

# INDEPENDENT ENERGY

## Quarterly

STRENGTHENING THE RURAL ECONOMY

Winter 2003

## Our Wind Co-op Breaking Ground Turbines On-Line in Washington and Montana

As more farmers realize the economic benefits of producing home grown energy, wind turbines are once again becoming common place in the wheat fields and range land of America. Northwest SEED and its partners are helping rural landowners lead an energy independence renaissance through "Our Wind Co-op," providing the spark needed to get ideas and projects up and going.

Initial funding from the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, a USDA Value-Added Development Grant, and the Renewable Northwest Project has helped launch Our Wind Coop to utilize the cooperative business model and install 4 of the initially planned 10 small-scale wind projects. With another site under construction, the Co-op is working to bring 6 additional turbines on line in the Northwest by early 2004.

### Big Sky Wind

Northwest SEED's most recent "Energy Independence" ceremonies took place in Stanford and East Glacier, MT, this October. The well attended dedications marked Montana's first cooperatively-owned wind turbine installations. The Bergey wind turbines will primarily serve on-site electrical needs, with any surplus electricity fed into the power grid for use by neighboring utility customers.

The Stanford site, a 1200-acre cattle ranch and wheat farm nestled in the Judith Basin, is owned by Jess Alger, a fourth generation Montana farmer. Like much of the area, Stanford experiences steady Class 3 winds. Mounted on a 100-foot guyed tower, the 10 kW turbine is expected to produce 18,000 kWh each year, enough to offset all of the electricity used on the Alger Ranch. It has already generated 1,500 kWh since installation in late September.



Don and Beverly Grim's 10 kW turbine in Peshastin, WA

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**MISSION:** Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED) supports and develops creative programs, policies, and financing approaches to build rural economies by harvesting "homegrown" renewable resources — wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and low-impact hydro — to create new revenue streams and high quality jobs throughout the Pacific Northwest.

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In East Glacier, bison rancher Doug Nelson installed his 10 kW turbine on a 60-foot guyed tower in October and is working to repair damage caused during an extreme wind storm. Located on the Blackfeet Reservation a few miles east of Glacier National Park, Nelson's 700-acre ranch is in a Class 4 wind area. The turbine is expected to produce 20,000 kWh each year, enough to supply power for Nelson's shop, his extensive electric fences, and partially offset electricity needed for his ranch operations.

Liberty County Commissioner Don Marble is overseeing installation of Our Wind Coop's third Montana turbine, slated to come on line in early December 2003 near the county's maintenance shop in Chester. With funding provided by Northwestern Energy's Universal Systems Benefit (USB) program and the State Department of Environmental Quality, the National Center for Appropriate Technology has provided significant support for Our Wind Coop's Montana installations.

#### Washington Update

Beverly and Don Grim's 10 kW wind turbine, mounted on a 100-foot free standing tower in Peshastin, WA, was energized in May 2003, serving as the kickoff to Our Wind Co-op. The July 3rd "Energy Independence" ceremony was well attended by project partners and local politicians, including State Representative Mike Armstrong and several Chelan County and PUD Commissioners.



Sarah Peterson places guy wire clamps on Jess Alger's turbine in Stanford, MT

Landowner Ed Kennell installed a 10 kW turbine on an 80-foot guyed tower this November on Luna Butte near Goldendale, WA, marking the latest addition to the Co-op lineup. Northwest SEED is planning a third inauguration ceremony for Our Wind Coop in January 2004 to celebrate the growing popularity of both small and large-scale wind projects in Klickitat County.

#### What is Our Wind Co-op?

Our Wind Co-op is a unique cooperative assisting farmers, ranchers and rural facilities to invest in small-scale wind turbines across the Northwest. In partnership with the Northwest Cooperative Development Center, the Last Mile Electric Cooperative, and Climate Solutions, Northwest SEED is continuing to pursue additional sites in Washington, Oregon and Idaho to reach our goal of installing ten wind systems by Spring 2004.

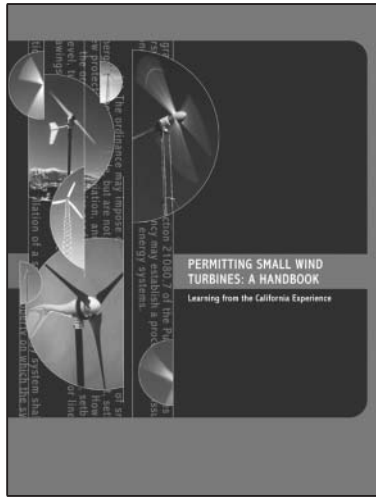
The energy production of all turbines participating in the Co-op will be monitored and reported on the [ourwind.org](http://ourwind.org) website to allow co-op members and the general public to observe turbine performance. The environmental attributes of this energy will be aggregated, marketed and sold as Co-op "Green Tags" to provide additional ongoing revenue, which adds to the economic viability of the effort.

