



Southern Oregon Renewable Resources Opportunity Inventory
Project Description
January 23, 2009

Introduction

It is well known that the six southwestern Oregon counties have been hard-hit by the demise of the traditional timber industry. It is equally apparent, however, that those six counties are rich in the resources necessary to develop high-quality alternative energy sources. Moreover, the Governor has made development of renewable energy sources one of his highest priorities, and the Oregon University System is at the cutting edge of alternative energy technology. Because of that convergence of interests, the six southwestern counties have decided to collectively take stock of the opportunities presented and their capacity to meet them.

The Director of Association of Oregon Counties, Mike McArthur and the President of Medford Fabricators, Bill Thorndike, will serve as conveners in this project.

Purpose

Develop an inventory of opportunities for renewable energy development--including opportunities for biomass, solar energy production, wind power, and geothermal energy-- in Southwest Oregon and assess the capacity of the region to seize those opportunities, including an inventory of existing workforce readiness and needs. Identify obstacles to renewable energy development and workforce development and engage partners in addressing them.

Project Concept

Form a public, private and non-profit team to develop a coordinated renewable energy resource inventory of the highest potential development options in Southwest Oregon. Membership would include the six Southwest Counties: Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Coos, Curry, and Lane. In addition, the team would include Pacific Power, PNGC Power, Bonneville Power Administration,

Oregon Department of Energy, Energy Trust of Oregon, Oregon BEST, and members of Oregon University system faculty.

The effort will address areas where collaboration will provide benefit to participants. These areas are likely to include sharing of information from expert sources, development of resource information, and potential joint project or infrastructure development.

The effort will include:

- An Oregon BEST sponsored seminar on renewable energy project development that includes key experts on resource requirements, financing, and development timelines.
- A listing of existing alternative energy projects in the region
- A review of applicable technologies
- An inventory of natural resources in the participating counties
- An assessment of workforce readiness and training opportunities
- An inventory of local, regional, and national companies that might have interest in developments in Southern Oregon
- An analysis of possible obstacles
- A list of priorities and funding needed for future projects

Location

Lane, Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Coos and Curry Counties

Potential team members

The Governor's ERT team, the Counties, State Dept of Energy, State Dept of Forestry, State Dept of Agriculture, OECD, State Employment Dept, United States Forest Service, BLM, U of O, OSU, PSU, Best Center, INR, Climate Trust, Energy Trust, OFRI, Sustainable Northwest, Weyerhaeuser, Roseburg Lumber, Pacificorp, Portland General Electric, The Ford Family Foundation, Collins Pine, Congressional offices, U.S. Endowment for Forestry & Communities, Bonneville Power Administration, Roseburg Lumber