

May 5, 2009

DOE promises speedier funding for renewable energy projects

The New York Times - April 30

Secretary of Energy Stephen Chu has announced \$93 million in funding for American wind energy research and development as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In addition to increased funding, Chu also pledged to speed up the Energy Department's loan-making process. He said in the past it was not unusual for loan approvals to take four years. The secretary said the new loan approval system will cut that time to a matter of months, and drastically reduce the amount of paperwork.

Renewable Energy Focus

Secretary Salazar Pledges to Open Four Renewable Energy Permitting Offices, Create Renewable Energy Teams

U.S. Department of the Interior - May 5

To expedite production of renewable energy on public lands while protecting land, water, and wildlife, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today pledged to create four Renewable Energy Coordination Offices, one each in California, Nevada, Wyoming, and Arizona, along with smaller renewable energy teams in New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, Colorado and Oregon. The offices and teams will expedite applications, processing, reviews and permitting of renewable energy projects on Bureau of Land Management lands. BLM has a backlog of 200 solar energy applications and more than 25 wind project applications in Western states, and an additional 200 locations have been identified where applicants want to begin site testing for wind projects. With \$41 million from the economic stimulus package, Interior also will be able to complete the reviews and permits for several new transmission projects so they can be ready for construction by 2010.

SEIA seeks solar carve-out in energy bill

Solar Industry Magazine - April 30

The [Solar Energy Industries Association](#) (SEIA) is urging lawmakers to include a carve-out of up to 25 percent for solar energy if a national renewable portfolio standard is approved. SEIA is also reportedly asking Congress to require that 20 percent of required renewable energy generation be set aside for distributed generation rather than large power plants. In addition, some larger solar firms are seeking to receive a portion of revenue generated from the purchase of greenhouse gas (GHG) allowances if legislation related to a GHG program is passed.

Utilities and transmission managers try to head off congressional grid plans

New York Times - ClimateWire - April 29

Major utilities and grid operators are planning an expansion of the Eastern interconnection grid to handle a huge increase in renewable power, seeking to head off congressional proposals for federal grid planning. The launch of the initiative attended by officials of the PJM Interconnection, Midwest ISO, ISO New England, New York ISO, the Southeastern Electric Reliability Council, Duke Energy, Entergy Corp., Florida Power & Light, Progress Energy, the Tennessee Valley Authority, Southern Co., Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator, and other companies. The energy companies and organizations want to show Congress that a grassroots approach will be more effective than creating a new, top-down planning process under federal control.

National Park Service warns solar projects could impact Mojave Desert

New York Times - GreenWire - April 23

A National Park Service official has warned the Bureau of Land Management that approving dozens of solar power plants in southern Nevada could dramatically impact water supplies across the arid region. About 63 large-scale solar projects are proposed for BLM lands in the region, and the plants are expected to use significant amounts of groundwater to cool and wash solar panels. The Park Service is concerned the projects could produce air and light pollution, generate noise and destroy wildlife habitat near the Devils Hole section of Death Valley National Park, the Lake Mead National Recreation Area and the Mojave National Preserve. BLM officials did not publicly respond to the issues raised in the memo, although a BLM project manager in Washington said there is "great sensitivity" within the agency to concerns over solar power plant siting.

Renewable energy bills move through California Senate

Daily Nexus - April 30

Parts of Senate Bills 463 and 542 have cleared their first hurdle and received approval from the Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee. Senate Bills 463 and 542 are part of a larger environmental package moving through the California Senate that expands the scope of state sponsored energy efficiency programs. Senate Bill 463, dubbed Renewable Energy Projects, would entitle a person to a one-time tax credit upward of \$3,000 for the purchase and installation of a renewable energy resource project. Senate Bill 542 would add apartments, duplexes and commercial rental properties into the California Solar Initiative and other energy efficiency programs to encourage the use of renewable energy.

