



Oregon

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Government to Government Report Oregon Department of Energy--2005 Summary

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The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) was reorganized in July 2005. The Nuclear Safety and Energy Resources divisions were combined into the Nuclear Safety and Energy Siting Division. A new section, the Renewable Energy Division, was created to help meet the increasing need for information and technical assistance regarding renewable resources.

State Energy Loan Program (SELP)

The Oregon Department of Energy Loan program offers low-interest, long-term loans for energy efficiency and renewable resource projects to tribes, individuals, businesses and non-profits.

SELP staff is working with Warm Springs Power Enterprises regarding upgrades to its hydroelectric power plant. Discussions are also continuing with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and Warm Springs Forest Products Industries about new biomass fired boilers at a mill that will include cogeneration facility. We have been reviewing draft contracts and a feasibility study of the project, and offered advice on use of ODOE programs.

SELP is also assisting Chris Crowley and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation with a wind generation project. This involves review and advice on project business plans and ownership structure.

Nuclear Safety and Energy Siting Division

Part of the work of this division is to protect Oregonians from potential threats from the Hanford Nuclear Site, and its potential to leak chemical and radioactive waste into the Columbia River.

The Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State used to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. The production process resulted in large amounts of chemical and radioactive waste. These wastes pose a long-term threat to the Columbia River. The Oregon Department of Energy is responsible for the technical review of the Hanford cleanup and assessment of potential impacts on the Columbia River and Oregon. Water testing of the Columbia River determined that there is no current radioactive threat.

Through this division, the State of Oregon continues to work closely with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation regarding Hanford policy and technical issues. This is done under a MOU coordinating efforts related to the Columbia River, groundwater protection, radioactive material transport, public information and emergency preparedness. A tribal representative is on the Oregon Hanford Clean-Up Board.

Acting as staff to the siting council, the Oregon Department of Energy consults with tribes regarding the proposed siting of new energy facilities and pipelines.

Conservation Division

The Residential and Business Energy Tax Credit programs make tax credits available for tribes and others without a tax liability through the pass-through provision. The State Home Oil Weatherization (SHOW) program provides incentives for homes heated with oil and wood. We also help schools cut energy costs by reviewing new school plans and older building facilities.

Renewable Energy Division

The Renewable Energy Division focuses ODOE's efforts on developing renewable energy projects and helps projects use state incentives, federal funds, and utility and other incentives more extensively.

The Oregon Department of Energy heads up the Oregon Wind Working Group (OWWG), which helps identify and overcome obstacles to wind development. The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians have attended OWWG meetings. Resources include a video, Wind Powering Native America, www.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/windpoweringamerica/filter_detail.asp?itemid=749 available through the U.S. Department of Energy.

The ODOE has met with the Siletz Tribal Business Corporation to discuss the feasibility of wind power and solar options on the Oregon Coast. There is interest in developing a wind farm to generate renewable energy, some of which could be used for the casino.

The Oregon Geothermal Working Group, through the federal GeoPowering the West effort, is reaching out to tribes. Geothermal energy has numerous direct uses in Oregon including home heating, and the potential for electricity generation. GeoPowering the West is helping tribes identify and develop geothermal resources on tribal lands.

Public Information and Outreach

In 2005, we again entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians (Scott Hansen) to setup, advertise and hold energy fairs. We have expanded the program beyond Energy Awareness Month in October. Booths, workshops and information were presented in July at SolWest in John Day, at Tsalila (the Umpqua River Festival) in Reedsport, in Astoria, at a home show in Redmond, and at the Oregon State Fair in Salem. Scott gave out more than 1,200 Children's Energy Awareness Activity Booklets and 800 Teachers' Packets. We could not do this public outreach without his efforts.

The agency also attends the Natural Resource Cluster meetings, the annual Government-to-Government Summit and Tribal Information Day at the Capitol. Tribal newspapers and radio stations receive agency news releases through an e-mail notification system.