*To learn more about Our Wind Co-op, visit: [www.ourwind.org](http://www.ourwind.org)*



## Hot Off the Press: Permitting Small Wind Turbines

Small wind turbine owners have traditionally encountered an overwhelming task in sorting through siting considerations and confusing regulations. Now help has arrived. Northwest SEED recently released a comprehensive guide for small wind turbine owners, in collaboration with the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) and the California Energy Commission. It highlights special state incentives to lower the costs of small-scale installations and can be used by local officials seeking to understand and improve permitting regulations affecting these energy systems. The handbook is a case study of California's groundbreaking state law (AB 1207) which established permitting standards for small wind systems at local levels.



The handbook is a useful tool for counties and residents outside California, providing current information to address the most common concerns raised in response to small wind turbine installations. Among the issues covered are visual impacts, acoustics, concern for wildlife, and property values. It also includes a model small wind zoning ordinance which AWEA encourages counties to adopt, and recommendations for best practices with a list of "Do's and Don'ts" for counties reviewing small wind permit applications.

This handbook concludes with an extensive reference section that includes contact information and links for county officials, state programs that offer incentives for small wind turbines, wind maps and rankings of counties and zip codes by windy acreage to aid direct marketing efforts, turbine dealers and manufacturers, and advocacy groups that promote residential energy systems.

## Energy Atlas: Idaho Version Newly Released

In November of 2003 Northwest SEED released the Idaho State Edition of *The Renewable Energy Atlas of the West*. Extracted from the original publication which covered the potential of renewable resources in the entire Northwest, the Idaho Edition is a resource for Idaho based policy makers, advocates, landowners, developers and others looking toward renewable options for electricity production.

Utilizing state-of-the-art GIS technology, the Atlas synthesizes data and presents graphical representations of potential solar, geothermal, biomass, and wind resources in Idaho. The Idaho Edition is a focused publication that combines the best existing renewable resource maps and data into a single comprehensive, publicly available document and interactive Web site. Online zoom-in maps are available at: [www.energyatlas.org](http://www.energyatlas.org).

"This handbook fills a long-standing need for information about small wind turbines and how local agencies make sure prospective turbine owners are treated fairly in obtaining permits for their machines."

AWEA Deputy Executive  
Director Tom Gray

To order printed copies of the handbook, contact:  
California Energy Commission,  
at 916-654-4058 or email  
[renewable@energy.state.ca.us](mailto:renewable@energy.state.ca.us)

Download a copy online at  
[www.awea.org/smallwind/  
documents/permitting.pdf](http://www.awea.org/smallwind/documents/permitting.pdf)



# Energy Policy Update

## Building regional and national support for renewables

Northwest SEED is working alongside its partners in the Renew Washington campaign to ensure that a growing portion of our state's electricity needs will be met by power from clean renewable energy sources. Already many utilities and producers are primed to meet that goal. At the national level Northwest SEED continues to support renewable energy provisions in the federal energy bill, including incentives and standards to stimulate significant economic and market growth in renewable energy production.

### Renewing Washington: The Benefits

As one of the core campaign partners, Northwest SEED is working closely with the Renewable Northwest Project, the NW Energy Coalition, and the Washington Public Interest Research Group, and numerous other organizations and businesses to create financial incentives and regulatory assurances to promote wind, biomass, solar and other home-grown renewable energy sources, as well as to increase energy efficiency throughout the state. Northwest SEED is helping the campaign link farmers and ranchers with urban green power supporters to create a strong base of support for public policy to establish a market for clean energy resources.

Recently the Renew Washington campaign asked Opinion Dynamics Corporation, a national public-opinion research firm based in Cambridge, Mass., to assess voter attitudes on energy issues and proposed Energy Portfolio legislation. The bill sets reasonable goals for electric utilities to gradually increase the amount of energy they acquire from renewable resources as well as reduce the energy their customers use through building efficiency programs and energy-saving appliances and lighting.

The poll results show strong support in the state of Washington for such goals. Nine out of ten Washington voters back efforts to establish more renewable energy and energy efficiency in the state. A clear majority of those polled also agree that more renewable energy sources would benefit the state with jobs, stable electric rates and increased tax revenues. The survey shows that nearly two-thirds of the state's voters support standards for utility investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, with similar support from both Republicans and Democrats and voters in both eastern and western Washington. These voters cite economic benefits such as more jobs, new sources of farm income and stable electric rates.

Farmers and rural communities throughout the state and nation are beginning to reap rewards from biomass, wind, solar and energy efficiency measures that help improve the bottom line on their farm operations and aid grid stability in their communities. The growing interest in and support for renewables and efficiency is yielding successful

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“In my discussions with farmers and ranchers across the state, I've found a strong desire for public policy that works to put new projects for renewable energy on the ground...they understand how great the potential is for true economic development with the new exciting crop of energy.”

