



September 7, 2023

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Oregon News

Oregon Solar + Storage Rebate Program Will Continue with Addition \$10 Million Investment

The Oregon Department of Energy's popular Oregon Solar + Storage Rebate Program will continue providing rebates for solar or solar and paired energy storage systems after an additional \$10 million investment by the Oregon Legislature... The additional \$10 million investment will continue supporting even more solar and storage projects. To date, the program has made funding commitments (either as rebates or reservations for rebates) to more than 4,600 projects, representing over \$14 million in rebates—Oregon Department of Energy, Blog, July 26, 2023:

<https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2023/7/26/oregon-solar-storage-rebate-program-will-continue-with-additional-10-million-investment>

Oregon Solar Car Team Nabs Second Place in Annual National Competition

The Oregon Solar Car Team, a group of teens from four Central Oregon high schools, just did something remarkable. They fundraised for their own solar-powered car and then built it from scratch, soldering every wire, tightening every bolt and connecting every solar panel joint by joint... Once the car was finished, they carted it off to Texas for a showdown with dozens of other teams from around the U.S. in the annual Solar Car Challenge—Chris McGinness, NBC, August 2, 2023:

<https://www.kobi5.com/news/oregon-solar-car-team-nabs-second-place-in-annual-national-competition-212688/>

Proposal for Oregon's First Large-Scale Solar Park and Farm Meets Opposition

A first-of-its kind proposal for a solar park and sheep ranch near Brownsville in the Willamette Valley is drawing both enthusiasm and ire from area residents and farmers... If the Muddy Creek Solar Facility is approved, it could provide emissions-free electricity to more than 30,000 homes while allowing land zoned for agriculture to be used for sheep grazing and growing native plants, according to project leaders. But those opposed say the project takes valuable farmland out of production, and could potentially drive up surrounding land prices—Alex Baumhardt, *Oregon Capital Chronicle*, August 10, 2023:

<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2023/08/10/proposal-for-oregons-first-large-scale-solar-park-and-farm-meets-opposition/>

Oregon Solar Tax Credits, Incentives and Rebates (2023)

The state of Oregon ranks 21st in the country for installed solar, with enough capacity to power 172,596 homes, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. Homeowners looking to go solar can lower system costs by taking advantage of multiple Oregon solar incentives, including the federal solar tax credit, net metering and solar rebate programs—Leonardo David, *Market Watch Guides*, August 21, 2023: <https://www.marketwatch.com/guides/home-improvement/oregon-solar-incentives/>

Long Battle Ends with Approval of Nolin Hills Renewable Energy Project

The [Nolin Hills Project](#) is proposed by Capital Power, a Canadian energy developer. It will be built in Umatilla County about 10 miles west of Pendleton and will include both wind and solar energy generation with a nameplate capacity of 600 megawatts, along with battery storage facilities— David J. Petersen, *Oregon Business*, August 25, 2023: <https://oregonbusiness.com/long-battle-ends-with-approval-of-nolin-hills-renewable-energy-project/>

Oregonians Won't See Clean Energy Rebates Until Mid-2024

Do you need financial help to switch to an electric stove, improve your home's insulation or install a new heat pump system... The Oregon Department of Energy says Oregonians won't be able to apply for generous home electrification and efficiency rebates until mid-2024 or later, according to a [document released this week](#)—Gosia Wozniacka, *The Oregonian/OregonLive*, August 30, 2023: <https://www.oregonlive.com/environment/2023/08/oregonians-wont-see-clean-energy-rebates-until-mid-2024.html>

Washington News

REC Silicon Still on Track to Reopen Moses Lake Polysilicon Factory in 2023

With manufacturing credits once again included in a [congressional reconciliation bill](#), new solar development plans could be back on the table in the United States. The current draft of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 includes \$370 billion in energy and climate spending, with manufacturing credits as presented in the former Solar Energy Manufacturing for America (SEMA) Act still intact: solar-grade polysilicon (\$3/kg), PV wafers (\$12/m²), thin-film and silicon PV cells (4¢/WDC), thin-film and silicon PV modules (7¢/WDC)... The entire industry would be buoyed if credits are approved, but no companies more so than Hanwha and REC Silicon. Hanwha, which is increasing its [Qcells solar panel campus](#) by 1.4 GW even without guarantee of credits, is the largest shareholder in REC Silicon and previously stated the polysilicon factory in Moses Lake, Washington, which has been closed for years, will reopen by Q4 2023—Kelly Pickerel, *Solar Power World*, August 1, 2023: <https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2022/08/rec-silicon-still-on-track-to-reopen-moses-lake-polysilicon-factory-in-2023/>

