February 8, 2018

Welcome to this week'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 News

Feds loan $48 Million for 6 Oregon Solar Energy Project

Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, D-Ore., announced Monday six Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) loans amounting to $48.2 million will help bring solar energy production to rural towns in Klamath, Lake, Deschutes and Clackamas counties, where solar facilities will produce enough electricity to power 11,289 Oregon homes and businesses – KTVZ News, Channel 21, posted February 6, 2018.
http://www.ktvz.com/news/feds-loan-48-million-for-6-oregon-solar-energy-projects/697350106

Clean Focus Renewables completes Ewauna 2 Ground-Mount Solar Project in Oregon

Clean Gocus Renewables completed Ewauna 2, a 3.867-MW ground-mount solar project in Klamath Falls, Oregon – *Solar Power World*, January 30, 2018.
https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2018/01/clean-focus-renewables-completes-ewauna-2-3-867-mw-ground-mount-solar-project-oregon/

Oregon Solar Jobs Dipped in 2018 Amid SolarWorld's Woes

Solar jobs in Oregon slid in 2017, a retrenchment after big growth the year before as the SolarWorld Americas Inc. plant in Hillsboro struggled to cope with the bankruptcy of its German corporate parent – *Portland Business Journal*, February 7, 2018.
https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/news/2018/02/07/oregon-solar-jobs-dipped-in-2017-amid-solarworlds.html

Washington News

Mayor Jenny Durkan Tours New Rooftop Solar Panels at Harborview Medical Center Powered by Seattle City Light's "Green Up" Program.

Jenny A. Durkan today toured a new rooftop solar panel installation at Harborview Medical Center. The project is the first to receive funding under Seattle City Light's "Green Up" grants program, which aims to expand the City's supply of clean, renewable energy, fight climate change, and lower electricity bills at community facilities, including schools, parks, community centers, and affordable housing complexes – Office of the Mayor, Seattle, Washington website, January 31, 2018.
http://durkan.seattle.gov/2018/01/mayor-jenny-durkan-tours-new-rooftop-solar-panels-at-harborview-medical-center-powered-by-seattle-city-lights-green-up-program/

Solar-Powered Trash Compactor Bins to Hit Downtown Spokane Streets
Roughly 40 solar-powered trash bins are coming to Spokane's city's streets in the coming weeks, capable of compacting refuse and collecting recycling. The move will free up members of the Downtown Spokane Partnership's cleaning crews to address graffiti, sidewalk trash and areas beneath the downtown's railroad viaducts, rather than collecting bags from the cans currently scattered throughout town – *The Spokesman-Review*, February 6, 2018.
http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/feb/06/solar-powered-trash-compactor-bins-to-hit-downtown/

Commentary on the New Solar Tariffs

New Tariffs and State Policy Cloud Oregon's Solar Growth
Obsidian Renewables' Outback solar farm outside Christmas Valley in south central Oregon is a 23,000-panel array with a peak output of 5.7 megawatts, enough power to serve about 1,200 customers. The company is looking to build far larger project -- 600 megawatts, plus battery storage -- in the same area, tapping into existing transmission lines and replacing the output of retiring coal plans – *Oregonian/Oregonlive*, January 29, 2018
http://www.oregonlive.com/business/index.ssf/2018/01/oregons_solar_growth_faces_tar.html

Washington Solar Industry Remains Strong despite Imposition of Import Tariffs
Washington's solar industry remains strong in the face of the U.S. president's announcement this week to impose tariffs on imported solar cells and modules. Our state benefits from a diversified and integrated solar industry that provides jobs in installation, manufacturing, distribution, engineering, marketing, sales, finance, software development, consulting, and education. Such economic diversity provides resilience from potential market disturbance from external forces – Solar Installers of Washington website, posted January 23, 2018.
http://www.solarinstallersofwa.org/

White House seeks 72 Percent Cut to Clean Energy Research, Underscoring Administration's Preference for Fossil Fuels
The Trump administration is poised to ask Congress for deep budget cuts to the Energy Department's renewable energy and energy efficiency programs, slashing them by 72 percent overall in fiscal 2019, according to draft budget documents obtained by The Washington Post – *Washington Post*, February 1, 2018.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/white-house-seeks-72-percent-cut-to-clean-energy-research-underscoring-administrations-preference-for-fossil-fuelsv/2018/01/31/c2c69350-05f3-11e8-b48c-b07fea957bd5_story.html?utm_term=.b5e952599211

Solar Panel Industry Still Optimistic despite New tariffs
Tariffs on solar panel imports imposed this week by the Trump administration threaten to increase customer costs and cut solar energy growth by as much as 11 percent over the next five years, but the industry remains optimistic that the roadblock will be temporary – *Los Angeles Times*, January 24, 2018.
https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/solar-panel-industry-still-optimistic-despite-new-tariffs/ar-AAv7B6w

Business News

Tesla Expands Sales of Solar Gear at Home Depot
Tesla Inc. is planning a major expansion of its solar division at Home Depot Inc., embarking on a critical test of the mainstream appeal of its renewable-energy products. The tech pioneer is beginning to roll out Tesla-branded selling spaces at 800 of the retailer's locations, the company confirmed to Bloomberg News. The areas, which will be outfitted during the first half of this year, are staffed by Tesla employees and can demonstrate its solar panels and Powerwall battery – *Bloomberg Technology*, February 01, 2018.
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-01/tesla-expands-sales-of-solar-gear-at-home-depot-in-critical-test

Technological Innovations

A Better Battery? MIT Researchers say Discovery Could Improve Storage of Energy from Wind, Sun
MIT researchers say they've improved a large scale battery, opening the possibility of storing massive amounts of renewable energy for a rainy day – or a day without wind. The researchers say their changes to liquid-sodium batteries will make them more durable and useful – *Boston Globe*, January 26, 2018.
https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/01/26/better-battery-mit-researchers-say-discovery-could-improve-storage-energy-from-wind-sun/UnVfQCh4hRH2GoN4fgItvO/story.html

Battery' that Bottles Sunshine Could Bring a New Solar Revolution
A plastic-like material may do for solar power what high-performance electrical batteries have done for iphones and Tesla Cars. Research conducted by MIT Professor Jeffrey Grossman uncovers novel ways of storing thermal energy, facilitating the move toward large-scale implementation – NBC News, January 13, 2018.
https://www.nbcnews.com/mach/science/battery-bottles-sunshine-could-bring-new-solar-revolution-ncna836416?utm_source=MIT+Energy+Initiative&utm_campaign=79743cdab5-eNewsletter_November_2017&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_eb3c6d9c51-79743cdab5-75775417&mc_cid=79743cdab5&mc_eid=db861d30a1

Relevant Papers and Webinars

Valuing Resilience Makes Solar+Storage More Economic
A new paper released by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Clean Energy Group, *Valuing the Resilience Provided by Solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems*, illustrates how

assigning a value to the ability of resilient energy systems to avoid outage-related losses can improve the economic feasibility of solar+storage. The study detailed in the paper looks at design scenarios for three types of buildings in southern California, finding that placing a value on the resilience benefits of a system increases the optimal size of solar+storage installations and can even make projects feasible in cases where they would not be economically viable otherwise. To read the paper and to register for related webinar to be held March 14, 1:00 PM-2:00 PM EDT, see Clean Energy Group website:
https://www.cleanegroup.org/ceg-resources/resource/valuing-resilience-solar-battery-energy-storage/

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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