**Rural Outreach Director  
Randy Smith**

For alerts on federal energy policy, sign up for the Union of Concerned Scientists Action Network:  
[www.ucsaction.org](http://www.ucsaction.org)



## POLL STATS

- Voters favor increased use of energy efficiency (95%) and renewable energy (93%).
- More than one-third of respondents want the single major energy resource used to generate electricity for their homes to be solar, wind or waste-to-energy.
- Two-thirds of voters support the Energy Portfolio Standard (EPS) and its component parts.
- 60% recognize that the EPS will create jobs, stabilize rates and enhance tax revenue for rural communities.
- Fewer than 20% oppose the EPS.
- Majority of voters believe costs to meet the standards should be shared by all customers.

The poll conducted in September 2003 by Opinion Dynamics with consultation from Moore Information asked questions to a sample of registered voters in Washington State. 600 telephone interviews were conducted with oversampling in Eastern and Southwest Washington.



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discussions with utilities and other stakeholders regarding public policy to set renewable energy and energy efficiency goals.

### **National Renewable Electricity Standard (RES)**

Northwest SEED has been working hard to ensure that comprehensive energy legislation emerging from Congress includes strong provisions to support renewable energy development in our nation. In September Senators Bingaman (D-NM) and Collins (R-ME) sent a letter in support of a federal Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) to Energy Committee Chairs Senator Domenici (R-NM) and Representative Tauzin (R-LA), the Chair of the House Energy committee. In an impressive showing of support, fifty-three Senators signed on to this letter, including Northwest Senators Gordon Smith (R-OR), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Max Baucus (D-MT), Patty Murray (D-WA) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA). Northwest SEED would like to especially recognize Oregon's Senator Smith for taking a leadership role among his fellow Republicans by supporting the RES.

With the House and Senate racing to pass a comprehensive energy bill before their winter recess, meaningful discussion of an RES took a back seat to contentious debates on increased oil and nuclear production incentives, fuel additives, and oil drilling in Alaska. Although some incentives for renewables were included in the conference bill presented for a vote, the bill lacked strong provisions - like an RES - to promote renewable energy. At the end of November the House of Representatives voted to pass an energy bill without such measures, but disagreement about some provisions has pushed a final vote on the conference bill in the Senate until at least January.

### **Upcoming Action**

As the issues of national and state energy portfolio legislation are debated over the coming months, Northwest SEED will continue our efforts to ensure that energy policy reflects the public's widespread support for renewable energy: homegrown energy for our economy, for our energy security, and for our communities.

Visit the Northwest SEED website ([www.nwseed.org](http://www.nwseed.org)) and sign up for email updates to stay informed about the national energy debate. Keep up to date on the Washington State issues through the Renew Washington campaign site ([www.renewwashington.org](http://www.renewwashington.org)).

## **VOLUNTEER HALL OF FAME!**

Our volunteers are essential for us to carry out our mission to promote renewable energy and economic opportunities in rural areas. We appreciate volunteers' dedication and the priceless gifts of their time, talents and resources.

### **VOLUNTEER PROFILE:**

**Vivian Shin (left)** has been an exceptional volunteer, dedicating more than forty hours since September to Northwest SEED. Vivian focuses on fundraising and outreach.

Matt Carr  
Carsten Croff  
Trent Elwing  
Mary Harris  
Harvey Hawks

Patrick Kilcline  
Dinky Pfeifle  
Vivian Shin  
Kevin Snively

*Thanks!*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 8**

**Renew Washington Economic Summit**

Olympia, WA

Investigating the benefits of expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency portfolio investments.

[www.renewwashington.org](http://www.renewwashington.org)

**January 13-15**

**Spokane Ag Expo; Bio Energy Pavilion**

Spokane, WA

Dedicated exhibits regarding bioenergy, wind, and other renewable energy topics.

[www.agshow.org](http://www.agshow.org)

**January 20-21, 2004**

**4th Annual Harvesting Clean Energy Conference**

Portland, OR

[www.harvestcleanenergy.org](http://www.harvestcleanenergy.org)

**July 11-14, 2004**

**Solar 2004: A Solar Harvest, Growing Opportunities**

Portland, OR

[www.ases.org](http://www.ases.org)

*Thanks for your support!*

## 2003 Funder & Donor Recognition

**A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity**

**American Wind Energy Association**

**Bonneville Environmental Foundation**

**Bullitt Foundation**

**California Energy Commission**

**Energy Foundation**

**Kooskooskie Commons**

**Last Mile Electric Coop**

**National Renewable Energy Lab**

**NW Cooperative Development Center**

**The Partnership Project**

**Renewable Northwest Project**

**State of ID Dept. of Water Resources**

**Union of Concerned Scientists**

**U.S. Dept. of Energy, Seattle, WA**

**U.S. Dept. of Agriculture**

**Western Resource Advocates**  
(formerly the Law Fund)

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