Clark College Receives \$1M in Federal Funding for Clean Energy Center

Clark College in Vancouver, Wash., received \$1 million in federal funding to purchase clean energy technology and equipment to develop a Center for Clean Energy, the college announced this week. The new center will train students clean energy technician jobs in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area... The funding will come from the 2023 Community Project Fund. Clark College will use the money to purchase a new solar array, hydro trainer, small-scale wind tower, four electric vehicles and other

training equipment—Sander Gusinow, *Oregon Business*, August 2, 2023:

<https://oregonbusiness.com/clark-college-receives-1m-in-federal-funding-for-clean-energy-center/>

Energy Facts: Impact of the Investing in America Agenda on Washington

This brief summary article, written by the U.S. Department of Energy, focuses on the impact of federal investment dollars on the development of clean energy in the state of Washington. The article discusses how clean energy has strengthened Washington's economy with clean energy jobs, clean energy businesses, clean technology and green transportation. Mention is also made to DOE's Weatherization Assistance and State Energy programs, both of which have helped Washingtonians save money on their home energy bills—U.S. DOE, August 11, 2023: <https://www.energy.gov/articles/energy-facts-impact-investing-america-agenda-washington>

Puget Sound Energy's Green Power Solar Grant Spotlights South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity

Investing in green power is investing in a healthy future for everyone. Globally, the International Energy Agency says that of the \$3 trillion invested in energy in 2023, nearly \$2 trillion is earmarked for clean, renewable sources, upgrades and practices. Add in two local organizations who consistently work towards resilience and a strong community and it's a powerful trifecta. Recently [South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity](#) was awarded a [Green Power Solar Grant](#) by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to benefit lives across western Washington. These funds will bring benefits to local low-income and BIPOC families working to build a fresh start—Kathryn Millhorn, *Thurston Talk*, August 11, 2023:

<https://www.thurstontalk.com/2023/08/11/puget-sound-energys-green-power-solar-grant-spotlights-south-puget-sound-habitat-for-humanity/>

Farming Concerns Arise at Horse Heaven Wind and Solar Project Hearings

The Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council opened hearings Monday on the Horse Heaven wind and solar project in southeast Washington, as witnesses disagreed on whether the development would hurt farming... The windmills and solar panels would take up more than 10 square miles designated for agriculture near the Tri-Cities—Don Jenkins, *Capital Press*, August 15, 2023:

https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/rurallife/farming-concerns-arise-at-horse-heaven-wind-and-solar-project-hearings/article_1418c714-3ae1-11ee-89ae-1bebb146f256.html

Yakima County Commissioners Extend Solar Moratorium Again

Whether the projects go through county or through state officials, solar farms have the potential to dramatically change the Yakima Valley landscape, Yakima County Commissioners say... Key issues and unanswered legal questions include preservation of farmland through the state's Growth Management Act, emergency response to solar farms that lie outside established fire protection districts, and the potential sale of water rights for properties covered by solar panels—Joel Donofrio, *Yakima Herald-Republic*, August 16, 2023: https://www.yakimaherald.com/news/local/government/yakima-county-commissioners-extend-solar-moratorium-again/article_416a115a-3b9f-11ee-acd3-5b26ad259118.html?utm_medium=email

Community Solar Project Set for Camas-Washougal Port

Beginning Sept. 1, Clark Public Utilities customers may participate in the utility's newest renewable energy project, [Community Solar East](#)... Solar can be expensive for homeowners and finicky when

determining how to properly fit and position the equipment, said Matt Babbitts, Clark Public Utilities' energy resources program manager. By comparison, a community model allows for utility customers to invest in a large collection of solar panels in exchange for an annual credit—Lauren Ellenbecker, *The Columbian*, August 23, 2023: <https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/aug/23/community-solar-project-set-for-camas-washougal-port/>

