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Oregon News

Blue Marmot Solar Facility Moves Forward

Lakeview residents had been noticing work being done on properties that have been proposed for the Blue Marmot Solar Park in Lakeview. A statement from EDP Renewables, the company building the project, said its contractors have been working on conducting more studies before they submit a revised Notice of Intent (NOI) with the Oregon Energy Facilities Siting Council—Kevin Winter, *Lake County Examiner*, Oct. 7, 2020: http://www.lakecountyexam.com/news/lake_county/blue-marmot-solar-facility-moves-forward/article_a3b5a95a-e932-5d88-980b-280abc23f100.html

Oregon Energy Regulators Recommend Massive Solar Project

Oregon's energy regulators have recommended moving forward with a controversial 3,900-acre solar facility opposed by some local farmers. The decision automatically triggers contested case proceedings. Opponents of the Obsidian Solar Center near Christmas Valley, Ore., must request to participate in the contested case process by Nov. 9 to make their objections before an administrative hearings officer—Maateusz Perkowski, *Capital Press*, Oct. 14, 2020: https://www.capitalpress.com/state/oregon/oregon-energy-regulators-recommend-massive-solar-project/article_706432b8-0e4f-11eb-9ca4-cf73489ed407.html

Are Solar Panels Coming to Heritage Farm?

Elemental Energy, a Portland-based solar energy company, has proposed a two-megawatt solar farm on 5 acres of open land at the property. The Clark County Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to discuss the possibility at its meeting Wednesday. Under the proposal, Clark Public Utilities customers

would have an option to subscribe to a select number of panels and have the power generated from those panels be credited to their accounts—Jack Hefferman, *The Columbian Blogs*, Oct. 30, 2020: <https://blogs.columbian.com/all-politics-is-local/are-solar-panels-coming-to-heritage-farm/#:~:text=Solar%20panels%20may%20be%20coming,open%20land%20at%20the%20property.>

See also: <https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2020-10/Heritage%20Farms%20community%20solar%20project.pdf>

Benton County Building Becomes Latest Solarize Corvallis Project

A solar panel installation on a Benton County building in Corvallis is one of the latest local projects aimed at saving energy. Panels are being installed on the building, at 4500 S.W. Research Way, this week as part of Solarize Corvallis, a joint effort by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition and the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative with a goal of covering Corvallis roofs with solar panels paid in part through investments by local residents—Jesse Sowa, *Lebanon Express*, Sept. 30, 2020: https://lebanon-express.com/news/local/benton-county-building-becomes-latest-solarize-corvallis-project/article_3b4a30dc-d625-5f20-924d-2ec007492962.html

Washington News

Solar Deployment Grant Program – Clean Energy Fund

Applications are now open for a new grant solicitation focused on Low-Income Community Solar Deployment. Eligible projects include community solar projects of more than 100 kW of direct current generating capacity that lower the energy burden of qualifying subscribers (low-income households and/or low-income service providers). Allowances are made for qualifying subscribers who are not retail electric customers. For more information, see the WA State Dept. of Commerce Clean Energy Fund Solar Program: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/clean-energy-fund/clean-energy-fund-solar-program/>

Homes First and Olympia Community Solar

Homes First is excited to join the Hummingbird Community Solar project. For many years, it has been a goal to solar panel our homes in order to further reduce the cost of maintaining a safe and healthy home for our tenants. This new initiative is another reason to celebrate during the Homes First 30th Anniversary—submitted by Homes First, *Thurston Talk*, Oct. 12, 2020: <https://www.thurstontalk.com/2020/10/12/homes-first-and-olympia-community-solar/>

American Legion Looking to Install Solar Panels

Mike Loriz, 1st vice commander of American Legion Post 26, is leading an effort to cut the Port Townsend veterans organization's electric bill while also making its 1941 downtown building more energy efficient by installing an array of solar panels on the south-facing side of its roof—Nicholas Johnson, *Peninsula Daily News*, Oct. 8, 2020: <https://www.peninsuladailynews.com/news/american-legion-looking-to-install-solar-panels/>

Everything We Know About the Newest U.S. Solar Panel Manufacturer — Violet Power

This fall, a brand new solar company announced a major addition to U.S. manufacturing with its gigawatt-production plans. Violet Power is setting up in a 600,000-sq.-ft facility across the street from

REC Silicon in Moses Lake, Washington, and will have 500 MW of crystalline silicon solar cell manufacturing capacity by Q2 2021 with another 500 MW of full panel production by the end of next year. The plan is to eventually scale to 5 GW of production and 1,000 manufacturing employees—Kelly Pickerel, *Solar Power World*, Oct. 14, 2020:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2020/10/everything-we-know-about-the-newest-u-s-solar-panel-manufacturer-violet-power/>

REC Silicon to Restart Solar Wafer Production for Neighbor Violet Power

Newly announced Washington-based solar cell and panel manufacturing venture Violet Power will now have a domestic silicon supplier with nextdoor REC Silicon. REC's Moses Lake silicon production facility has been out of commission since 2018, but with Violet Power setting up nearby and planning on 1 GW of production output, REC now had a significant domestic buyer. The two facilities will establish a silicon ingot and wafer solution for Violet Power's immediate solar cell manufacturing requirements and also work to expand domestic capacity for production of input materials necessary for other cyber-secure clean energy solutions utilizing green energy to create sustainable, responsibly produced and highly competitive products for domestic applications—Kelly Pickerel, *Solar Power World*, Oct. 13, 2020:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2020/10/rec-silicon-to-restart-solar-wafer-production-for-neighbor-violet-power/>

