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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 <http://www.energy.wsu.edu/solarnewsbriefs.aspx>

Oregon News

Powering EV Charging Stations with Agrivoltaics

A research team from Oregon State studied the potential of agricultural land to generate solar electricity to power electric vehicles along the state's highways. They found that agrivoltaic systems placed in adjacent proximity to the highway can be useful in rural areas, which is also where electric charging stations are most needed. The study, recently published in [Scientific Reports](#), looked at how agrivoltaic technology can be used to improve EV charging infrastructure to reduce range anxiety, which is the worry about making it to the next charging point—Anne Fischer, *pv magazine*, July 5, 2022: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/07/05/powering-ev-charging-stations-with-agrivoltaics/>

Public Hearing Set for New 320-Acre Solar Farm near Prineville

Developers are seeking a conditional use permit to build a 320-acre solar farm outside of Prineville, the latest in a growing number of solar projects in Crook County. Jake Stephens — CEO of the Bend-based developer NewSun Energy, which is spearheading the Powell East Solar Farm — estimates the installation could generate about 50-60 megawatts of power—Bryce Dole, *The Bulletin*, July 8, 2022: https://www.bendbulletin.com/localstate/public-hearing-set-for-new-320-acre-solar-farm-near-prineville/article_0d994408-fee8-11ec-9341-3fcf88122343.html

Oregon Researchers Propose Innovative Path Forward for Farming's Water Woes

At 8:00 a.m., it is already warm — bordering on hot — at Oregon State University's Vegetable Research Farm in Corvallis. The ground is dusty and so is faculty research assistant Matt Davis, who is on his knees, rooting around in the soil. He pulls out an Adirondack blue potato, one of three varieties he is

harvesting, and hands a bin of them to OSU Extension's Amy Garrett for sorting and weighing. Garrett examines each potato closely, looking for damage. But there is something else out of the ordinary about this particular research plot: The rows of potatoes are planted between rows of solar panels—Jes Burns, *OPB*, July 21, 2022: https://www.opb.org/article/2022/07/21/oregon-research-agriculture-water-shortage-solar-panels-solution/?utm_medium=email

City Council Approves Up to \$122 Million for Clean Energy Fund Grants to 65 Nonprofits

After a short, sharp debate about racism and scrutiny of public contractors, the Portland City Council unanimously approved \$122 million in grants from the Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund, a \$298 million pot of tax dollars aimed at curbing carbon emissions and driving climate investments into low-income communities of color—Anthony Effinger, *Willamette Week*, July 20, 2022: <https://www.wweek.com/news/city/2022/07/20/city-council-approves-up-to-122-million-for-clean-energy-fund-grants-to-65-non-profits/>

New Interactive Tool and Report Connects Oregon Renewable Energy Potential with Important Development Considerations

A public partnership with the Oregon Department of Energy, Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development, Oregon State University's Institute for Natural Resources, and the U.S. Department of Defense has published new educational materials that will help local governments, Tribes, communities, policymakers, agencies, energy developers, and other stakeholders access important information and considerations for potential renewable energy in Oregon. The Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment (ORESAs) project was funded through a \$1.1 million U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) grant, with the goal of providing baseline data to support important conversations around potential energy and transmission development in the state—Jennifer Kalez, *Oregon Department of Energy*, July 21, 2022: <https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2022/7/21/new-interactive-tool-and-report-connects-renewable-energy>

Washington News

New Wind and Solar Projects Planned Across Washington

The [Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council \(EFSEC\)](#) became an independent state agency in Washington on June 30, 2022, making quite a few decisions regarding renewable energy. This year Washington State Legislature passed E2SHB 1812 to meet the state's clean energy goals. The final bill report, states the policy of Washington regarding energy facility site locations recognizing a need for additional energy facilities in Washington. This ensures the location and operation of these renewable energy facilities will produce minimal adverse effects on the environment trying to balance the increasing demands for energy facilities with the broad interests of the public—Sophia Lesseos, *NBC*, July 6, 2022: https://www.nbcrightnow.com/news/new-wind-and-solar-projects-planned-across-washington/article_77dccd2a-fd54-11ec-bdca-47ff39ac6e34.html

