



Oregon

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Government to Government Report Oregon Department of Energy—2009 Summary

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The mission of the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) is to ensure Oregon has an adequate supply of reliable and affordable energy and is safe from nuclear contamination, by helping Oregonians save energy, develop clean energy resources, promote renewable energy, and clean up nuclear waste.

New Opportunities

2009 provided the Oregon Department of Energy the opportunity to work with tribes on a variety of ongoing issues and on a common new challenge related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) commonly known as the federal stimulus program.

The Department and all of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes received funding through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. However, the funding award required an application from recipients with a short time frame from award notice to application deadline.

The Department was able to use the Government-to-Government structure to call a special meeting of the Natural Resource Working Group and convey information to the tribes about the EECBG application process and timelines. The Department also shared its write-up on the State of Oregon's energy strategy for incorporation into those applications.

Later in the spring, the Department was invited to give an update at the Economic Development and Community Services Government-to-Government Cluster about the ongoing ARRA awards and efforts.

As they begin prioritizing their Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program funds, the Department is working with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to discuss energy efficiency targets and objects, potential projects and implementation assistance.

Ongoing Efforts

Nuclear Safety and Emergency Preparedness

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 (ODOE) is responsible for the technical review of the Hanford cleanup and assessment of potential impacts on the Columbia River and Oregon.

The State of Oregon continues to work closely with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) regarding Hanford policy and technical issues. This is done under a Memorandum of Understanding coordinating efforts related to the Columbia River, groundwater protection, radioactive material transport, public information and emergency preparedness.

ODOE staff consults and coordinates with CTUIR staff regularly on Hanford technical and policy issues. ODOE also works with the CTUIR as a member of the Hanford Natural Resource Trustee Council.

Siting of Energy Infrastructure

The Oregon Department of Energy works with tribes regarding the proposed siting of new energy facilities and pipelines. Some of the proposed projects include electric transmission lines and wind farms. With many of these set to be located east of the Cascades, the Oregon Department of Energy opened a small field office in Hermiston to better serve the public in that area.

The development of wind farms in eastern Oregon also brought the Oregon Department of Energy to a September meeting with the CTUIR to hear about the tribes' concerns and interest in protecting access to traditional foods. There was good discussion on opportunities and issues associated with energy development.

Public Information and Outreach

The agency attends the Natural Resource Working Group meetings, the annual Government-to-Government Summit and Tribal Information Day at the Capitol.

In 2009, the Department helped sponsor the Tribal Energy Conference and Energy Trade Fair put on by the Affiliated Tribes of NW Indians. The three-day conference included sessions on tribes as energy developers and financing tribal energy projects.

In November, we attended the Government-to-Government Summit and were part of a panel discussion on Tribal Economic Development. The agency's presentation covered how ongoing state programs can assist with tribal energy projects.

The Department also helped sponsor the Government-to-Government State-Tribal Water Forum in November.

As part of the State's Economic Revitalization Team, we met with representatives of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation to hear about the success of the hydro-electric plant at the Pelton Reregulating Dam and about plans for future renewable energy projects.

Investments and Incentives

The Oregon Department of Energy reorganized in 2009 and now offers a one-stop shop for energy incentives. This "shop" includes the state energy tax credit, loan and American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (federal stimulus) programs.

The loan section offers low-interest, long-term loans for energy efficiency and renewable resource projects to tribes, individuals, businesses and non-profits. 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.

With The Klamath Tribes we have provided a Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) Pass-through for their solar electric (photovoltaic) project. The PV system, completed in March, will save about 2,300 kilowatt hours (kWh) annually. By using the BETC, the Tribes received \$7,221 to help pay for the \$16,600 solar array.

We have worked with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs on a large conservation project for their Warm Springs Composite Products business. This economic enterprise is saving nearly \$24,000 a year on its electric bills by installing a variable frequency drive air compressor and other measures, making this industrial process more energy-efficient. Warm Springs Composite Products produces fire-rated door components, specialized wood products and commercial component composites. By using the pass-through option of the Business Energy Tax Credit, Warm Springs Composite Products received nearly \$36,000 toward the cost of the project.