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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

New Community Solar Projects Bring Solar to More Oregonians

The first three community solar projects through the Oregon Community Solar Program are now online, bringing more clean energy options to Oregon residents and businesses. The projects, located near Sandy, Molalla and Woodburn, are managed by solar developer Neighborhood Power. In total, they will produce more than 13,500 MWh per year—enough energy to power 1,400 Oregon homes—Energy Trust Blog, Apr. 21, 2021: <https://blog.energytrust.org/new-community-solar-projects-bring-solar-to-more-oregonians/?category=our-news>

First Projects in Oregon's Mandated Community Solar Program Now Coming Online

Four community solar farms are coming online in Oregon within the Portland General Electric service territory. Each 2.5-MW project is supported by renewable energy provider Neighborhood Power and Mana Monitoring. Three of the projects, online now, are the first projects commissioned in Oregon's state-mandated community solar program. Daimler Trucks, WorldMark by Wyndham–Portland Waterfront Park vacation club resort and Clackamas County have all committed to their renewable energy goals as initial subscribers—Kelly Pickerel, *Solar Power World*, Apr. 6, 2021: <https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2021/04/first-projects-in-oregons-mandated-community-solar-program-now-coming-online/>

Adapture Renewables Completes 33 MWdc Portfolio of Ten Solar Projects in Oregon

Adapture Renewables Inc. announced today the completion of a portfolio of ten solar projects totaling 33 megawatts (MWdc) across the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Adapture Renewables acquired the portfolio in early 2019 and successfully brought all of the projects to commercial operation by

February 2021—*Businesswire*, Apr. 13, 2021:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210413005417/en/>

ODOE Helps Cut the Virtual Ribbon on Ashland Food Co-op's Solar Installation

Oregon Department of Energy Director Janine Benner joined Ashland Food Co-op, True South Solar, the City of Ashland, and other partners to “cut the ribbon” on Ashland Food Co-op’s new virtual net metered solar installation. ODOE was proud to support the project with an over \$100,000 Renewable Energy Development Grant. The Ashland Food Co-op invested in the 528-panel, 197 kilowatt system as part of its effort to be completely powered by renewable energy by 2030—Oregon Department of Energy, Apr. 23, 2021: <https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2021/4/23/odoe-helps-cut-the-virtual-ribbon-on-ashland-food-co-ops-solar-installation>

Canby Church gets Solar Energy Funds

Portland General Electric recently announced its customers enrolled in Green Future renewable energy options have supported another \$1.76 million in local energy projects through the PGE Renewable Development Fund. Nine organizations, including a Canby church, are being awarded grants to support solar projects at their facilities, providing more renewable energy being generated locally and benefitting the many communities they serve. Smyrna United Church of Christ (UCC), Canby, was awarded a grant for a \$32,559 14-kilowatt solar project. Smyrna UCC has served the Canby community since 1891 and currently has a congregation of about 100 active members—John Baker, *CanbyHerald*, Mar. 24, 2021: <https://pamplinmedia.com/cby/147-news/501312-401837-canby-church-gets-solar-energy-funds>

Washington

How Puget Sound Energy's \$1 Million Green Power Solar Grants Benefit Two Thurston County Organizations

In the energy sector, you might say that green is the new black. Customer demand for renewable energy has been increasing every year and at Puget Sound Energy (PSE), that demand has been harnessed to fund solar grants to nonprofits, housing authorities and tribal entities serving low-income and BIPOC community members through the Green Power Solar Grant program. “This year we were able to award over \$1 million to 15 organizations,” says Mackenzie Martin, community projects manager. It’s the largest amount distributed through the program to date. Around Thurston County, two of the selected projects will have a significant impact. A \$100,000 grant will enable the Nisqually Indian Tribe to install a 120-kilowatt solar system on their Elders Facility. At YMCA Olympia, a \$12,665 grant is being used for a 3.24-kilowatt solar installation on their historic Main House—Heidi Smith, *Thurston Talk*, Apr. 9, 2021: <https://www.thurstontalk.com/2021/04/09/how-puget-sound-energys-1-million-green-power-solar-grants-benefit-two-thurston-county-organizations/>

