

Western's monthly energy efficiency and renewable energy newsletter dedicated to customer activities and sharing information on energy services.

Iowa utilities still learning lessons from stored energy facility

After four years of fits and starts, members of the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities and the Iowa Stored Energy Park Agency recently announced that a long-delayed compressed air energy storage project is now moving forward.

IAMU could be forgiven for thinking that a powerplant that runs on stored wind energy was just too good to be true. The many potential benefits to Iowa utilities, consumers and communities were the reason IAMU first decided to build the Iowa Stored Energy Park in 2003. According to an agency press release, ISEP will enhance the value of wind and other resources while conserving fossil fuels, controlling electricity costs, creating jobs and providing environmentally friendly power.

So even after an early study showed that the original Fort Dodge, Iowa, location was unsuitable for a variety of reasons, IAMU didn't give up. "The sub-committee in charge of the project had to step back and start



Plans for the Iowa Stored Energy Park include a welcome center where consumers can learn about wind energy. (Artist's rendering by Iowa Stored Energy Park Agency)

the search for a site all over again," recalled ISEPA Development Director Kent Holst.

Enlisting the aid of the Iowa Geological Society, IAMU screened more than 20 underground caverns. Only three emerged as possibilities, and two of those didn't make the cut for geological reasons. "A reservoir has to have a cap rock formation to seal in compressed air," explained Holst.

Specific needs

The final site, just west of Dallas Center in central Iowa, appears to have all the requirements. The reservoir is deep and wide enough with the right kind of rock for ISEP's unique technology.

At ISEP, wind power and other low-cost resources will be used to pump air into the sandstone, displac-

ing water in a limited and carefully controlled area to form a "bubble." The air will remain in place as an underground reservoir of stored energy. Wells tapped into the reservoir will allow the air out when needed to provide electricity. "So you can see, we had very specific geological needs," Holst said.

The site's location, within 30 miles of downtown Des Moines, is good from an economic development point of view. It is not, however, in the best wind area in a state that ranks third nationally for its wind resources. The original ISEP plan called for building a 75- to 100-MW wind farm near the storage site. Now the wind power will have to come from a remote site. "The next two studies ISEPA plans will

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Iowa utilities

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look at our best options for addressing transmission and interconnection issues,” said Holst.

When one door closes, though, another one opens. “The new storage location is connected in one direction to the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator,” said Holst. “There may be opportunities to buy and sell energy with MISO—but that’s a subject for another study.”

Stand-alone agency

From its early experiences, IAMU learned to thoroughly investigate all options before ruling any out, but Holst said that other types of renewable generation are not under consideration. “Not for running the compressors, at least. Sandia [National Laboratories] is doing research on using biofuels—ethanol or biodiesel—to replace some of the natural gas,” he said. “That’s a very popular idea here in Iowa.”

Energy Services Bulletin

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IAMU also learned that there was an easier way to manage the project for the participating utilities. Under Section 28E of the Iowa Code, two or more agencies are able join together to form a separate government body to provide a new service. “We formed ISEPA as a 28E organization to handle contracting and other legal aspects of development,” explained Holst.

ISEPA represents the more than 130 municipal utilities involved in the development of the project. The initial ownership/investor arrangements has not been established yet, but is expected to be finalized this summer. “We feel strongly that the facility can succeed as a municipally-owned project,” Holst stated.

Time table laid out

The design phase would begin some time after that, and financing details should be in place by May 2009. The U.S. Department of Energy has supported the project, financially with \$2.9 million in funding, and with technical assistance from Sandia. IAMU member utilities and surrounding states will cover the rest of the cost.

The agency hopes to be generating 268 MW by summer 2011. “It has to be that big to get the economy of scale,” Holst said. “You can’t spread the development of the storage field around, the way you could with some other types of powerplants.”

Above-ground plans for the park include a building designed to meet the highest standards for environmental protection and showcase the latest equipment and technology.

Savings are reward

Once operating, ISEP will contribute to a mix of energy resources supplying cities and utilities participating in the project. IAMU anticipates that most ISEP customers will continue to use conventional generation—mainly coal-fired steam powerplants—to serve their baseload needs. Energy from ISEP will be a mid-range, or “intermediate,” power source. Studies have shown that is the area with the most urgent need for utilities.

ISEPA estimates that CAES plus wind energy from the facility could account for 20 percent of a typical Iowa municipal utility’s yearly energy use, and could save cities and their utilities as much as \$5 million annually in purchased energy. The cost of energy from ISEP CAES facilities has been estimated at \$65 per megawatthour.

That is a significant success for a group of admitted novices to power project development. “None of the participants have been involved in building a major powerplant,” Holst confirmed. “It has been a learning curve all the way, but there are a lot of knowledgeable people out there who are willing to share their expertise. And, of course, you have to do extensive diligence at every stage,” he added.

