



November 7, 2024

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Oregon News

Farmers Pushback against Industrial Solar Farm

Nine miles north of Eugene, a project that could affect the future of farming and solar energy production in the Willamette Valley is taking place... The South Korean company Hanwha Qcells is petitioning the Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council to build the "Muddy Creek Energy Park," but local citizens and farmers have serious concerns about its environmental impact and the future of the Willamette Valley—Mathias Lehman-Winters, *The Daily Emerald*, Oct 4, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Solarize Deschutes Program Saves Homeowners up to 80% on Renewable Energy Upgrade

A program in Deschutes County is knocking down barriers for homeowners to install solar panels on their roofs... "I built this house back in 2005 and my intention at the time was to put solar on it then, but I couldn't afford it," said Chuck Tucker, who lives in Bend. "In 2005, when I was pricing out solar that it was going to cost me \$24,000, and I think today, with the incentives, it was \$21,000."—Peyton Thomas, *Central Oregon Daily News*, Oct 8, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

U.S. Department of Energy Invests \$10 Million to Support Clean Energy Transitions for Communities across the United States

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced three new communities will receive a combined \$10 million in funding and technical assistance to research, model, validate, and deploy local clean energy strategies. Teams of local governments, electric utilities, and community-based groups will work closely with experts from DOE's world class national laboratories over two to three years through an in-depth partnership with the DOE's Clean Energy to Communities (C2C) program. [Select communities include: Lane County, Oregon]—DOE, Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy, [Press Release], Oct 9, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Phoenix-Talent Schools Receive Solar Grants

The Phoenix-Talent School District received \$2 million in grant funds for solar panels and battery backup units from the Oregon Department of Energy to be installed at Talent Elementary School and Talent Middle School... The installation of the new equipment at TMS is set to start in December to January and the installation at TES is set to begin in June, finishing by the end of summer—Rocky Walker, KDRV-

TV Newswatch, Sept 28, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Oregon Agrivoltaics-Based Microgrid Tackles Crop Warming from Climate Change – and May Improve Taste of Lettuce

At Our Table Cooperative, a farm south of Portland, Oregon, an agrivoltaics-based microgrid is expected to reduce crop warming from climate change, lower energy costs, provide resilience to the community and may even improve the taste of lettuce... Our Table Cooperative's interest in agrivoltaics began when Narendra Varma, executive director of the farm, began noticing that as Oregon summers have become hotter in response to climate change, the six-acre organic farm – which grows 40 to 50 types of vegetables and berries – has been 35% to 50% less productive—Lisa Cohn, *Microgrid Knowledge*, Oct 28, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Amazon Web Services Awards Solar Installations to 10 Eastern Oregon Facilities

Amazon Web Services awarded \$1.2 million in rooftop solar installations for local nonprofits and community facilities across Eastern Oregon... GRID Alternatives in partnership with AWS announced Wednesday, Oct. 30, the renewable energy initiative project will benefit 10 local nonprofit organizations and community places spanning across Morrow and Umatilla counties—*Energy Central*, Nov 2, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Oregon Department of Energy Report Showcases State's Changing Energy Landscape

The Oregon Department of Energy published its 2024 Biennial Energy Report on November 1, featuring fundamental information and data about energy in Oregon, highlights of emerging energy resources, and foundational “Energy 101s” on current topics and technologies—Oregon Dept. of Energy, [Press Release], Nov 4, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Roseburg Sewage Disposal Service Receives Nearly \$3 Million in Funding for Solar Upgrades

A Roseburg sewage disposal service provider has been awarded nearly \$3 million in state grant funding for solar upgrades to its infrastructure thanks to a partnership with a renewable energy asset developer, according to Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority officials—Ryan Bonham, KEZI 9, Nov 4, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