Tough times for wind energy but solar power is rising in 2009

Renewable Energy Focus - April 30

In its first quarter updates for renewable and clean energy, Emerging Energy Research (EER) says that "despite difficult short-term market conditions, carbon and renewable policymaking remains a serious topic of government debate globally, and is shaping longer term opportunities." EER highlights policies announced in the first quarter around the world such as the American Clean Energy and Investment Act, the introduction of feed-in-tariffs in South Africa, and the Russian power sector's plans to tap into renewables. According to EER, the global wind industry now finds itself nearing the trough of the current economic crisis. EER projects annual MW additions to decline by 24 percent in the US and 19 percent in Europe in 2009.

Notable renewable energy projects and deals

US wind energy industry installs more than 2,800 MW in Q1

American Wind Energy Association - April 28

In its first quarter market report, the American Wind Energy Association announced that the wind energy industry installed more than 2,800 megawatts of new generating capacity in the first quarter of 2009, with new projects completed in 15 states and powering the equivalent of 816,000 homes. The nation nevertheless still lacks the long-term signal that is needed to build up renewable energy on a large scale. The wind energy industry says the US now needs a national renewable electricity standard, a policy that more than 80 percent of Americans favor.

Californians install 78 MW of solar panels in Q1

Energy Business Review - April 24

California has installed 78 megawatts (MW) of solar panels in the first quarter of 2009, according to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). California is spending \$3.3 billion to install 3,000 MW of solar panels over 10 years. California's solar market finds its strength in generous state incentives, joined with federal tax credits that greatly decrease the cost of installation. California has among the highest utility rates in the country, making self-generated solar power competitive with conventional utility power, especially for large users. The CPUC identified a recent change in the federal tax code that

permits homeowners a larger tax credit for solar installations as a factor driving strength in that market.

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[Abengoa Solar begins operation of the world's largest solar power tower plant](#)

Abengoa Solar - April 29

[Abengoa Solar](#) recently began commercial operation of the new PS20 solar power tower plant located at the [Solucar Platform](#), near Seville, Spain. The PS20 has a capacity of 20 megawatts, enough to power for 10,000 homes. PS20 consists of a solar field made up of 1,255 mirrored heliostats. Each heliostat, with a surface area of 1,291 square feet, reflects the solar radiation it receives onto the receiver, located on the top of a 531 feet high tower, producing steam which is converted into electricity generation by a turbine.

[AEP doubles renewable energy goal](#)

American Electric Power - April 28

American Electric Power is doubling its goal of adding 1,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy to 2,000 MW by the end of 2011, with regulatory support. The goal is one of 12 new targets announced in the company's third annual Corporate Sustainability Report. This will bring the company's total renewable energy portfolio to more than 2,600 MW by the end of 2011. AEP has added 903 MW of wind generation since 2007, when the company committed to its original goal of adding 1,000 MW.

[New center in San Diego to focus on algae, biofuels](#)

Union Tribune - April 29

San Diego and neighboring Imperial Valley are already home to some of the world's leaders in growing algae and turning it into fuel that they hope will soon curb the nation's demand for foreign oil. Leaders of the region's scientific, academic, biotechnology and political communities announced that they were forming the San Diego Center for Algae Biotechnology, or SD-CAB, to capitalize on this expertise. Working together, the groups hope to attract much-needed money from federal and state governments to foster commercialization of algal fuel and other products.

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Events

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May 4-7, 2009

Chicago, IL

Recent Opportunities

[San Diego County Water Authority Extends Its Deadline for Solar Power Projects Request for Proposals and Issues Addendum No. 1](#)

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<http://www.jdsupra.com/post/documentViewer.aspx?fid=2d8c7136-b81d-4363-b37b-57095e7631a3>

[Hand in Hand: Fuel Funding & Regulation](#)

California Energy Commission Extends a Helping Hand to the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Industry

[Renewable Electric Power RFP \(Palo Alto, CA\) & Fuel Cell Power Generation RFP \(Inland Empire, CA\)](#)

Related News

[Energy Related Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 May Help California Reach State Renewable Energy Goals](#)

[Pending California Legislation Mandates Dramatic Increase in Renewable Energy Resources](#)

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