Washington Farmer Sees Wind, Solar Project as Boon to Agriculture

Wheat farmer Chris Wiley testified Wednesday, Aug. 23, that leasing land for the massive Horse Heavens wind and solar installation in southeast Washington could lead to an “agricultural renaissance.” Lease payments from Scout Clean Energy will allow his family to eliminate debt, upgrade equipment and keep farming in a tough environment, Wiley told the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council—Don Jenkins, *Capital Press*, August 23, 2023: https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/grains/washington-farmer-sees-wind-solar-project-as-boon-to-agriculture/article_4959c1a4-41de-11ee-891c-6f22a4997442.html

Cities May Invest in Clark Public Utilities' Community Solar Project at Port of C-W Industrial Park

Officials in Camas and Washougal are considering participating in Clark Public Utilities' community solar project at the Port of Camas-Washougal's industrial park. Camas City Council members discussed purchasing up to 10 kilowatts from the community solar project during their Aug. 7 workshop. Camas City Administrator Doug Quinn told Council members he would like Camas officials to consider investing in the community solar project—Kelly Moyer and Doug Flanagan, *Camas-Washougal Post-Record*, August 24, 2023: <https://www.camaspostrecord.com/news/2023/aug/24/cities-may-invest-in-ports-community-solar-project/>

EFSEC: Goldendale Solar Project Could have Adverse Impact

The Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) says it believes the Carriger Solar Project—a proposed sprawling array of solar panels just outside Goldendale—may have “significant impacts” on the environment and is considering issuing a determination of significance—Lou Marzeles, *The Goldendale Sentinel*, August 30, 2023: https://www.goldendalesentinel.com/news/efsec-goldendale-solar-project-could-have-adverse-impact/article_011d862c-474d-11ee-a3ad-176842d74cd7.html?utm_medium=email

Hanford Site: Land Available for Clean Energy Projects

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) seeks organizations interested in leasing land at the Hanford Site. As part of the department's Cleanup to Clean Energy initiative, the DOE has launched the first Request for Information (RFI) in hopes of bolstering utility scale carbon pollution free electricity projects.... The DOE has identified 19,000 acres of land at the Hanford site for industrial activities such as carbon pollution-free electricity generation (CFE) and storage. Potential CFE projects include solar, wind, and nuclear projects—News Radio 610 KONA, August 31, 2023: <https://610kona.com/hanford-site-land-available-for-clean-energy-projects/>

National News

President Biden's Investing in America Agenda Funds Launch of New Tribal Electrification Program

The Department of the Interior announced today the launch of a new program and availability of \$72.5 million in initial funding through President Biden's Investing in America agenda to help Tribal communities electrify homes. This investment is a critical step toward the goal of electrifying all homes in Indian Country with renewable energy sources and advances the Biden-Harris administration's work to reach a carbon-free electricity sector by 2035—U.S. Department of the Interior, [Press release], August 15, 2023: <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/president-bidens-investing-america-agenda-funds-launch-new-tribal-electrification>

READI: Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative Tribal Engagement Series

The U.S. Department of the Interior is launching the Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative (READI), seeking input on how to streamline and advance Tribal renewable energy development... A Tribal engagement series is being held to hear directly from Tribes about renewable energy resource needs and priorities—U.S. Department of the Interior, Indian Affairs. For more information, the schedule of Tribal Engagement Sessions, and to register: [Click here.](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Invests \$266 Million to Help Rural Business Owners, Farmers and Ranchers Lower Energy Costs, Generate Income, and Expand Operations, as Part of Investing in America Agenda

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that USDA is awarding \$266 million in loans and grants to agriculture producers and rural small businesses to make investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements that will lower their energy costs, generate new income, and strengthen the resilience of their operation. This funding is made possible in part by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act—U.S. Department of Agriculture, [Press release], August 30, 2023: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/08/30/biden-harris-administration-invests-266-million-help-rural-business>

DOE to Award \$300M in Grants to Speed Up Transmission Permitting

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced a funding opportunity of up to \$300 million in grants for states, tribes, and local governments to accelerate and strengthen electric transmission siting and permitting processes to help achieve the Biden administration's climate and clean energy goals—Sean Wolfe, *Power Grid International*, August 30, 2023: <https://www.power-grid.com/td/transmission/doe-to-award-300m-in-grants-to-speed-up-transmission-permitting/>

Industry

Everything You Need To Know About American Solar Panel Manufacturers

[Solar panels](#) made in America are rapidly increasing in popularity. In addition to the United States' growing ability to manufacture the components of solar panels, policy incentives, such as those that result in financial benefit for solar customers and tariffs on imported solar panels, have contributed to the rise in companies manufacturing their solar panels in America and consumers seeking them—Shelby Simon, Corinne Tynan, *Forbes Home*, July 31, 2023: <https://www.forbes.com/home-improvement/solar/american-solar-panel-manufacturers/>

