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Experts Convene in Portland to Address Renewable Energy Growth

Forum Explores Role of Transmission for Wind, Solar and Geothermal Resources

Portland, Ore. -- The Renewable Northwest Project (RNP), a leading advocate for renewable energy throughout the Northwest, co-presented a forum yesterday on the role of energy transmission in proliferating renewable resources. Hosted in collaboration with the Energy Future Coalition, Climate Solutions and the Northwest Energy Coalition, forum participants included national and regional leaders from diverse sectors including government, business, labor, non-profit and environmental groups.

"Renewable energy offers us an immediate opportunity to address urgent economic, environmental and national security issues," said Rachel Shimshak, executive director at Renewable Northwest Project. "The forum enabled energy stakeholders to wrestle with the critical role of transmission in realizing a clean energy future," Shimshak added.

Held at The White Stag Building of the University of Oregon in Portland, the daylong forum featured speakers and panel discussions that explored key issues involved in developing new transmission to reach renewable energy resources. "This forum was significant, because we must together address how to evolve the current framework for planning, developing and financing transmission infrastructure to harness the power of clean energy resources," said Bill White of the Energy Future Coalition, who visited from Washington, D.C. to co-host the event. "Without new state and federal policies, our national renewable energy resources will remain untapped, continuing our over-dependence on fossil fuels."

John Audley, deputy director with Renewable Northwest Project, facilitated a discussion on how to build transmission for renewable energy while protecting conservation values. "New policies must ensure that we build the transmission we need while minimizing impacts on sensitive ecological resources," Audley said.

"The forum was an example of how diverse groups can come together to address concrete solutions that will help us realize a clean energy future," Rachel Shimshak noted. "We have come a long way but have far to go to bring new renewable resources to scale."

The Northwest region is renowned for its commitment to clean energy. Over the past 12 years, it has fostered more than 4,100 megawatts of new renewable energy projects - including wind, solar and geothermal - generating enough to power for approximately 1,025,000 households.

Renewable Northwest Project is a regional nonprofit advocacy organization promoting responsible development of renewable energy resources in the Pacific Northwest. For more information, please visit www.rnp.org.

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