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Oregon News

SolRiver Capital Acquires 38 MW Solar Portfolio in Oregon from Sulus Solar

SolRiver Capital, a national solar investment fund, today announced the acquisition of a portfolio of community solar and utility-scale solar PV projects from developer Sulus Solar. The portfolio consists of 14 projects across the state of Oregon, totaling 38 MW-DC. Once completed, the projects will produce over 60 million kilowatt hours of clean electricity annually, which is enough to power more than 5,100 homes each year and is the equivalent of planting over 700,000 trees—SolRiver Capital, LLC, *Globe Newswire*, Oct. 14, 2021: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/10/14/2314208/0/en/SolRiver-Capital-Acquires-38-MW-Solar-Portfolio-in-Oregon-From-Sulus-Solar.html>

PGE Plans to Nearly Triple Clean Resources by 2030

Portland General Electric today shared plans to increase the amount of clean energy it serves to customers and meet its target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from power served to customers by at least 80%¹ by 2030, 90% by 2035 and zero emissions by 2040. Tying together the need for more clean and renewable resources and plans for an upgraded grid to support those resources, PGE today initiated its request for proposals (RFP) public process and filed its inaugural Distribution System Plan (DSP) at the Oregon Public Utility Commission—PGE, [Press release], Oct. 15, 2021: <https://portlandgeneral.com/news/2021-10-15-pge-plans-to-nearly-triple-clean-resources-by-2030>

Portland Icon Bob's Red Mill Earns Gold in Sustainability

Bob's Red Mill, the Milwaukie-based whole-grain brand is being recognized for its sustainable practices. Sold in more than 60 countries across six continents, the brand announced on Thursday, Oct. 7 that

Clackamas County had awarded it a gold certification in sustainability, the county's highest honor bestowed to a business leading the charge in minimizing waste, conserving energy and water, preventing pollution and more. "Since (the panels) came online, we've saved 87 tons of CO2 by forcing renewable solar energy, and that's equivalent to if we had planted 1,300 trees," —Jaelen Ogadhoh, *Portland Tribune*, Oct. 17, 2021: <https://pamplinmedia.com/pt/9-news/525272-419795-portland-icon-bobs-red-mill-earns-gold-in-sustainability>

EPA Grants Over \$250k to Klamath Tribes

The Klamath Tribes recently received two separate grants totaling over \$250,000 dollars. They are coming to the tribes from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. One of the grants will invest \$99,992 into purchasing and installing a solar-powered water pump. It will help minimize external nutrient loading from agricultural properties around Upper Klamath Lake—Mariah Mills, NBC KOB15, Oct. 19, 2021: <https://kobi5.com/news/local-news/epa-grants-nearly-250k-to-klamath-tribes-169592/>

Community Solar Installation in Talent a First in the State

Oregon's first participant-owned solar array sits atop the Oregon Shakespeare Festival production building in Talent. The installation is just awaiting a switch before it can begin putting energy into the electric grid and providing energy credits for the owners—Tony Boom, *Mail Tribune*, Oct. 29, 2021: <https://www.mailtribune.com/top-stories/2021/10/29/community-solar-installation-in-talent-a-first-in-the-state/>

Parties make Final Case in Obsidian Solar Case

People who are challenging (Limited Parties) the proposed project order for the Obsidian Solar Facility in the Fort Rock area, Obsidian Solar Inc. and the Oregon Department of Energy filed their final briefs in the contested case as all parties responded to the closing arguments submitted a couple of weeks ago. The administrative law judge hearing the case is expected to make a decision on Monday, Dec. 13—Kevin Winter, *Lake County Examiner*, Oct. 25, 2021: https://www.lakecountyexam.com/townnews/law/parties-make-final-case-in-obsidian-solar-case/article_66c6aba8-fa50-5209-a5ae-55d564b7b619.html

Washington News

Award-Winning Green Up Community Program is Now Accepting Applications for New Solar Power Projects

Seattle City Light and the Washington State Housing Finance Commission's (WSHFC) Sustainable Energy Trust were selected as 2021 Green Power Leadership Award winners by the Center for Resource Solutions. The award recognizes the two agencies for removing barriers for low- and moderate-income communities to install solar with affordable financing through WSHFC's Sustainable Energy Trust combined with incentives from the Green Up Community Program—Nichole Schultz, *Seattle City Light Powerlines*, Oct. 1, 2021: <https://powerlines.seattle.gov/2021/10/01/award-winning-green-up-community-program-is-now-accepting-applications-for-new-solar-power-projects/>