Green Power Solar Grant Awarded to Samish Indian Nation

As part of the Puget Sound Energy (PSE)'s efforts to support organizations that serve families and individuals in the community, they have awarded over \$900,000 in total grant funding through their Green Power and Solar Choice programs. Samish Indian Nation is proud to be a recipient of this round's competitive funding. Samish operates on the foundation of protecting citizens and respecting the land

that has connected them to their ancestors since time immemorial—Samish Indian Nation, *Cision*, July 11, 2022: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/green-power-solar-grant-awarded-to-samish-indian-nation-301583852.html>

Study Calls for Smarter Land Use Planning to Curb Farmland Loss

The Pacific Northwest stands to lose more than half a million acres of farmland to urban sprawl by 2040 unless cities make smarter development choices, according to a new report by the American Farmland Trust. The report, "[Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future](#)," also highlights threats to farmland by rising sea levels due to climate change, and the accelerated expansion of solar projects needed to meet zero-carbon energy mandates—Sierra McClain, *Capital Press*, July 13, 2022: https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/research/study-calls-for-smarter-land-use-planning-to-curb-farmland-loss/article_14d4699c-022f-11ed-8cc0-93ce4f74e909.html

Several More Solar Farm Projects Proposed for Yakima County

At least five solar energy projects have been either approved or are proposed along State Route 24, between Moxee and the eastern Yakima County line — or just over it. They are listed below, with their company, size, location and approval status—Joel Donofrio, *Yakima Herald-Republic*, published in the *Wenatchee World*, July 17, 2022: https://www.wenatcheeworld.com/news/several-more-solar-farm-projects-proposed-for-yakima-county/article_ea593114-06b3-11ed-8116-3f02a41bbc6e.html

Yakima County Commissioners Plan Moratorium on Solar Farms until Siting Rules are Devised

Worried that Yakima County could become an epicenter for solar farms, county commissioners plan to enact a moratorium on such projects until a local code siting them can be developed. So far, two solar projects have been approved east of Moxee with two more awaiting final approval. Those projects would not be impacted by the moratorium—Phil Ferolito, *Yakima Herald-Republic* published in the *Wenatchee World*, July 17, 2022: https://www.wenatcheeworld.com/news/yakima-county-commissioners-plan-moratorium-on-solar-farms-until-siting-rules-are-devised/article_72952234-06bb-11ed-a0be-6f742daeab69.html

Puget Sound Energy Awards Solar Grant to Ferndale Food Bank and Whatcom Center for Early Learning

The Ferndale Food Bank and the Whatcom Center for Early Learning will reduce their annual energy costs as well as reduce their carbon footprint with a solar grant from Puget Sound Energy.

The Green Power Solar Grant was provided through PSE's Green Power and Solar Choice programs to help each of the organizations install a new solar array at their locations. The Ferndale Food Bank was awarded \$80,918 while the Whatcom Center for Early Learning (WCEL) is set to receive \$38,409—Submitted by Puget Sound Energy, *Whatcom Talk*, [July 27, 2022]:

<https://www.whatcomtalk.com/2022/07/26/puget-sound-energy-awards-solar-grant-to-ferndale-food-bank-and-whatcom-center-for-early-learning/>

National News

Biden-Harris Administration Dedicates \$56 million to Domestic Solar Manufacturing and Recycling

The Biden-Harris Administration, through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced a slate of new initiatives and \$56 million in new funding, including \$10 million from President Biden's Bipartisan

Infrastructure Law, to spur innovation in solar manufacturing and recycling—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, July 15, 2022: <https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2022/07/biden-harris-administration-56-million-domestic-solar-manufacturing/>

Mining for Solar Power as DOE & EPA Seek Perspectives

The Department of Energy's Clean Energy Demonstration Office has issued a Request for Information (RFI) to support the development of a renewable energy program on the nation's 17,750 current and former mines. The goal of the RFI is to choose a selection of projects that will chart a course to guide future projects, as they seek to navigate the long and complex federal, state, and local rules that regulate siting and grid interconnection—John Fitzgerald Weaver, *pv magazine*, July 15, 2022: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/07/15/mining-for-solar-power-as-doe-epa-look-for-perspectives/>

