspire opposition… In light of these challenges, some advocates argue that the region could avoid building transmission lines and large renewable projects if it instead dramatically scaled up what is known as "distributed solar"—Emily Moore, *Sightline Institute*, May 10, 2023: https://www.sightline.org/2023/05/10/the-northwest-needs-more-midsize-solar/

Working for Oregon's Clean Energy Future
Oregon will need electricians to install and maintain electric vehicle charging, engineers and construction experts to build and maintain solar, wind, battery, and other clean resources to support the grid, and energy efficiency technicians to reduce our energy consumption to help keep energy costs low – among many other potential family-wage jobs—Oregon Dept. of Energy, May 10, 2023: https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2023/5/10/working-for-oregons-clean-energy-future

SolRiver Capital Completes First of Six of Its Oregon Community Solar Program Projects
SolRiver Capital (www.solrivercapital.com), a prominent clean energy investment fund, announces the successful completion of the Green Project, a 3.7 MW community solar project in Jefferson County, Oregon. This project is the first of six in a 21 MW portfolio participating in the Oregon Community Solar Program. Konisto Companies designed and built Green, and will bring SolRiver's remaining five projects online by the end of 2024—SolRiver Capital, LLC, *yahoo!finance*, May 10, 2023: https://finance.yahoo.com/news/solriver-capital-completes-first-six-150000387.html

Energy Trust Celebrates 25,000th Solar Project with New Habitat for Humanity Homes
Over the past 20 years, Energy Trust of Oregon has helped grow the solar industry in Oregon, bringing the benefits of clean, renewable power to Oregon families and businesses. This spring marks a significant milestone as Energy Trust supports its 25,000th solar project, a group of townhomes built by Habitat for Humanity in Bend—Energy Trust of Oregon, Blog, May 12, 2023: https://blog.energytrust.org/energy-trust-celebrates-25000th-solar-project-with-new-habitat-for-humanity-homes/?category=our-news

Washington News

New Technical Assistance Opportunities: Solar Plus Storage Program
The Washington State Dept. of Commerce is currently offering technical assistance opportunities

through the Solar plus Storage for Resilient Communities program. There are two providers, Cascadia Renewables, Sazan Group, and an internal Commerce Energy Resilience specialist who will provide site-specific feasibility studies at no cost to a limited number of communities. Commerce anticipates announcing successful awardees to the Solar plus Storage for Resilient Communities program in mid-June. Interested communities are asked to fill out this Smartsheet Technical Assistance Request form. Contact Maureen Maples, Solar Program Manager, Email: Solar@Commerce.wa.gov should questions arise.

Port of Camas-Washougal Solar Project Planned in Partnership with Clark Public Utilities
Clark Public Utilities' community solar project is on track to more than double its current electric generation… After more than a year of discussions, utility commissioners on Tuesday signed an interagency agreement with the Port of Camas-Washougal for Community Solar East, which would establish a 799-kilowatt solar grid at the port's industrial park—Lauren Ellenbecker, *The Columbian*, May 2, 2023: https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/may/02/port-of-camas-washougal-solar-project-planned-in-partnership-with-clark-public-utilities/?utm_medium=email

New Wheelhouse Building to Meet Growing Bellingham Community Boating Center Demand
Bellingham's Community Boating Center is planning a new building to keep up with the organization's growing demand. The $1 million project, called the Wheelhouse, will provide a heated gathering space, restrooms, showers and changing facilities for people using the center. The new building will be ADA-accessible and Earth friendly, including solar panels—Rachel Showalter, *The Bellingham Herald*, May 3, 2023: https://www.bellinghamherald.com/news/local/article274835506.html

Tiny Homes for the Formerly Homeless
Twelve people who had been living on the streets of Seattle are now snug in 12 tiny houses tucked into backyards throughout Washington's largest city. And each little dwelling is likely the most sustainable house on its block… Solar arrays on the roofs of the homes provide more than enough power for heating, lighting and cooking, even in Seattle's not-so-sunny climate—Jane Margolies, *The New York Times*, May 3, 2023: https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/03/style/seattle-homeless-tiny-homes.html