Solar Farms are Booming in Washington State, but their Locations are Causing Friction

In September 2018, Russ and Amy Hanson received an unsolicited offer from Invenergy to cover their land near this south central Washington town with solar panels. They could earn up to \$40,000 a year for a quarter-century lease on their 40-acre tract, according to correspondence from the company to the Hansons. After decades in Western Washington, the Hansons were close to retiring to this area with a spectacular view of snow-capped Mount Adams. They did not want solar panels out their front door,

and turned down the deal—Hal Berton, *Seattle Times*, May 2, 2021 republished in the Union-Bulletin, May 3, 2021: https://www.union-bulletin.com/news/northwest/solar-farms-are-booming-but-their-locations-are-causing-friction/article_5bdf5a88-ac25-11eb-9561-c7dee1ae4b28.html

National

Broad Coalition asks Congress to Expand Local Rooftop and Community Solar Power for All

A coalition of advocates representing civil rights, indigenous, environment, equity, rural and business organizations is calling on Congress to prioritize the equitable and just deployment of renewable energy through policies that support expanding local rooftop and community solar power for all. In a [letter to Congressional leaders](#), the coalition recommends a comprehensive set of federal policy actions, including the deployment and expansion of community and rooftop solar programs, that will build a more equitable, resilient and clean electricity system and economy that works for all Americans—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, Apr. 20, 2021:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2021/04/broad-coalition-calls-on-congress-policies-make-solar-power-accessible-to-all/>

New Traceability Protocol Allows Solar Companies to Ensure Ethical Supply Chain

Today the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) is releasing a new tool to increase supply chain transparency and help ensure that all solar components are made ethically throughout the solar value chain. The [Solar Supply Chain Traceability Protocol](#) is a set of guidelines designed to help solar companies meet compliance obligations and, importantly, provide customers with assurances that their solar products are free of unethical labor practices—SEIA Press Release, Apr. 29, 2021:

<https://www.seia.org/news/new-traceability-protocol-allows-solar-companies-ensure-ethical-supply-chain>

Agrivoltaics

Partial Shade from Solar Panels Increase Abundance of Flowers in Late Summer

[A new study](#) by Oregon State University researchers found that shade provided by solar panels increased the abundance of flowers under the panels and delayed the timing of their bloom, both findings that could aid the agricultural community. The study, believed to be the first that looked at the impact of solar panels on flowering plants and insects, has important implications for solar developers who manage the land under solar panels, as well as agriculture and pollinator health advocates who are seeking land for pollinator habitat restoration—Sean Nealon, Oregon State University Newsroom, Apr. 12, 2021: <https://today.oregonstate.edu/news/partial-shade-solar-panels-increase-abundance-flowers-late-summer>

Combining Solar Panels and Lamb Grazing Increases Land Productivity, Study Finds

Land productivity could be greatly increased by combining sheep grazing and solar energy production on the same land, according to new research by Oregon State University scientists. This is believed to be the first study to investigate livestock production under agrivoltaic systems, where solar energy production is combined with agricultural production, such as planting agricultural crops or grazing animals—Read more and access the report: Oregon State University, *Phys.org*, Apr. 29, 2021:

<https://phys.org/news/2021-04-combining-solar-panels-lamb-grazing.html>

Solar Panel Recycling

What It Takes To Realize a Circular Economy for Solar Photovoltaic System Materials

Rapidly increasing solar photovoltaic (PV) installations has led to environmental and supply chains concerns. The United States relies on imports of raw materials for solar module manufacturing and imports of PV cells and modules to meet domestic demand. As PV demand increases, so will the need to mine valuable materials—a motivation for domestic reuse and recycling. Read article and access reports at: NREL, Apr. 2, 2021: <https://www.nrel.gov/news/program/2021/what-it-takes-to-realize-a-circular-economy-for-solar-photovoltaic-system-materials.html>