Community Solar is a Path to the Future if Policymakers Plan for It

Community solar can often win bipartisan hearts and minds in a way that more traditional PV project development does not. The key is clearly in that first word – community – but a well-designed community solar project needs to truly deliver results that meet (even exceed) the objectives of that community. Is it boosting up disenfranchised residents? Is farmland preservation a priority? Are there (hopefully) big clean energy and electrification goals that need to be achieved—Chris Crowell, *Solar Builder*, July 20, 2022: <https://solarbuildermag.com/featured/community-solar-is-a-path-to-the-future-if-policymakers-plan-for-it/>

Solar Investment Tax Credit to be Extended 10 Years at 30 percent

In a surprise victory for the solar and clean technology industries, Senator Joe Manchin and Democrats reached an agreement on a reconciliation bill, dubbed the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. The bill includes \$370 billion in spending for renewable energy and climate measures. The bill calls for a 10-year extension at 30 percent of the cost of the installed equipment, which will then step down to 26 percent in 2033 and 22 percent in 2034—Ryan Kennedy, *pv magazine*, July 28, 2022: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/07/28/solar-investment-tax-credit-to-be-extended-10-years-at-30/>

Solar Industry News and Innovations

12th Annual National Solar Jobs Census 2021

The National Solar Jobs Census is the annual review of employment in the U.S. solar energy industry, nationwide and by state. Now published by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC), this report is the most comprehensive and rigorous analysis of solar labor market trends in the United States—IREC, July 25, 2022: <https://irecusa.org/resources/national-solar-jobs-census-2021/>

Publications

Berkeley Lab Study Explores Energy Justice Implications of Renewable Energy Siting Patterns

The clean energy transition will require utilizing large swathes of land for utility-scale solar and wind energy project sites. The impacts of large-scale deployment of solar and wind energy projects on local communities raises questions of energy justice. Some argue that the clean energy transition could burden disadvantaged communities with negative impacts from project development, while others argue that project development could provide economic and cultural benefits to disadvantaged

communities. In a new study (link is external), the Berkeley Lab explores the technoeconomic and demographic factors that influence renewable energy project siting patterns—Berkeley Lab Electricity Markets & Policy, July 25, 2022: <https://emp.lbl.gov/news/berkeley-lab-study-explores-energy-justice>

Upcoming Events: Conferences, Webinars

New Federal Funding for Energy Storage: What is Available and How to Qualify [webinar]: August 9, 10:00 a.m. PDT

U.S. DOE has several new, large funding budgets for energy storage projects, research and development. This webinar will feature speakers from the national laboratories and U.S. DOE, who will explain how and when these federal dollars will become available, who can qualify, and how to apply. For more information and to register see Clean Energy States Alliance website:

<https://www.cesa.org/event/new-federal-funding-for-energy-storage/>

Sunny Awards [webinar]: August 15, 2022, 12:00 p.m. PDT

The Sunny Awards for Equitable Community Solar (The Sunny Awards) is a \$100,000 prize competition that will recognize community solar projects and programs that employ or develop best practices to increase equitable access to the meaningful benefits of community solar for subscribers and their communities. For more information on this prize program and to register for this U.S. DOE webinar see: <https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/sunny-awards-equitable-community-solar>

Working Together for an Equitable Energy Future [virtual event]: August 25-26

The Equity in a Clean Energy Economy (ECEE) Collaborative is bringing together an array of stakeholders to discuss new approaches and tools to ensure affordability and equity in the transition to clean energy. This national workshop will feature keynote presentations by leaders, a variety of panels, new research and customer survey findings, and an emphasis on bringing voices of disadvantaged communities into our deliberations. For more information and to register:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/56f6e7df701/a6f56843-6223-401f-a584-29143804084a.pdf?rdr=true>

2022 WA State Solar Summit: Connecting to our Clean Energy Future: [hybrid event] Centilia Cultural Center, Seattle and/or Virtual: October 14

Hosted by Solar Washington since 2015, the Washington State Solar Summit is an important annual information gathering and networking event for anyone working in the solar industry or interested in solar, including manufacturers, installers, utilities, municipalities and tribes, legislators/policy makers, educators, students, advocacy organizations/nonprofits, distributors, engineers, financial lenders, consultants and more. For more information and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-solar-washington-summit-connecting-to-our-clean-energy-future-tickets-354707689247?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

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