



Renewable Energy Precincts Newsletter

Keeping you informed on renewable energy in NSW

Issue 7, December 2012

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For more information see:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/climatechange/renewableprecincts.htm

Follow the work of the Renewable Energy Precincts Program on:

www.flickr.com/photos/67461081@N05

Welcome to the final issue of the REP newsletter for 2012.

In this issue we recap recent events organized by the Renewable Energy Precincts program. The newsletter also contains details of a program specifically targeted at Community Renewable Energy.

NSW Renewable Energy Day 2012

The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) thank the community and all of our partners for making Renewable Energy Day 2012 a success!

The world's fastest solar car, free tours to wind farms and a bioreactor, and the chance to learn about energy efficiency and local renewable energy projects were just some of the reasons that NSW / ACT Border Region residents visited Renewable Energy Day last month.



Queanbeyan High School students spent Renewable Energy Day learning about a variety of power sources with staff from the Illawarra Environment Education Centre.

The inaugural event held on Wednesday 21 November, included tours departing from hubs in Gunning, Bungendore and the ACT. Each hub offered the chance to learn about renewable energy technologies, how to save money on power costs and the commercial and employment opportunities associated with renewable energy development in the region.



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Over 500 local residents took advantage of Renewable Energy Day 2012 to tour Veolia's bioreactor near Goulburn, and winds farms operated by Infigen and Acciona. The Illawarra Environmental Education Centre ran energy workshops in Queanbeyan and Mulwaree High Schools and more than 100 primary school students from Gunning, Bungendore and Breadalbane visited the hubs.



Visitors queue for a look inside a turbine tower Infigen Woodlawn wind farm



Demonstration of a Real Power Systems gassifier at the Gunning Hub



Veolia staff explain the workings of the Woodlawn bioreactor

The NSW Government has committed to achieving 20 per cent renewable energy by 2020. Renewable Energy Day is one way OEH is helping the community understand the range of technology options that can be used to achieve this goal. Renewable Energy Day was a collaboration between OEH and Regional Development Australia Southern Inland and ACT as part of the South East Region of Renewable Energy Excellence (SERREE) initiative.

More photos from the day are available at our flickr page: www.flickr.com/photos/67461081@N05.



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Industry community engagement workshop

Over forty representatives from the wind and solar industry attended a community engagement workshop organised by the Clean Energy Council in Sydney last month. The workshop was opened by Dr Rob Stokes, Parliamentary Secretary for Renewable Energy and included an interactive workshop by the Australian Centre for Corporate and Social Responsibility on the “Social License to Operate”. OEH, through REP, provided funding and organisational support for this workshop.

Support for Community Renewable Energy

OEH, through REP, will shortly be announcing details on support for pre-feasibility studies and project facilitation of community-owned renewable energy projects.

Community-owned renewable energy is an opportunity for communities to come together to produce their own electricity from renewable resources. These projects provide a number of benefits, including returning profits to local communities, building local skills and enhancing community understanding of renewable energy.

✓	Clean energy from an abundant and free fuel source
✓	Pioneer community-owned wind or solar in NSW
✓	Local economic and social benefits
✓	Build local capacity and resilience in your community

Community-owned renewable energy is a proven concept internationally, with hundreds if not thousands of projects using wind, solar, hydro and other renewable resources. Support from OEH will help deliver community-owned renewable energy projects in NSW.

The REP Program also recently provided funding for research into challenges and opportunities in the Australian community renewable energy sector. This research was undertaken by a consortium made up of the Community Power Agency, Backroad Connections and the Institute for Sustainable Futures. For a copy of the final report from this project, or more information on community renewable energy generally, please contact your local Renewable Energy Coordinator (details below).



Palerang Council’s recently installed solar PV array



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Regulation of wind farm noise by the EPA

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) recently announced proposed changes to the way wind farm noise is regulated by the NSW Government.

Regulations currently on public exhibition would make the EPA the agency responsible for the ongoing regulation of operational wind farm noise. Under the regulations an Environmental Protection License would need to be sought from the EPA in order to operate a large-scale wind farm in NSW.

The draft regulations are on exhibition for public comment until 23 January 2013. More information on the draft regulations and how to comment is available from see <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licensing/windfarms.htm>.

Recent publications

A number of publications have recently been produced that are of interest to the renewable energy sector in NSW. These include:

- Australian Electricity Market Operator "*National Transmission Network Development Plan*"
<http://www.aemo.com.au/Electricity/Planning/National-Transmission-Network-Development-Plan/Overview>
- Bureau of Resources and Energy Economics "*Australian Energy Technology Assessment*" -
http://www.bree.gov.au/documents/publications/aeta/Australian_Energy_Technology_Assessment.pdf
- Bureau of Resources and Energy Economics "*Resources and Energy Major Projects - October 2012*" -
http://www.bree.gov.au/documents/publications/mimp/REMP_Oct2012.pdf
- Clean Energy Council "*Wind Farm Investment, Employment and Carbon Abatement in Australia*"
<https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/resourcecentre/reports.html>

More details on these and other publications will be included in future editions of this newsletter.