WDFW Warns Solar Farms could blot out Habitat for At-Risk Species

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife says it needs more money to bird dog energy proposals that might cover shrub-steppe habitat with solar panels. Fish and Wildlife has asked for \$402,000 a year to hire a biologist, environmental planner and consultants to review solar projects and recommend ways to minimize damage to habitat—Don Jenkins, *Capital Press*, Oct. 4, 2021:

https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/rurallife/wdfw-warns-solar-farms-could-blot-out-habitat-for-at-risk-species/article_eac424c6-22fa-11ec-a967-3f65b3e965de.html

Solar Panels Already Saving on Manchester Library's Energy Bills

The Manchester Library is already reaping the rewards from a \$32,040 grant given by Puget Sound Energy for solar panels that now sit atop a new addition to the building. Eric Cisney, president of the nonprofit Friends of the Manchester Library, said the 8.75-kilowatt solar panel system has so far saved more than \$200 in electrical power and any pollution that would have been generated by the production of the excess electricity—Bob Smith, *Kitsap Daily News*, Oct. 11, 2021:

<https://www.kitsapdailynews.com/news/solar-panels-already-saving-on-manchester-librarys-energy-bills/>

Washington's Embattled Shrub-Steppe Ecosystem gets Monetary Boost from Legislature

Within Washington's interior, a sea of sagebrush acts as a haven hidden in plain sight, with one passing by not noticing that there is more than meets the eye to this shrub-filled landscape. A more modern creation, wind and solar energy, also poses a threat. According to Michael Garrity, the energy, water and major projects division manager at the WDFW, solar projects bring shading, mowing and fencing—Jordan Tolley-Turner, *Spokesman-Review*, Oct. 24, 2021:

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/oct/24/washingtons-embattled-shrub-steppe-ecosystem-gets-/>

Watch: Solar Installation Completed at Climate Pledge Arena

A 1.2 MW solar installation set to power Climate Pledge Arena, home of the NHL's newest franchise, the Seattle Kraken, and the WNBA's Seattle Storm, is complete. Unico Solar Investments is the owner/operator of the project. While this project is not the only source of power for the stadium, all the other power sources that feed the Kraken are 100% renewable energy. The stadium features an 11 MW electric load, while the off-site facility hosting the third leg of the installation has a separate load of around two MW. Read more and watch Climate Pledge Arena's YouTube channel upload of a video outlining the installation here—Tim Sylvia, *pv magazine*, Oct. 25, 2021: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2021/10/25/watch-solar-installation-completed-at-climate-pledge-arena/>

Agrivoltaics

Growing Crops Under Solar Panels? Now There's a Bright Idea

In Jack's Solar Garden in Boulder County, Colorado, owner Byron Kominek has covered four of his 24 acres with solar panels. The farm is growing a huge array of crops underneath them—carrots, kale, tomatoes, garlic, beets, radishes, lettuce, and more. It has also been generating enough electricity to power 300 homes. Rooftops are so 2020. If humanity is going to stave off the worst of climate change, people will need to get creative about where they put solar panels. Now scientists are thinking about how to cover canals with them, reducing evaporation while generating power. Airports are filling up their open space with sun-eaters—Matt Simon, *Wired*, Oct. 14, 2021: <https://www.msn.com/en->

[us/weather/topstories/growing-crops-under-solar-panels-now-there-e2-80-99s-a-bright-idea/ar-AAPvOTz?ocid=BingNewsSearch](https://www.bing.com/news/topstories/growing-crops-under-solar-panels-now-there-e2-80-99s-a-bright-idea/ar-AAPvOTz?ocid=BingNewsSearch)

Colorado Research Farm Studies Benefits of Pairing Agriculture with Solar Panels

Fields of solar panels are increasingly common across the country. And, people are exploring new ways to use the land under and around the arrays. Some farm vegetables. Others graze sheep or grow pollinator plants and keep bees. The approach is called agrivoltaics. “We’re taking agricultural practices, and now solar, and basically just putting them together,” says Andy Bingle, the education director at the [Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center](https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2021/10/colorado-research-farm-studies-benefits-of-pairing-agriculture-with-solar-panels/)—YCC Team, *Yale Climate Connections*, Oct. 25, 2021:

<https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2021/10/colorado-research-farm-studies-benefits-of-pairing-agriculture-with-solar-panels/>

Regional and National News

Northwest Energy Plan Emphasizes Solar, Wind Power through 2041 with Coal Losing Steam

With coal-fueled plants becoming a thing of the past, regional experts foresee big changes coming in the next two decades for energy production across the Northwest. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council’s latest 20-year power plan, designed to help suppliers meet the energy needs of Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Montana, emphasizes an increased reliance on renewable energy sources. The plan describes these options, primarily solar and wind, as cost-effective at reducing carbon emissions—Greg Mason, *Spokesman-Review*, Oct. 7, 2021:

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/oct/07/northwest-energy-plan-emphasizes-solar-wind-power/>

Biden Administration Announces Goal of 5 Million Homes Powered by Community Solar