'Clean Energy Revolution.' WA Gov. Jay Inslee Signs 7 Energy Bills into Law in Tri-Cities
Washington Gov. Jay Inslee came to the energy hub of the Pacific Northwest — the Tri-Cities — to sign seven clean energy bills passed by the Legislature in the session just ended… The bills he signed Wednesday against a backdrop of Energy Northwest's Horn Rapids solar center panels that supply energy to Richland will boost local economies and businesses and provide jobs, Inslee said—Annette Cary, *Tri-City Herald*, May 3, 2023: https://amp.tri-cityherald.com/news/politics-government/article275025501.html

State will Compensate Local Residents to 'Go Solar'
The State of Washington will compensate local residents to "Go Solar" as part of a statewide program… The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) is a regulatory mandate to increase the production of energy from renewable sources like solar throughout Washington, according to the USA Clean Energy Network… The new, statewide renewable electricity standard is given to every state as a goal to have a

percentage of its power come from renewable energies like wind and solar—Staff, *Ellensburg Daily Record*, May 12, 2023: https://www.dailyrecordnews.com/news/state-will-compensate-local-residents-to-go-solar/article_05ab0c42-edc9-11ed-9d49-03a2ece6f37e.html

Yakima County to Work with Bureau of Land Management on Solar Farm Criteria
Yakima County officials plan to work with the Bureau of Land Management on the criteria for putting solar farms on federal public lands… The federal agency is updating its environmental impact statement for new solar farms. Environmental impact statements identify potential environmental effects projects may have and require developers to address them—Phil Ferolito, *Yakima Herald-Republic*, May 15, 2023: https://www.yakimaherald.com/news/local/yakima-county-to-work-with-bureau-of-land-management-on-solar-farm-criteria/article_d70cd7a6-ef8c-11ed-9add-a35b7c41f0be.html?utm_medium=email

National News

Energy Department Invests $26 Million to Support Clean Electric Grid
The Biden Administration Wednesday announced $26 million in funding to demonstrate how solar, wind, storage and other clean energy resources can support a modern, resilient and clean energy grid. Through the Energy Department, the funding will be distributed to eight selected projects across 15 sites, including 13 states and Puerto Rico, and build on numerous Energy Department-led efforts to combat climate change and promote clean energy. [One recipient will be the Portland General Electric Company]. This project will demonstrate grid-forming inverters at the Wheatridge Renewable Energy Facility in Oregon, North America's first energy center to combine wind, solar and energy storage systems in one location—Frank Konkel, *Nexgov*, May 10, 2023: https://www.nextgov.com/emerging-tech/2023/05/energy-department-invests-26-million-support-clean-electric-grid/386170/

Automated Permitting Speeds Solar Adoption Across United States
Communities That Used SolarAPP+ Processed More Than 11,000 Solar Permits and Eliminated More Than 134,000 Days of Delays in 2022—Harrison Dreves, NREL, *News*, May 3, 2023: https://www.nrel.gov/news/program/2023/automated-permitting-speeds-solar-adoption-across-united-states.html#:~:text=The%20Solar%20Automated%20Permit%20Processing%20Plus%20%28SolarAPP%2B%29%20software%E2%80%94developed,permits%20for%20residential%20PV%20systems%20and%20solar-plus-storage%20systems.