The U.S. Imports Most of its Solar Panels. A New Ruling May Make that More Expensive

The Department of Commerce has determined that solar panel manufacturers in four Southeast Asian countries are evading U.S. trade rules by using Chinese-sourced materials subject to tariffs without paying applicable duties. Those countries — Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, and Cambodia — are responsible for [nearly three-quarters](#) of solar modules imported to the United States—Eric McDaniel, NPR, August 18, 2023: <https://www.npr.org/2023/08/18/1194303196/solar-panel-imports-china>

Building Resilient Solar Projects: Tips and Best Practices

The solar industry is losing \$2.5 billion annually from equipment underperformance, likely caused by equipment malfunctions and weather conditions, according to an article in kWh Analytics' [2023 Solar Risk Assessment](#). With the global solar energy market projected to reach [\\$300 billion by 2032](#) and the market expected to grow from today's 3% of U.S. electricity supply to 40% by 2035, it is imperative that the industry resolves these issues—Jason Kaminsky, *Renewable Energy World*, August 22, 2023: <https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/solar/building-resilient-solar-projects-tips-and-best-practices/>

Conferences and Events

Webinar: Energize Your Impact: How Funders & Donors can Support Equitable Solar Power: Clean Energy Group, September 6

This webinar will showcase innovative approaches funders are taking to bring equitable solar to low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. Speakers will share examples of specific projects, as well as high-level takeaways from a recent report by the Clean Energy States Alliance, titled [Energize Your Impact: How Foundations Can Accelerate Solar for LMI-Serving Community Institutions](#). For more information and to register: <https://www.cleangroup.org/webinar/energize-your-impact-how-funders-donors-can-support-equitable-solar-power/>

Webinar: Celebrating One Year of the IRA and What's Next for the Solar Industry, September 7

Join this webinar hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) to discuss how the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has impacted domestic solar manufacturing and encouraged equitable solar energy deployment since it was passed last year—and where DOE sees the industry heading next. For more information and to register:

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/webinar-celebrating-one-year-ira-and-whats-next-solar-industry>

RE+ Tech, Las Vegas, September 11-14

RE+ Tech is the event for the technical and scientific communities to present and share innovative research in solar, storage, and smart energy industries at North America's largest clean energy event. (formerly called SPI, ESI, and Smart Energy Week). This event-within-an-event showcases scientific content from industry leaders and provides a hub for science and tech trailblazers to come together, share research, and innovate tomorrow's clean energy solution. For more information and to register: <https://www.re-plus.com/re-plus-tech/>

Webinar: Transmission Siting and Economic Development Funding Opportunity Announcement, September 14

Join this webinar hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Grid Deployment Office on September

14, 2023, from 2-3 p.m. ET to learn about the Transmission Siting and Economic Development (TSED) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). Registration required. Click here for more information and to register: <https://www.energy.gov/gdo/transmission-siting-and-economic-development-grants-program>

Hanford Cleanup to Clean Energy Information Day, Washington State University Tri-Cities, Richland WA, September 22

DOE is planning a [Hanford](#) Cleanup to Clean Energy Information Day in Richland, Wash. for interested parties to ask questions and have an opportunity to see the land identified for potential carbon free energy production. For more information and to register (by September 20): <https://www.energy.gov/em/events/hanford-cleanup-clean-energy-information-day>

2023 Washington State Solar Summit, Seattle, October 20

Hosted by the Solar Washington, the Washington State Solar Summit is an important annual information gathering and networking event for industry stakeholders including manufacturers, installers, utilities, municipalities, legislators/policy makers, educators, students, tribal members, advocacy organizations/nonprofits, distributors, engineers, financial lenders, consultants and more. For more information and to register: <https://www.solarwa.org/2023solsummit>

Oregon Solar + Storage Conference, Portland, November 7-9

This year 2023 OSSIA Conference is going to be bigger and better than ever: Networking, Career Fair, Continuing Education, Energy Trust of Oregon programs, What's new for Oregon Solar, grants, programs codes, and more. Registration now open. For more information, see the OSSIA Conference website: <https://www.orssia.org/osec>

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