Reports

Overcoming Barriers to Solar+Storage in Critical Facilities Serving Low-Income Communities: A Survey of Service Providers

Critical facilities serving low-income communities could benefit greatly from the cost savings and energy resilience of solar combined with energy storage. However, this sector faces numerous barriers to solar+storage deployment, and market penetration remains low. In order to assess existing market barriers, Clean Energy Group conducted a survey of municipalities, community organizations, affordable housing developers, and technical service providers who have been involved in developing solar+storage projects. This report summarizes the results of this survey and suggests actions to bring the benefits of solar+storage to the people who need it most—Clean Energy States Alliance, Apr. 21, 2021: <https://www.cleanegroup.org/ceg-resources/resource/overcoming-barriers-to-solar-storage-in-critical-lmi-facilities/>

Solar for Manufactured Homes: An Assessment of the Opportunities and Challenges in 14 States

This two-volume report describes the nature of the manufactured housing stock and shows how those homes are distributed across the country. It explains the general obstacles to LMI solar, as well as additional challenges related specifically to manufactured housing. It identifies the types of solar technologies that can work with manufactured housing and includes nine case studies that highlight ways in which solar can be deployed to benefit manufactured housing residents—To download report and register for the associated webinar see: Clean Energy States Alliance, Apr. 29, 2021: <https://www.cesa.org/resource-library/resource/solar-for-manufactured-homes>

Upcoming Virtual Conferences and Presentations

Solar Washington Presentation: Virtual 2021 Legislative Session Recap, May 18 at 12:00 p.m. PDT

Join Solar Washington in this presentation scheduled for Tuesday, May 18 at 12:00 noon (Pacific). Solar Washington Board Member Sarah Vorpahl will provide a review of the climate and energy bills from the 2021 legislative session out of Olympia. For more information and to register:

https://www.solarwa.org/may_2021_solar_washington_presentation_2021_legislative_session_recap

NREL Solar Permitting Tools: An Introduction to SolarApp+ and TRACE Tool, May 19 at 10:00 a.m. PDT

This webinar, hosted by the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA), will feature an update from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) on the development of the Solar Automated Permit Processing Platform Plus (SolarAPP+), an online solar permitting platform, including piloting results from

jurisdictions in Arizona and California. NREL will also present the new Solar Time-based Residential Analytics and Cycle time Estimator (Solar TRACE), a tool designed to help local governments, utilities, and industry identify permitting, inspection and interconnection cycle times and related requirements nationwide—For more information and to register: <https://www.cesa.org/event/nrel-solar-permitting-tools/>

An Assessment of Evaluation Practices of Low- and Moderate-Income Solar Programs, May 20 at 10:00 a.m. PDT

As concerns about social equity and clean energy rise, a growing number of state and local governments, utilities, and non-profit organizations are promoting solar power to reduce energy bills for low- and moderate-income (LMI) households, while meeting other policy goals such as job creation and clean energy generation. At least 41 active programs in 21 states have made funding commitments totaling well over a billion dollars. A new study, from Berkeley Lab looks at how those programs are being evaluated. To read more, access the report and register for the webinar:

<https://emp.lbl.gov/publications/assessment-evaluation-practices-low>

2021 Clean & Affordable Energy Conference, June 2 and June 10 at 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PDT

The Clean & Affordable Energy Conference, hosted by the Northwest Energy Coalition, will cover the most pressing issues in the Northwest's energy landscape. These include salmon recovery and potential changes to the federal hydro system, as well as how to advance equity in the energy space through funding and support for expanded community participation. Panelists will discuss how to address regulatory barriers to decarbonizing utilities, and how stakeholders can engage in the NW Power Council's regional planning processes to support clean, affordable, and reliable service for all Northwest communities. For more information and to register: <https://nwenergy.org/nw-clean-affordable-energy-conference/>

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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