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# Renewable Energy Update

an Allen Matkins  
market intelligence  
publication

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## [BrightSource to reduce size of Ivanpah CSP facility](#)

*RenewableEnergyWorld - Feb 16*

BrightSource Energy Inc. has submitted a new design for the Ivanpah Solar Energy Generating System project. This mitigation proposal, filed with the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM), would reduce the project's size from 440 to 392 megawatts (MW) and reduce its overall footprint by 12%. The mitigation proposal for the Ivanpah project is a response to comments and suggestions made during the Ivanpah permitting process' public comment period. The proposal, developed in response to concerns over the environmental and wildlife impacts of the project, puts Ivanpah a step closer to being California's first solar thermal power plant permitted and constructed in California in nearly two decades.

## Renewable Energy Focus

### [Gov. Schwarzenegger Urges Local Counties to Expedite Large-Scale Renewable Energy Projects](#)

State of California - Feb 18

Committed to the timely permitting of renewable energy projects to help California achieve its shared goals of economic development and environmental protection, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger sent letters late February 17th, 2010 to the board of supervisors of 10 counties that have high concentrations of large-scale renewables projects. In the letters, the Governor encourages the boards to ensure timely yet expeditious permitting of large-scale renewables projects in their counties in order for these projects to receive grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which requires projects to begin construction this year.

To read each letter, click on the county: [Imperial](#), [Inyo](#), [Kern](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Riverside](#), [San Benito](#), [San Bernardino](#), [San Diego](#), [San Luis Obispo](#) and [Solano](#). The full text of the letter that went to Kern County is also below:

## [Solar net metering bill heads to Schwarzenegger's desk](#)

*L.A. Times - Feb 18*

The California state Assembly overwhelmingly passed a bill that would expand a credit program for Californians who generate excess electricity through their home solar power systems. The bill, AB 510, sponsored by Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), has already passed the Senate and now goes to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is expected to sign the measure into law. Under the state's net metering program, utilities extend credit to consumers who contribute clean energy to the state's electricity grid. The program currently caps the amount of electricity eligible for the credit to 2.5% of each utility's peak power demand. The measure passed doubles that cap to 5%.

## [NREL testing projects in Colorado](#)

*NREL - Feb 12*

NREL's newest source of clean energy -- a 1 megawatt solar array in Colorado -- is providing laboratory researchers an opportunity to examine the potential environmental impacts of large-scale renewable energy projects. Three-quarters of the states in the U.S. have adopted aggressive renewable energy mandates to reduce carbon emissions and diminish the environmental damage from more than a century's reliance on fossil fuels.

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### Recent Events

Allen Matkins has attended numerous events addressing developments in the renewable energy field in 2009. [A summary can be found here.](#)

Allen Matkins hosted the successful panel discussion on

But utility-scale renewable energy installations also can be significant construction projects -- some proposed sites in California and the desert Southwest may cover up to 5,000 acres apiece. In the West, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management alone has at least 31 renewable energy projects under "fast track" permitting review.

### [Photovoltaic breakthroughs brighten outlook for cheap solar power](#)

*Scientific American - Feb 16*

Material improvements from the California Institute of Technology and IBM might lower the cost of solar power. Scientists at Caltech employed vertical crystals of silicon -- microwires -- to capture as much as 85% of the full spectrum of incoming sunlight. Their efficiency is almost as good as that of traditional silicon wafers, yet they require just 1% of the silicon in such wafers. No actual solar cells have been produced from the new microwires yet. The silicon blades show enough light absorption to make them "interesting candidates from which to make solar cells." Thin-film silicon solar cells already exist, but they have struggled to match the efficiency of traditional silicon photovoltaics at absorbing light or turning it into electricity. The new microwires of silicon achieve similar efficiency at a fraction of the material cost.

### [California lab births flexy, stingy solar cells](#)

*The Register - Feb 16*

A team of researchers at the California Institute of Technology has made a breakthrough in solar-cell development, creating flexible wire-based cell substrates that use just one percent of the silicon needed for brittle and comparatively heavy conventional cells. Solar cells made from this material would not only be less expensive than current photovoltaics, but due to their low weight and bendable structure they could be used in a wide variety of applications.