Washington News

Funding Awarded for Clean Energy Projects

Two Pierce County departments were awarded grant funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce Clean Energy Program. Pierce County Facilities Management was awarded \$160,000 to study the feasibility of implementing solar energy and battery storage systems at County-owned facilities. Pierce County Planning and Public Works was awarded \$2.3 million to construct a large-scale solar innovation project on the site of the closed Purdy Landfill. Both initiatives align with Pierce County's ongoing efforts to enhance sustainability and reduce its environmental footprint—*Tacoma Weekly*, Oct 8, 2024: [Click here to read more.](#)

\$2.2 Million for Eastern's Clean Energy Projects

Eastern Washington University (EWU) is set to reduce its carbon footprint with the help of a \$2.2 million

grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce. The funding will support two major clean energy initiatives: a carbon capture system and a solar energy project—Clare McGraw, *Cheney Free Press*, Oct 9, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

South Whidbey Solar Projects Receive Grant Funding

With the use of solar power grants [awarded by the WA Dept. of Commerce], two South Whidbey nonprofit organizations hope to provide a place for community members to gather during an emergency or natural disaster... Goosefoot Community Fund received \$66,400 for a feasibility study of a solar plus storage project at Bayview Center, where the Goose Grocer is located. The plan, Executive Director Elise Miller explained, is to offset utility costs at the electricity-heavy grocery store while also providing a community resiliency hub to citizens during a power outage... Good Cheer received \$210,000 to enhance its food bank building with a battery energy storage system similar to Goosefoot's plan—Kira Erickson, *Whidbey News-Times*, Oct 11, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

New Commerce Resources Aid Access to Federal Clean Energy Funds

The Washington State Department of Commerce today announced two new programs that will connect Washington entities with federal clean energy and climate funding opportunities. Supported by the Climate Commitment Act, these resources aim to promote sustainability, boost economic growth, and ensure all communities across the state have equitable access.

The new resources help Washington organizations and communities identify and access federal funding opportunities:

- The [Federal Clean Energy Tax Credit Assistance Program](#) (CETCAP) is available to organizations and entities eligible for federal clean energy tax incentives through the Inflation Reduction Act. Free resources, including personalized support from clean energy tax attorneys, are available now for community-based organizations, local government agencies, ports, housing authorities, tribes and other entities. Interested parties should visit [Lawyers for Good Government](#), Commerce's contracted program partner, to submit a request for assistance.
- The [Federal Funds Grant Writing Assistance Program](#) is designed for tribes, community-based organizations, local government agencies, and other entities to help prepare and submit federal grant applications. This free resource is available now and includes grant writing services such as proposal writing and development, proposal design and project management, and partnership coordination, among other services.

For more information [click here to read](#) the WA State Dept. of Commerce's full *News Release*, Oct 17, 2024.

WA's Solar Panel-Recycling Program Needs Teeth

In 2017, Washington passed into law a groundbreaking solar panel-recycling requirement. This legislation was the first of its kind. Only now are historically progressive states like California trying to catch up... The [law requires photovoltaic module \(solar panel\) manufacturers to finance](#) the takeback and recycling of the solar panels at no cost to the end user. Specifically, the law required solar panel manufacturers to have developed a stewardship plan by July 1, 2017, before any further sales into Washington—Bret Manley, *The Seattle Times*, Oct 22, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

State Invests More than \$8M in Cowlitz Indian Tribe Clean Energy Projects. It Pledges to Continue

Efforts ‘for Generations.’

The Washington State Department of Commerce director and Cowlitz Indian Tribe chairman signed a memorandum of understanding Wednesday to continue state investments into Cowlitz clean-energy initiatives for the future... Since 2022, the state has invested \$8,473,508 in the tribe’s clean energy initiatives. The tribe has received two technical assistance grants supported by the Climate Commitment Act. The act limits and reduces greenhouse gas emissions from large businesses and industries in Washington—Brianna Murschel, *The Columbian*, Oct 30, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Inslee OKs Horse Heaven Power Project, Admonishes EFSEC