The U.S. Department of Energy on Friday announced a target of the equivalent of five million homes powered by community solar energy by 2025. The target would save \$1 billion and contribute to administration goals of fully renewable electricity by 2035, according to the department. “Community solar is one of the most powerful tools we have to provide affordable solar energy to all American households, regardless of whether they own a home or have a roof suitable for solar panels,” Energy Secretary Jennifer M. Granholm said in a statement—Zack Budryk, *The Hill*, Oct. 8, 2021:

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/575971-biden-administration-announces-goal-of-5-million-homes-powered-by>

New Simplified Permit Guidelines for Solar and Storage

The IREC-led SolSmart program is excited to release an updated version of the national Simplified Permit Guidelines for residential solar, including new guidance on permitting for residential battery storage. These state-of-the-art guidelines are intended to help local governments develop an efficient and streamlined permit process for typical solar PV and storage projects. They will allow communities to reduce unnecessary delays and cost while ensuring compliance with nationally recognized safety standards—IREC, Oct. 8, 2021: <https://irecusa.org/blog/local-energy-climate-solutions/new-simplified-permit-guidelines-for-solar-and-storage/>

The Energy Storage for Social Equity Initiative: Call for Applications due Dec. 3 at 5:00 p.m.

The Energy Storage for Social Equity (ES4SE) Initiative, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy’s

Office of Electricity Energy Storage Program, is a program by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories. ES4SE is designed to empower urban, rural, and tribal disadvantaged communities to consider energy storage technologies and applications as a viable path towards community prosperity, well-being, and resilience. The primary goal is to support disadvantaged communities affected by unreliable and expensive energy systems. Through this program, eligible communities have access to direct non-financial technical assistance and potential support for new energy storage project development and deployment. For technical assistance eligibility, selection criteria, and to apply see: <https://www.pnnl.gov/projects/energy-storage-social-equity-initiative>

Solar Panel Recycling

New Website Aims to Consolidate All Solar Recycling Options

Solar industry volunteers have launched an [informational website](#) to display the different locations that accept recycled solar components. SolarRecycle.org aims to aggregate valuable information on where to donate or sell used equipment, how to recycle solar equipment and state and federal policy related to solar recycling and waste classification. The site features an interactive map, highlighting recycling service providers known in each state—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, Oct. 13, 2021:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2021/10/new-website-aims-to-consolidate-all-solar-recycling-options/>

Workforce Development & Training

NABCEP and IREC Streamline Industry Certification for Veterans

The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) has developed new Veterans Pathways for key credentials that support career advancement in the solar and solar-plus-storage industries. By recognizing relevant skills and experience gained through military service, the new pathways make it easier for veterans to qualify for NABCEP certifications and advance their solar careers—IREC [Press release], Oct. 25, 2021: <https://irecusa.org/blog/press-release/nabcep-and-irec-streamline-industry-certification-for-veterans/>

Reports

Fostering Equity Through Community-Led Clean Energy

This report examines six strategies that community-based organizations are using to build equitable clean energy policies, programs, and investments in local communities. Through six case studies, ACEEE authors show how these strategies are well suited to address inequities in the clean energy sector. The report also discusses the importance of collaboration between local governments and community-based organizations in furthering equitable and just clean energy policies and initiatives. It concludes by identifying actions local governments can take to collaborate with, fund, and support community-led efforts to advance equitable clean energy outcomes. Read more and download the report—ACEEE [Press release], Oct. 21, 2021: <https://www.aceee.org/research-report/u2105>

Utility-Scale Solar, 2021 Edition: Empirical Trends in Deployment, Technology, Cost, Performance, PPA Pricing, and Value in the United States

The report presents analysis of empirical plant-level data from the U.S. fleet of ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV), PV+battery, and concentrating solar-thermal power (CSP) plants with capacities

exceeding five MW_{AC}. While focused on key developments in 2020, the report explores longer-term trends in deployment, technology, capital and operating costs, capacity factors, the levelized cost of solar energy (LCOE), power purchase agreement (PPA) prices, and wholesale market value—Electricity Markets & Policy, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Oct. 2021: <https://emp.lbl.gov/utility-scale-solar/>

Berkeley Lab Study Explores Supply-Side Barriers to Solar Adoption Equity

Although there is growing interest in policies and programs to ensure that the benefits of solar power are equitably reaching households of all income levels, lower income households are still less likely to go solar. Some of the causes for this are well documented and unsurprising. For example, income is unequally distributed among households, and low and moderate income (LMI) households have less cash, are less able to finance installations, are less likely to own their home, and are less aware of the opportunity. But we looked at a further possibility – that solar marketers are not trying as hard to sell to LMI households—Read more and access the study at Berkeley Lab, Electricity Markets & Policy [website], Oct. 21, 2021: <https://emp.lbl.gov/news/berkeley-lab-study-explores-supply-side>

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