



**March 7, 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 NW Partner News and Publications**

#### **Inequities in the Energy System: New White Paper Explores Issues and Opportunities**

"Families in America with the least means pay disproportionately more for their electricity, sometimes lacking basic access to service altogether." That's the finding and the starting point for the new white paper, *Reversing Energy System Inequity: Urgency and Opportunity During the Clean Energy Transition* that goes on to explain how, as we transition to a cleaner electric system, we can address inequities that at present force some people to choose between paying their utility bills and buying medicine and food. The question is whether we'll take the opportunity to mitigate these inequities or exacerbate them as we integrate new wind, solar, energy efficiency, and grid management technologies into our electric system. Read more and access report at: *NW Energy Coalition*, March 4, 2019: <https://nwenergy.org/featured/inequities-in-the-energy-system-new-white-paper-explores-issues-and-opportunities/>

#### **Collaborative Regional Workforce Development for an Inclusive Solar Future**

The U.S. solar industry has made incredible strides over the past decade. Solar is currently the fastest growing source of power, and this accelerated expansion of the industry has propelled solar installer to the number one fastest growing job in the U.S. The new case study from Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association (OSEIA), *Collaborative Regional Workforce Development for an Inclusive Solar Future*, supplements the Solar Training Network's (STN) toolkit, [Strategies for Solar Workforce Development](#), and demonstrates how industry organizations can champion regionally adaptive workforce initiatives. Read more here:

<http://solarplusnw.org/wp-content/uploads/OSEIA-Collaborative-Case-Study.pdf>

#### **Oregon has Four Solar Markets, Each Needs Legislative Support**

The Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association (OSEIA) has created an infographic to demonstrate the benefits and policy needs of the four solar markets in Oregon. This educational tool details the importance of the four solar markets and the need for supportive state policy in each. View it here on the Solar Plus NW website:

[http://solarplusnw.org/wp-content/uploads/OSEIA\\_Thriving\\_Solar\\_Industry\\_FINAL.pdf](http://solarplusnw.org/wp-content/uploads/OSEIA_Thriving_Solar_Industry_FINAL.pdf)

### **Snohomish PUD Seeking Sites for Local Solar Projects**

Snohomish County PUD is soliciting sites for local solar energy projects, with a focus on supporting organizations that provide community services and/or renewable energy education. The solar projects are funded under the utility's Planet Power program through voluntary contributions from PUD customers. The 2019 projects are the final round of Planet Power projects as the utility makes a transition to a Community Solar program later this year. To date, Planet Power has raised more than \$1.6 million, resulting in 34 solar demonstration projects at local schools, non-profits and public agencies. For more information see: *My Edmonds News*, February 27, 2019:

<https://myedmondsnews.com/2019/02/snohomish-pud-seeking-sites-for-local-solar-projects/>

### **The Renewable Energy System Incentive Program: January 2019 Update**

This WSU Energy Program factsheet provides both the historical context of solar incentives in Washington as well as the new program elements. The overview includes utilities as delivery partners, highlights of the program, projects statewide, new program results and the RESIP Timeline. Read more on the WSU Energy Program website:

<http://www.energy.wsu.edu/documents/RenewableEnergySystemIncentiveProgramJanuary2019UpdateTC.pdf>

## **Oregon News**

### **Oregon Utility Combines Solar, Wind, and Battery Storage for First Time**

Oregon utility Portland General Electric (PGE) has partnered with NextEra Energy on a large new energy facility that combines 300 MW of wind, 50 MW of solar and 30 MW of battery storage – the first in the country to combine these three resources. The project, known as the Wheatridge Renewable Energy Facility, will also be one of the largest solar installations in the state and the battery facility will be one of the largest in the country—*EarthTechling*, February 22, 2019:

<http://earthtechling.com/pge-largest-solar-wind-battery-project/>

### **Feds Loan \$48 million for 6 Oregon Solar Energy Projects**

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 – *News Channel 21, KTVZ.com*, February 7, 2019:

<https://www.ktvz.com/news/feds-loan-48-million-for-6-oregon-solar-energy-projects/697350106>

### **Oregon Adopts Temporary Rules Limiting Solar Siting on Certain High-Value Farmlands**

On January 29, 2019, the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, the state's land use agency, filed [temporary rules](#) amending the standards for siting solar PV facilities on

agricultural lands. Although the Land Conservation and Development Commission stopped short of making the changes permanent in order to further consider stakeholder interests at its May 23, 2019 meeting, the Commission carried forward the bulk of the proposed limitations, notably, the retention of the prohibition on siting solar on Class I or II, Prime or Unique soils – *JUDSupra*, February 29, 2019: <https://www.idsupra.com/legalnews/oregon-adopts-temporary-rules-limiting-38730/>

### **Renewable Energy Siting Bill Worries Farmland Advocates**

Increasing demand for renewable energy in Oregon has spurred a proposal to exempt most such projects from compulsory review by a statewide siting panel. Supporters argue it would be less expensive and time-consuming for county governments to review plans for solar arrays and other renewable energy facilities. However, advocates of farmland preservation argue that counties will scrutinize renewable energy projects less rigorously than the Energy Facility Siting Council, which aims to ensure such facilities meet statewide standards. Under House Bill 2329, the threshold for mandatory EFSC review of solar facilities would be increased from 100 to 200 acres of arable farmland. Read more at *Capital Press*, March 5, 2019:

[https://www.capitalpress.com/state/oregon/renewable-energy-siting-bill-worries-farmland-advocates/article\\_6e46e184-3f6a-11e9-98d3-6be75455270b.html](https://www.capitalpress.com/state/oregon/renewable-energy-siting-bill-worries-farmland-advocates/article_6e46e184-3f6a-11e9-98d3-6be75455270b.html)