Snohomish County PUD chooses Doosan V2G Tech for Microgrid

Snohomish County PUD (SnoPUD) will use Doosan GridTech's vehicle-to-grid (V2G) energy management system to control two V2G fleet charging stations at its Arlington, Washington microgrid. The V2G system can charge a car and allow the vehicle's energy to flow back to the grid for support during an outage. This pilot program explores the challenges of using a microgrid to provide renewable energy and grid support. The program's goal is to evaluate the effects of this two-way interface—Sharon Bennett, *Microgrid Knowledge*, Oct. 28, 2020: <https://microgridknowledge.com/snohomish-v2g-microgrid/>

Solar Industry

Clean Energy Jobs Continue to Offer Competitive Wages Despite COVID

To understand the quality of employment opportunities in clean energy-related industries, E2 (Environmental Entrepreneurs), the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE) and the Clean Energy Leadership Institute (CELI) have commissioned BW Research to analyze wages and benefits of occupations in clean energy industries in comparison to all occupations nationwide, sectors heavily impacted by the pandemic crisis and other energy-related occupations. Read more and access the report at: Matthew Mercure, *Solar Industry*, Oct. 23, 2020: <https://solarindustrymag.com/clean-energy-jobs-continue-to-offer-competitive-wages-despite-covid>

Solar Recycling

This Game-Changing Solar Company Recycles Old Panels into New Ones

By the early 2030s, as one large wave of solar panels is reaching the end of life, the International Renewable Energy Agency projects that there could be as much as 8 million metric tons of total solar panel waste. By 2050, that could jump to as much as 78 million metric tons of cumulative waste. "We're

looking at an emerging waste stream which has the potential to go to pretty large volumes over the next decade,” says Andreas Wade, who leads global sustainability for First Solar, a solar panel manufacturer that is taking on the problem with a circular approach—*WasteAdvantage*, posted Oct. 11, 2020: <https://wasteadvantagemag.com/this-game-changing-solar-company-recycles-old-panels-into-new-ones/>

Solar Panel Recycling: Let’s Make It Happen

This is one of four blogs in a series examining current challenges and opportunities for recycling of clean energy technologies. Please see the [introductory post](#), as well as other entries on [wind turbines](#) and [energy storage batteries](#)... **Recycling vs. Disposal of PV Panels:** As current PV installations reach the final decommissioning stage, efficient recycling and material recovery are preferable to disposing of panels in landfills. Solar panels are mostly glass and metal, both of which are easily recyclable materials—Jack Gignac, *Union of Concerned Scientists*, Oct. 30, 2020: <https://blog.ucsusa.org/james-gignac/solar-panel-recycling>

Community Solar

U.S. Energy Dept. Aims For Affordable Solar

Follow. The. Money. For all the talk about saving coal jobs over the past four years or so, the U.S. Department of Energy has been pushing dollar after dollar onto the renewable energy plate. In the latest twist, the Energy Department is ramping up its efforts to bring affordable solar power to the nation’s vast population of low- and middle-income households, with a focus on new financial instruments—Trina Casey, *CleanTechnica*, Oct. 26, 2020: <https://cleantechnica.com/2020/10/26/us-energy-dept-aims-for-affordable-solar-power-with-a-little-help-from-friends/>

Reports

Reimagining Interstate Rights of Way Could Bring Energy Boon

A [research report](#) by the Webber Energy Group at the University of Texas in Austin identifies more than 127,000 acres of right-of-way areas at interstate exits around the country as suitable sites for locating solar power generating sites. Study highlights Oregon.—Skip Descant, *Government Technology*, Oct. 9, 2020: <https://www.govtech.com/fs/infrastructure/Reimagining-Interstate-Rights-of-Way-Could-Bring-Energy-Boon.html>

Solar Study Highlights Rural Potential

When it comes to finding places to set up shop, solar panel projects often consider two factors: first, how much sun the area receives; second, how close it is to the operation it is meant to power. But according to a new study conducted by Laura Zapata, co-founder of Tennessee-based solar energy company Clearloop and energy nonprofit WattTime, there is another factor that companies should be looking at: how much dirty energy, such as coal and fossil fuel, the project would replace if installed. The dirtier the previous energy source, the more 'bang for your buck' a company gets reducing its carbon footprint—Sander Gusinow, *Oregon Business*, Nov. 1, 2020: <https://www.oregonbusiness.com/article/energy-environment/item/19188-solar-study-highlights-rural-potential>

Access the report: [Solar in the Shadows: Expanding Access to Clean Energy in Forgotten America.](#)

Upcoming Conferences, Webinars, etc.

The Impact of Policies and Business Models on Income Equity in Rooftop Solar Adoption, Clean Energy State Alliance, Webinar, Dec. 3 10:00 a.m. PST

Low- and moderate-income (LMI) households are less likely to adopt rooftop solar than higher income households in the U.S. Some state policy interventions and business models have expanded solar adoption among LMI households, however. New research by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) finds evidence that LMI-specific financial incentives, solar leasing, and property-assessed financing have increased the diffusion of solar adoption among LMI households in existing markets and have driven more installations into previously under-served low-income communities. On this webinar, LBNL researchers will share their findings about the impact of these interventions on solar adoption in low-income communities—Register here: <https://www.cleangroup.org/webinar/the-impact-of-policies-and-business-models-on-income-equity-in-rooftop-solar-adoption/>

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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