Gov. Jay Inslee has approved the Horse Heaven wind and solar installation in southeast Washington, while admonishing the council that recommended the project to speed up its reviews... Inslee’s approval allows Colorado-based Scout Clean Energy to install up to 222 turbines and cover more than 5,000 acres of farmland with solar panels on hills visible from the Tri-Cities.—Don Jenkins, *Capital Press*, Nov 4, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

National News

U.S. Department of Energy Launches Community Microgrid Assistance Partnership

The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Electricity (OE) today announced the launch of the Community Microgrid Assistance Partnership (C-MAP). This initiative is designed to assist remote, rural, and electrically isolated communities in developing resilient microgrid systems that enhance energy reliability and security, particularly in historically underserved and/or Indigenous areas... Starting October 2, 2024, eligible communities can submit proposals for technical assistance and funding to support the design and implementation of a microgrid project, or to optimize existing microgrid systems for improved performance. Interested participants can find [comprehensive guidance](#) on the DOE website. The application deadline is December 20, 2024—DOE, Office of Electricity, Oct 2, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

\$1.5B Federal Boost for Four Major Transmission Projects as DOE Unveils National Grid Study

The Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded capacity contracts of up to \$1.5 billion to four major transmission lines under its Transmission Facilitation Program (TFP) to aid the transfer of 7.1 GW of new capacity throughout Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The DOE’s Grid Deployment Office (GDO) on Oct. 3 also released its final 800-page [National Transmission Planning Study \(NTP\)](#), a crucial roadmap geared to help regional transmission organizations (RTOs), utilities, and other stakeholders plan and build out the transmission system. The study concludes that if the U.S. were to implement its “lowest-cost U.S. power system portfolios” that meet future demand growth and reliability requirements, it would need a transmission expansion of up to 2.1 to 2.6 times the size of the 2020 system by 2050 and an expansion of interregional transmission on a magnitude of 1.9 to 3.5—Sonal Patel, *Power*, Oct 3, 2024: [Click here to read more and access study](#).

Biden-Harris Administration Invests in Rural Communities to Lower Energy Costs and Create Jobs in 34 States as Part of Investing in America Agenda

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small announced today that USDA is partnering with farmers and small businesses to expand access to clean energy and lower energy bills through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)... USDA continues to accept REAP applications and has set aside a portion of the program funds to support underutilized renewable energy technologies, like wind and geothermal power. For additional information, contact a [local energy coordinator](#). [Seven awards benefit people in Oregon; four awards benefit people in Washington]. A [complete list of all REAP projects](#) is available online—UDFS, [Press Release], Oct 3, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Bonneville Power Administration Unveils Plans for \$3B in Grid Upgrades

The Bonneville Power Administration on Tuesday identified roughly \$3 billion of transmission line and substation projects it said would be key for accommodating growing electricity demand and the expansion of wind and solar power... Bonneville, the largest supplier of electricity in the Pacific Northwest, is outlining the infrastructure plans as electricity demand is expected to rise substantially in the years ahead and as Washington is pressing to get more power from renewable sources—Bill Lucia, *Washington Standard*, Oct 15, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

BPA Plans \$3 Billion in Transmission Projects, Including 500-kV Lines

The Bonneville Power Administration on Tuesday proposed [\\$3 billion in transmission construction](#), including 500-kV projects across Oregon and Washington... The projects would accommodate regional load growth and enable BPA to add thousands of megawatts of wind and solar generation as well as battery storage to its system, the federal power marketer said in [a press release](#)—Ethan Howland, *Utility Dive*, Oct 16, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Biden Admin Awards \$2B in New Grid Resilience Grants

In the wake of Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the Biden administration has awarded a total of nearly \$2 billion in new grants to help harden, expand, and modernize U.S. power grids... Friday's [awards](#), the third round from the Department of Energy's [Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships \(GRIP\) Program](#), "couldn't come at a more critical time," Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said in a media briefing. "Energy demand, as we know, is rising nationwide, and it is straining our outdated grid infrastructure. And as climate change worsens, we're seeing more frequent and devastating storms like Helene and Milton." Jeff St. John, *Canary Media*, Oct 18, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Reports