Precinct updates

The Renewable Energy Precincts Program welcomes two new Regional Coordinators - Mark Fleming in the South Coast and Snowy Monaro Precincts, and Dieuwer Reynders in the NSW/ACT (West) Precinct. Chris MacKenzie-Davey is now responsible for the NSW/ACT (East) Precinct.



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South Coast and Snowy-Monaro: Mark Fleming

There are a number of communities in the South Coast and Snowy-Monaro Precincts considering cooperative renewable energy projects. These projects span across a number of technologies, including solar PV, wind and micro hydro. Community renewable energy provides a major opportunity for regional communities in the South Coast and Snowy-Monaro Precincts.

Another current major focus for me is maximising the ability of regional centres to provide services to the renewable energy industry. As regional economies change there are opportunities for re-skilling of the workforce and prospect to become part of the supply chain for the renewable energy sector. I'm working with a number of other agencies and organisations to help maximize these opportunities for the South Coast and Snowy-Monaro region.

Contact on 043206472 or mark.fleming@environment.nsw.gov.au



New England North West: Paul Cruickshank

The New England North West Energy Round Table is developing a business plan for the wider region to plan for jobs, suppliers, consultancies, materials. The aim is to regionalise benefits which flow from renewable energy projects, building on the lead the region has developed with the national broadband network and innovative training through TAFE, University of New England and Southern Cross University.

New England's community wind project 'New England Wind' (NEW) is working hard to refine data to confirm a preferred wind farm site in the area northeast of Armidale. There are still many opportunities for locals to get involved in NEW, ranging from raising capital to helping out with promotion, administration, data and research. See <http://www.newenglandwind.coop/>. NEW is also working with the OEH and other key agencies and groups to establish a peak body for Community Renewable Energy in Australia.

Contact on 0457 593 827 or paul.cruickshank@environment.nsw.gov.au.



NSW/ACT Border Region (East): Chris Mackenzie-Davey

I've now taken on the NSW/ACT Border Precinct (East) and look forward to furthering my contacts in the area. The Renewable Energy Day has also been a focus for this precinct over the last few months. This inaugural event was very successful and I'd like to thank all the stakeholders from Industry, Councils and the community for their involvement.

The falling cost of technology and the renewable energy resources in the region present exciting opportunities for the Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan and Palerang Council areas. I'm going to be working closely with the other stakeholders on the South East Region of Renewable Energy Excellence (SERREE) to help this process. For more information on SERREE visit:

<http://rdaact.org.au/serree/>.

Contact on 0457 593 266 or chris.mackenziedavey@environment.nsw.gov.au





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NSW/ACT Border Region (West): Dieuwer Reynders

I'm the new precinct coordinator for the NSW/ ACT Border precinct (West). I previously worked in Kosciuszko National Park and my background is in natural resource management and community engagement. Renewable Energy Day 2012 has been a major focus for the region over the last few months, providing a perfect opportunity to forge links between government and industry in the region.

Another focus is helping the region explore the opportunities that come from its proximity to the ACT region. It is estimated that, in the long term, approximately 560MW of ACT's renewable energy needs will come from wind energy generated in NSW. This is an economic opportunity for NSW and the border region in particular.

Contact on 0437 574 703 or dieuwer.reynders@environment.nsw.gov.au



Upper Hunter: Pauline Dunne

The Liverpool Range Wind Farm (LRWF) – Community Open House – held in Cassilis, in early November was well attended. Around 60 landholders from the Coolah, Cassilis and Ulan areas called in to discuss project details. Epuron has now lodged its Project Environmental Assessment with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure which will be exhibited for community comment in the New Year. The first LRWF Community Consultative Committee (CCC) meeting is planned for December.

Also around Coolah, the Coolah West Wind Farm continues with project pre-feasibility studies. In Scone progress on the Kyoto Energy Park moved further with the project developers expecting to establish CCC early in the New Year.

Contact on 0457 593 991 or pauline.dunne@environment.nsw.gov.au



Central West: Grant Christopherson

A Central NSW Renewable Energy Co-op (CENREC) was formed in Bathurst in October 2012. Seven highly skilled directors have been appointed to lead CENREC with the initial objective of raising \$5million from the regional community to own a turbine of around 2.5MW generating capacity which is part of a 44 turbine proposal in the Central West.

Community Consultative Committee's (CCC's) have recently been established for three proposed wind farms within the Central West. These committee's have been voluntarily established by the wind farm development companies and will encourage a representation of a healthy mix of local views on proposed wind farm developments.

Contact on 0457 594 193 or grant.christopherson@environment.nsw.gov.au



Feedback

To provide any feedback or comments regarding the Renewable Energy Precincts Program, email any of the Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinators or Mark Squires, Acting State Coordinator Renewable Energy Precincts at mark.squires@environment.nsw.gov.au