

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

To Establish the Southern Oregon Clean Energy Alliance (SOCEA)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is hereby made and entered into by and between the Counties of Coos, Curry, Douglas, Josephine, and Lane, Oregon for the purposes of mutual cooperation on renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for economic development purposes.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to develop the governance framework for the signatory agencies to collaborate on renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, for the purpose of economic development, as described in Section 3 “Goals”, Section 4 “Objectives”, and Section 6 “Governance Framework” .

2. Context/Background

The signatory counties – Coos, Curry, Douglas, Josephine, and Lane - have been hard-hit by the demise of the traditional timber industry. This fact, the impending loss of “Payments to Counties” funds, and the current economic recession have created a social and economic “crisis” in the region. But with crisis comes opportunity, and the counties have recognized that regional cooperation is the key to a prosperous future. Indeed, the counties are rich in the natural resources, innovative spirit, and will necessary to develop high-quality clean energy projects. 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 clean energy technology. Finally, the counties recognize that together they will have opportunities to influence both policy and economic development in a way that none of them could alone. Because of that convergence of interests, the counties have decided to work supportively to create an alliance aimed at attracting and stimulating the development of alternative energy and energy efficiency projects, a.k.a. “clean energy” projects.

3. Goals

The counties have found common ground in the following goals, which motivate their desire to cooperate towards developing a regional clean energy industry cluster. The counties desire to:

1. Generate quality economic development opportunities for our communities, industries, and households; AND
2. Generate an economic base and revenue streams to the communities and counties in order to provide and maintain quality infrastructure and services.

4. Objectives

To achieve these goals, the counties have agreed on the following objectives:

1. Inventorying opportunities for clean energy development as part of an overall sustainable economic development effort;
2. Pursuing projects in a coordinated, supportive fashion;
3. Pooling our political resources in the service of clean energy projects;

4. Maximizing the utilization of state and federal incentives and resources that support clean energy project development and associated benefits such as reducing carbon and other ecosystem services; AND
5. Coordinating our efforts with the 7 California Counties involved in the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and that have expressed interest in coordinating clean energy development across the broader region.

5. Name

The new alliance will be named the Southern Oregon Clean Energy Alliance (SOCEA)

6. Governance Framework

The counties understand that working cooperatively has many advantages over “going it alone.”

Cooperation allows:

1. Coordinated maximization of renewable energy resources versus competition and uncertainty;
2. Economies of scale in efforts such as infrastructure development, workforce development, and regional economic marketing;
3. Attracting the attention of private sector energy developers;
4. Joint grant writing and other resource development;
5. Leveraged political influence for the entire region.

6.1 Statement of Mutual Interdependence

The cooperating counties recognize that pooling our resources and influence towards common goals will serve the interests of the region as a whole, and the individual counties. Developing a regional clean energy alliance and identity will attract private sector investment and supportive public resources and policies in ways that cannot be achieved through a zero-sum-game, go-it-alone approach. While some projects will inevitably benefit one or more county over others, over time all counties will benefit from the Alliance’s efforts. Working supportively will enhance the competitiveness of the region as a whole in attracting projects. Therefore, we agree to support all Alliance-designated projects as a unified body.

6.2 Term

The Southern Oregon Clean Energy Alliance is an experiment. For this initial trial period, the MOU takes effect on March 1, 2010, or the date of the latest signature, and expires on June 30, 2011.

6.3 Opt Out

Any county may opt out of the Alliance at any time by providing a 30-day written notice to the other signatory counties.

6.4 Policy Board

Each County Commission will designate a representative Commissioner to serve on the Policy Board. The Policy Board will serve as the ultimate decision-making authority for the Alliance. Other organizations will be invited to participate in the meetings, but will not enjoy decision-making rights for the Alliance. Future consideration will be made towards inviting tribal nations in the region to participate as voting members of the Policy Board.

The Policy Board will establish ad-hoc implementation committees to engage in specific tasks and projects for the Alliance, which will be open to participation by any and all parties that might contribute to project success.

6.5 Decision-Making

No part of this MOU shall be construed as providing the Policy Board with decision-making authority over any internal county business. The Policy Board will make decisions regarding SOCEA business and projects only. The Policy Board will strive for consensus on all decisions. However, if consensus is not achievable within a reasonable period of time, decisions will be made by majority vote. Quorum shall be defined as attendance by at least 3 of the 5 designated representatives. No decisions, whether by consensus or by majority vote, can be made without a quorum.

6.6 Project Selection Criteria

As a general rule, the Alliance will adopt projects that benefit at least two or more of the member counties, although the Alliance will support projects that benefit only one county. The Alliance will also strive for proportional geographic representation of projects.

6.7 Alliance Activities

The signatory counties agree to work together on the following types of activities for their mutual benefit:

- Joint grant-writing and other resource development to support Alliance activities;
- Joint political advocacy opportunities to move the SOCEA clean energy/economic development agenda at local, state, and federal levels.
- Joint clean energy resource assessments and feasibility studies, especially on issues of mutual concern (e.g. biomass resource assessments, infrastructure and workforce assessments)
- Joint clean energy project development, particularly for those counties affected by a particular proposal, including facility siting, collection and transportation of raw resources, development of adequate infrastructure to support the project, and assistance in obtaining incentives and financing.
- Joint marketing/outreach of the region as a “fertile ground” for clean energy business development.

The preceding list is not exhaustive or prescriptive.

6.8 Meetings

The Policy Board will meet on a quarterly basis. The meeting schedule will be set at the first official meeting of the Policy Board. Ad hoc committees will set their own meeting schedule.

7. Signatures

Coos County:

Robert (Bob) Main, Vice Chair

Date

Kevin Stufflebean, Chair

Date

Nikki Whitty, Commissioner

Date

Curry County:

Georgia Nowlin, Vice Chair

Date

George Rhodes, Commissioner

Date

Bill Waddle, Chair

Date

Josephine County:

Sandy Cassanelli, Vice Chair

Date

Dwight Ellis, Chair

Date

Dave Toler, Commissioner

Date

Douglas County:

Joe Laurance, Commissioner Date

Doug Robertson, Chair Date

Susan Morgan, Commissioner Date

Lane County:

Bill Dwyer, Commissioner Date

Bill Fleenor, Chair Date

Rob Handy, Vice Chair Date

Pete Sorenson, Commissioner Date

Faye Stewart, Commissioner Date