RMI's New Report: VPPs Could Prevent Up to 28 Million Tons of Carbon Emissions by 2035

Virtual power plants (VPP) could prevent 1.5 to 7.3 million metric tons of CO2 emissions in 2024, according to a new report... RMI (formerly Rocky Mountain Institute), an independent nonprofit focused on transforming global energy systems, and Virtual Power Plant Partnership (VPP3), a coalition of nonprofits and organizations focused on unlocking the market potential of VPPs, recently released the report, entitled "Power Shift: How Virtual Power Plants Unlock Cleaner, More Affordable Electricity Systems."... The report explores the potential role VPPs could play in transforming and decarbonizing the electricity grid, as well as delivering affordable, reliable power—Kathy Hitchens, *Microgrid Knowledge*, Sept 26, 2024: [Click here to read more and access the report](#).

DOE Delivers High-Stakes Grid Study as Election Pressure Rises

The Department of Energy issued a planning road map Thursday for a major expansion of the nation's high-voltage power grid aimed at moving far more renewable energy to population centers and meeting 2035 climate goals... The long-awaited National Transmission Planning Study arrives with little more than a month left in the 2024 presidential campaign. Under a Democratic administration, if Vice President Kamala Harris wins the election in November, the report is expected to guide efforts to build more long-distance power lines that can ship power across multiple states—Peter Behr, Jeffrey Tomich, *E&E News*, Oct 6, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Why this Florida Neighborhood Still has Power

In the wake of Hurricane Milton, more than 3 million people in Florida lost power. But in a recently built neighborhood in the small town of Cortez, as soon as the storm took out the grid, batteries switched on to power lights, fridges, and other essentials—Adele Peters, *Fast Company*, Oct 11, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Artificial Intelligence Camera Captures Bird Behavior Around Solar Panels to Inform Siting and Conservation—Success Story

Understanding how wildlife interacts with solar arrays is critical to maintaining healthy ecosystems while deploying clean energy. A team at Argonne National Laboratory set out to develop a camera system that could continuously monitor how birds behave around solar panels using artificial intelligence. Their results provided greater understanding of bird behaviors at large-scale solar sites—DOE, EERE, Solar Technologies Office, Oct 24, 2024: [Click here to read more](#).

Conferences, Webinars and other Upcoming Events

NW Energy Coalition Clean & Affordable Energy Conference: UW Campus, Seattle, Nov 13, 2024

Hear the latest on energy issues in our region and learn from peers' experiences within the clean energy transition in a tabletop discussion—[Click here for more information and to register](#).

Energy Resilience Planning for Local Governments Workshop: Dec 6, 2024 Virtual

Join Sustainable Northwest and Energy Trust of Oregon for the 3rd Annual Energy Resilience Planning for Local Governments Workshop. This free, virtual, half-day workshop is aimed at connecting city and county staff with funding, resources, and organizations to help with the planning and implementation necessary to make their community more energy-resilient and prepared for future disasters. [Click here for more information and to register](#).

Solar Power and Energy Storage Mountain West : Denver, CO, Jan 20-22, 2025

Presented by the Colorado Solar and storage Association (COSSA), this conference is designed to advance your understanding of new policies and opportunities to equip your business with the necessary skills to compete in the ever-developing clean energy industry. [Click here for more information and to register](#).

Intersolar & Energy Storage North America (IESNA) : San Diego, CA, Feb 25-27, 2025

Intersolar & Energy Storage North America offers clean energy professionals an unmatched opportunity to gain critical insights, make impactful connections, source quality products—and have fun. This Flagship Expo & Conference will deliver a nationwide look into solar, storage, EV charging infrastructure, and manufacturing at federal and state levels. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

2025 Community Solar Innovation Summit: Denver, CO, June 26-2027, 2025

The only national conference put on by the community solar industry for the community solar industry. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

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