Here's How North America's First Utility-Scale Solar Recycling Plant is Ramping Up for the Clean Energy Boom
We Recycle Solar is deploying new machinery and technology to quadruple its processing capacity to 522 million pounds per year by 2028. We Recycle Solar, which is permitted by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to handle hazardous secondary materials that come from solar panels, removes, decommissions, recycles, and processes the panels for reuse… It says its 75,000-square-foot Yuma, Arizona, factory currently has the capacity to process 7,500 modules, or 345,000 pounds, for

recycling and reuse in a day and 69 million pounds in a single year—Michelle Lewis, *electrek*, May 19, 2023: https://electrek.co/2023/05/16/north-america-first-utility-scale-solar-recycling-plant/

Community Resilience Options: A Menu for Enhancing Local Energy Resilience
The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced $34 million in funding to advance clean energy technology in 18 American Indian and Alaska Native communities. This funding will strengthen tribal communities by supercharging their access to solar power and microgrids, increasing energy security and resilience, and powering unelectrified tribal buildings. [The Lummi Indian Business Council of Bellingham, WA one of the recipients, received the award amount of $2,000,000]—DOE, May 23, 2023: https://www.energy.gov/articles/us-department-energy-announces-34-million-deploy-clean-energy-technologies-american-indian

Reports

Power of Place: Clean Energy Solutions that Protect People and Nature
Power of Place is a visionary study that outlines a practical methodology for decarbonizing our nation while minimizing land-use footprints and costs. It is designed to assist energy planners and decision-makers at all levels of government in identifying pathways to achieve net zero by 2050 while prioritizing people and nature. The study demonstrates that with early planning and the right incentives, we can minimize tradeoffs and maximize benefits for climate, nature, and people—–The Nature Conservancy, May 9, 2023: Click here for the more information, the report, fact sheet and additional resources.

Land Use Trade-Offs in Decarbonization of Electricity Generation in the American West
Land-use conflicts may constrain the unprecedented rates of renewable energy deployment required to meet the decarbonization goals of the Inflation Reduction Act. This paper employs geospatially resolved data and a detailed electricity system capacity expansion model to generate 160 affordable, zero-carbon electricity supply portfolios for the American west and evaluates the land use impacts of each portfolio—Neha Patankar, et al. *Energy and Climate Change*, May 15, 2023: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2666278723000144

Characterization of Vulnerable Communities in Terms of the Benefits and Burdens of the Energy Transition in Pacific Northwest Cities
Energy transition to renewable sources has occurred along with the development of various clean energy policies aimed at decarbonization and electrification. However, the transition can inadvertently lead to social inequity resulting in increasing burdens on vulnerable communities. Although many studies have tried to define and identify vulnerable communities, there has been no study specifically aimed at characterizing vulnerable communities in terms of the benefits and burdens of such energy transition. In response, the objective of this study is to characterize vulnerable communities by examining rooftop solar adoption and energy expenditure using spatial and mixed-effect models—Yohan Min, Hyun Woo Lee, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, March 2023, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652623001075

Conferences and Events

Investing in Relationships: Strategies State Agencies Can Use to Equitably Partner with Community Representatives (Report and Associated Webinar) June 8

State agencies generally experience a degree of separation between themselves and the communities they serve. It is essential that they partner with community representatives deeply and often, in order to best realize their missions of service… This case study analyzes six programs conducted by the Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) that have shown success in building meaningful and impactful relationships with community representatives… The report profiles the programs listed above and highlights essential best practices for community engagement. These programs can serve as a model for other state agencies seeking to develop relationships with community partners in order to better meet their shared goals. To read more, view the PDF, and access the webinar, see: Clean Energy States Alliance, May 5, 2023: https://www.cesa.org/resource-library/resource/community-engagement-models-energy-trust-oregon/

REAP for Solar Contractors (Webinar) June 9

Solar Washington is partnering with Spark Northwest and Pierce and Snohomish Conservation Districts to offer this webinar on REAP for Solar Contractors. This "101" webinar will help you complete a successful REAP grant application, understand who amongst your clients would "qualify" for the REAP grant and improve communication between companies and our program down the road. Generating more awareness amongst contractors about the REAP program and our program services will create a stronger referral pipeline, pushing qualifying clients to REAP grant representatives. For more information and to register: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2638688699702566234

RE+ Tech Las Vegas, NV, 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, October 20

Hosted by the Solar Washington, th 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/2023_solarsummit

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