Spoken like a good—and determined—student. ⚡

Want to know more?

Visit www.wapa.gov/es/pubs/esb/2007/mar/mar071.htm

Concerned utilities meet energy issues with local leadership

Utilities and municipalities are taking the initiative to address climate change and energy independence.

Power providers as different as the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and San Miguel Power Association in southwestern Colorado have adopted aggressive energy and environmental policies. They are not required by law to do so, but are undertaking ambitious programs for the same reason—"It's the right thing to do," said SMPA General Manager Bobby Blair.

Ahead of state programs

SMPA announced its 80/20 program at the beginning of the year. The name comes from the goals of getting 80 percent of SMPA customers to use at least one 100-kWh block of renewable energy and to get 20 percent of the co-op's total kWh sales from renewable energy by the end of 2009. "Even though we are not required to follow the guidelines of Amendment 37, we live in a ski resort where issues of global climate change are a big concern," said Blair.

Amendment 37 is Colorado's voter-enacted renewable portfolio standard that requires electric utilities to produce mandatory amounts of power from renewable resources in coming years. Small cooperatives are exempt from the rule's provisions, although several, like SMPA, have chosen to comply.

San Francisco unveiled its own Climate Action Plan two years ahead of California's landmark 2006 bill to control greenhouse gas emissions. The plan calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2012 through expanding

energy efficiency and renewable energy in municipal buildings, using clean fuels for city fleets and working with consumers to reduce individual contributions to climate change.

SFPUC's "Clean Air, Clean Energy" program requires that all of the city government's power come from renewable sources by 2010. Currently, San Francisco's city buildings get 80 percent of their power from hydroelectric sources—the Hetch Hetchy dam and an allotment from Western. The remainder comes from conventional powerplants. "The city plans to add tidal power, biofuels and triple our investment in solar energy by 2009," said Communications Director Tony Winnicker.

Redevelopment

Another program goal—to become a retail green power supplier—is about to become a reality. Under an agreement with developer Lennar BVHP, SFPUC will supply 100 percent green power to a "Green Public Power Community" at the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard. Redevelopment of Hunters Point and Treasure Island, another decommissioned shipyard, offer SFPUC the chance to branch out into retail power delivery.

The installation has no existing infrastructure, so SFPUC and Lennar will share costs of building the necessary transmission and distribution system to serve the development. Lennar will deed the infrastructure to the city and SFPUC will recoup its investment of \$12 million from ratepayers over future years.

The developer is also contributing \$2 million toward the cost of providing renewable energy to customers in the new neighborhood.



The gondola connecting the towns of Mountain Village and Telluride, Colo., runs on renewable energy through Mountain Village's green tags purchase. (Photo by Mountain Village, Colo.)

Sustainability is key

PG&E, the city's retail service provider, also bid for the contract. "As an investor-owned utility, PG&E could afford to subsidize service to the area for years," said Winnicker. "It's tough to compete with that."

SFPUC brought its own strengths to the table, however. "Lennar wanted to build a sustainable development," Winnicker explained, "and PG&E couldn't guarantee renewable energy. That helped us to close the deal."

Scheduled for completion in 2009, the 93-acre neighborhood will include more than 1,600 new residential units and 300,000 square feet of commercial and retail space. Initially, the community will receive solar power and hydroelectric power from Hetch Hetchy. SFPUC is installing solar panels atop the facility's reservoir to supply this and other future green power communities.

Green tags are answer

As a small utility with no renewable generation of its own, SMPA used green tags to satisfy a large customer's desire to purchase 100 percent renewable energy.

The town of Mountain Village

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Mesa, Ariz., includes demand-side management in integrated resource plan

Necessity proved to be the mother of conservation when Mesa, Ariz., Utilities crafted a 10-year plan to meet Western's integrated resource plan requirement.

Under the 1992 Energy Policy Act, Western's firm power customers must submit an IRP every five years and update it annually. The plan forecasts a utility's electric power demand and evaluates the alternatives available to meet it. Mesa's 2007 IRP represented some firsts for the municipal utility. "They called me up to ask about the IRP requirements," recalled John Li, Energy Services representative for Western's Desert Southwest region. "This was the first time some members of Mesa's Resource Division had done an IRP for Western."

"I had completed IRPs at other utilities but the requirements are different for Federal hydropower customers," said Resources Division Director Frank McRae. "The IRP information on the Energy Services Web site was useful, but we wanted to verify our interpretation. John was very helpful," he added.

Seeking new resources

The city had never considered demand side management as a potential resource either, but during the period the new plan covers, 2007 to 2016, three long-term power supply contracts are set to expire. In 2008, the city's contract with Arizona Electric Power Cooperative will expire, and two separate agreements with Public Service Company of New Mexico will end in 2012 and 2013.