### [Alternatives to alternative energy emerging](#)

*BusinessWeek - Feb 19*

When oil prices crashed and credit markets froze in 2008, private investment in alternative energy withered. Wind and solar projects were kept alive, however, thanks to some \$3 billion in government subsidies in the U.S. alone, and many more billions overseas. Nearly 8,000 megawatts of new wind capacity was installed in the U.S. in 2009, according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance (NEF). Now, backers of other green projects -- largely shut out to date -- are seeing some government funding as well. This article outlines the boost in what it calls "alternative alternative energy," noting big money is starting to flow into biomass, geothermal, and marine wave power projects.

### [SMUD receives huge response to its renewable energy feed-in-tariff](#)

*EERE - Feb 17*

A California utility's feed-in tariff (FIT) program for renewable or combined heat and power generating facilities met with an overwhelming response. The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) reported that applications for the new FIT, which were all for solar photovoltaic power, exceeded its 100-megawatt allotment. SMUD lists only five applicants for the new program, and they are all commercial entities: Belectric, Inc.; Global Connect; McClellan Park; Recurrent Energy; and SunPower Corporation. The program, approved in September 2009, is designed to remove barriers to interconnection with the utility by providing standard rates and contract conditions that make it easier for SMUD and its power-generating customers to do business.

### [Bill Gates: We need global 'energy miracles'](#)

*CNN - Feb 12*

[Renewable Energy Project Finance](#). For a copy of the program materials, [click here](#).

#### Upcoming Events

[Renewable Energy World Conference & Expo POWER SHIFT](#)

Austin, TX

*February 23-25, 2010*

[AWEA Windpower 2010 Conference and Expo](#)

Dallas, TX

*May 23-26, 2010*

#### Recent Opportunities

[San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Request for Qualifications for Design-Build Solar Photovoltaic Projects](#)

[City of Willows Opportunity](#)

[Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Renewable Energy Supply Rolling Request for Proposals](#)

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Microsoft founder and philanthropist Bill Gates is calling on the world's tech community to find a way to turn spent nuclear fuel into cheap, clean energy. Gates called climate change the world's most vexing problem, and added that finding a cheap and clean energy source is more important than creating new vaccines and improving farming techniques. He suggested that researchers spend the next 20 years inventing and perfecting clean-energy technologies, and then the next 20 years implementing them. The world's energy portfolio should not include coal or natural gas, he said, and must include carbon capture and storage technology as well as nuclear, wind and both solar photovoltaics and solar thermal power.

### **West Coast governments vow cooperation**

*Vancouver Sun - Feb 13*

The governments of Washington, Oregon, California, and British Columbia, Canada have vowed to cooperate on a host of initiatives to tackle climate change in a way that will also boost the economy. Noting that the climate isn't contained by borders, and claiming it is states and provinces and not national governments that so far have taken concrete action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the state and provincial leaders said they plan to work together in what they have dubbed the Pacific Coast Collaborative. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who will chair the group, said the state and provincial governments will need to work with their federal counterparts to bring about change on items such as cleaner fuel standards and developing renewable energy.

### **Notable Renewable Energy Projects and Deals**

#### **Samsung enters solar deal in California**

Green Inc. - Feb 16

Samsung is jumping into the American solar business. Pacific Gas and Electric asked regulators to approve a series of 25-year contracts for 130 megawatts' worth of photovoltaic power plants to be built by Solar Project Solutions, a joint venture between Samsung America and ENCO Utility Services, a former subsidiary of the utility company Edison International. The deal is the latest of a spate of such agreements signed by California utilities as they take advantage of the increasing attractiveness of photovoltaic power as the price of solar modules falls and new competitors enter the market. The Samsung venture will construct a 50-megawatt power plant and three 20-megawatt solar farms in Tulare County in California's Central Valley. A fourth 20-megawatt power plant will be built in neighboring Kings County.

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