### **Corvallis High School Celebrates Solar Array**

Corvallis School District celebrated the installation of a new rooftop solar array at Corvallis High School. At the event, billed as a “Solarbration,” Julie Williams, CHS teacher and advisor for the school’s Green Club, said her students in the Green Club had been working to have the 117-kilowatt array installed since 2007. Students in the Green Club helped raise some of the nearly \$266,000 cost of installation. Other funds for the array came from the Energy Trust of Oregon, the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative and Benton Electric, Inc., which installed the array in September and owns the array – See Antony Rimel’s story, *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, February 21, 2019:

[https://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/chs-celebrates-solar-array/article\\_02917e69-7fee-596e-b64a-f349e81b7bbd.html](https://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/chs-celebrates-solar-array/article_02917e69-7fee-596e-b64a-f349e81b7bbd.html)

## **Washington News**

### **Solar Project, with More than a Half-Million Panels, Proposed for Private and State Lands Near Columbia River**

One of the Northwest’s most ambitious solar projects has been proposed for 1,700 acres of private and public land in Klickitat County near the Columbia River. Portland-based Avangrid Renewables seeks to build a project that would require more than 500,000 photovoltaic panels to be spread on acreage now used for grazing cattle or put in a federal conservation reserve, according to a [document the company filed](#) with its project application in Klickitat County and an Avangrid spokesman. The Avangrid solar farm will have a 150-megawatt capacity – Hal Bernton, *The Seattle Times*, March 6, 2019:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/state-solar-project-with-more-than-half-million-panels-planned-for-private-and-state-lands-near-columbia-river/>

### **Spokane Tribe Goes Solar With Private, Fed Funding**

The Children of the Sun, as the Spokane Tribe refer to themselves, are going solar this year with

installations in 28 locations generating over 600 kilowatts of energy, thanks to the support of Wells Fargo Foundation, the U.S. Department of Energy and non-profit Grid Alternatives. The project is being managed by the Spokane Indian Housing Authority, in Wellpinit, WA. The \$2 million project will be one of the primary projects of Grid Alternatives Tribal Program, and will be funded in part through the group's Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund, drawing on \$5 million pledged by Wells Fargo Foundation last year to be used over three year—Read more at *CleanTechnica*, February 18, 2019:

<https://cleantechnica.com/2019/02/18/spokane-tribe-goes-solar-with-private-fed-funding/>

### **Seattle Solar Company that Hosted Inslee Explains Industry Challenges**

Solar industry jobs are among the fastest-growing in the nation, but hurdles abound, and public policy has significant sway. A and R Solar, in Seattle's Mount Baker neighborhood, provided the backdrop, literally, for Jay Inslee's announcement that he's seeking the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination. CEO Reeves Clippard started A and R with co-founder Andy Yatteau 12 years ago. They've since grown to a team of 70. "Solar jobs are one of the fastest-growing jobs in America. We now employ more people than the coal industry, and these are jobs you can't export, we are boots on the roof, boots on the ground," Clippard said – Read/listen to more about the industry: Ted Land, *K5 News*, March 1, 2019:

<https://www.king5.com/article/news/seattle-solar-company-that-hosted-inslee-explains-industry-challenges/281-b9d6eb73-824d-4ebb-ba41-c8bb5e12bbfe>

### **Astoria Co-op Pursues Rooftop Solar**

The Astoria Co-op Grocery is securing funding for a solar array atop its new store in Mill Pond that could provide 57 kilowatts of renewable energy. The project would make the co-op the first retailer in the region to add a solar array – Edward Stratton, *Daily Astorian*, March 1, 2019

[https://www.dailystorian.com/news/local/astoria-co-op-pursues-rooftop-solar-array/article\\_7dfcd80c-3bbb-11e9-9c87-b7d3222752c7.html](https://www.dailystorian.com/news/local/astoria-co-op-pursues-rooftop-solar-array/article_7dfcd80c-3bbb-11e9-9c87-b7d3222752c7.html)

## **Recent Reports**

### **Low Income Consumer Solar Working Group Final Report**

A year-long effort by the Low Income Consumer Solar (LICS) Working Group culminated in the public release of a final report and roadmap. A desirable attribute of community or shared solar projects is their ability to give access to solar energy to customers who cannot afford rooftop solar installations. The document highlights a range and variety of solar project models that could engage low- to moderate-income households. The roadmap is intended as a guide to decision-making at the regional, state, and community level—*DEFG*, February 14, 2019:

<http://defgllc.com/publication/low-income-consumer-solar-working-group/>

## **Events**

### **Snohomish County PUD No. 1. Community Solar Open Houses Announced**

Mark your calendar if you would like to learn more about this exciting opportunity to participate in local renewable energy generation. Construction at the Community Solar site in Arlington begins this month and Snohomish PUD is preparing to open up solar unit sales in April. Learn more during any of the open houses below—**All open houses are from 5:30-7:00 p.m., with short presentations at 5:30 and 6:15.**

For more information see: <https://www.snopud.com/home/green/CommunitySolar.ashx?p=3564>

- **March 12 Snohomish PUD Main Headquarters (Electric Building)**, Commission Room, 2320 California Street, Everett 98201
  - **March 14 Mountlake Terrace Library**, 23300 58th Ave West, Mountlake Terrace 98043
  - **March 21 Lakewood/Smokey Point Library**, 3411 169<sup>th</sup> Place NE, Suite A, Arlington 98223
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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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