The economics have changed, too, McRae observed. "Until recently, demand-side management was not a

cost-effective strategy for the city," he said. "Now, the comparative cost of replacing those supply-side resources justifies Mesa's investment in DSM programs."

Reducing peak demand could enable the utility to reduce, defer or even eliminate supply-side resource acquisitions. To figure out which type of programs would get the best results, Mesa contracted with Boulder, Colo.-based Summit Blue Consulting, a company that specializes in demand-side strategies. "Summit Blue evaluated our customer base, our goals and all possible demand-side options," said Mesa Public Information Officer Stacy Damp. "Then they narrowed the list down to the strategies that would give us the most 'bang for our buck.'"

Residential heating, ventilation and air conditioning turned out to be the area where efficiency and conservation could have the most impact. Not surprising, said McRae, for an Arizona utility with a significant residential customer base. "Our summer peak load is made up almost entirely of residential air conditioners," he pointed out.

Program launch

Mesa City Council approved the IRP early in January, and Western accepted it shortly thereafter. The next step is to implement the DSM portion of the plan. "A utility can usually get a demand-side program up and running much sooner than it can bid and negotiate a new power contract," said Li.

Summit Blue will return to develop and initiate the implementation of the programs. "We'd like to get an

incentive for replacing old air conditioners in place before the summer cooling season," said Damp, who will be working on outreach. "We may do some kind of lighting program, too, because it's an inexpensive change."

Air conditioning is likely to be a tougher sell, she acknowledged, as many of the targeted units are in older homes and low-income areas. Mesa Utilities also serves many non-English-speaking households, so it will be necessary to do bilingual marketing, as well. "The challenge will be communicating the payback to people who don't have a lot of money to spare for home improvements," Damp said.

System upgrade

As Mesa Utilities Resources Division prepares to launch its first DSM program, the Electric Division is stepping up its program to convert the city's 4-kV distribution system to 12 kV. "This gives us a unique opportunity, not only to reduce our line losses, but to encourage customers to replace their old air conditioners," said McRae. It is not economical to convert an old three-phase air conditioner to operate on a 12-kV system, he explained. "And those old units are the inefficient ones we want to phase out."

Mesa will be working with HVAC contractors to assess the configuration of customers' air conditioners. "We'll be able to get the vintage of the unit and its efficiency rating, too," McRae said. "In a lot of cases, we'll be able to offer the customer a higher rebate based on potential savings."

That could lead to greater customer participation, which would mean

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more energy and demand savings. The IRP's estimated savings from DSM were based on conservative assumptions about participation. "The program could turn out to be much more successful than we anticipated," said McRae. "It's very exciting."

Learn an effective strategy

Demand-side management offers many exciting opportunities for utilities, which is why Western's IRP

process has always encouraged customers to consider energy efficiency, said Energy Services Manager Ron Horstman. "Customers like Mesa are discovering the value of DSM apart from IRP requirements," he said. "As they develop programs, they will find that Energy Services' technical assistance can help them maximize effectiveness," he said.

To help customers who are just starting to look at what demand-side management can do for them, Western hosted a series of seminars earlier this year. If you missed those

events, streaming audio from the Nov. 14 webinar is available online. You can also download presentations from the Jan. 24 workshop. Watch the Energy Services Web site for announcements about further training opportunities.

Of course, many Western customers already have well-established DSM programs, reported here in the Energy Services Bulletin. You haven't seen your demand-side management story in print? Share your DSM experience with newcomers by contacting the editor today. ⚡

Want to know more?

Visit www.wapa.gov/es/pubs/esb/2007/mar/mar073.htm

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became a "Green Public Power Community" Jan. 1, buying 4,000 100-kWh blocks of renewable energy credits from SMPA monthly. That is enough to offset the electricity used by the Telluride Mountain Village gondola, town hall, Telluride Conference Center, the maintenance shop, snowmelt system and town street lights.

Tri-State Generation and Transmission, SMPA's power wholesaler, is supplying the green tags, generated mostly by wind. "It's very exciting that one of our customers is now the single largest purchaser of renewable energy in Tri-State's system," said Blair.

The Mountain Village town council and owners association started discussing the idea of running on 100-percent green energy last fall. Around the same time, Tri-State reduced the cost of green tags from \$2.50 per 100-kWh block to \$1.25. "The price drop was

just good fortune, because the town was intent on making the purchase anyway," Blair observed.

Schools join in

The green tag purchase was also a Christmas present to SMPA, giving the co-op a good start on its way toward meeting the goals of its 80/20 program. Blair estimated SMPA will need consumers to commit to 34 to 36 million kWh annually, or more than 28,000 blocks monthly. "If you're going to set goals, set them high," Blair said.

Reaching ambitious goals takes team work, and in February, SMPA kicked off a joint promotion with high schools and middle schools in its territory. Students will be contacting local residents and businesses offering 100-kWh blocks of renewable energy for \$1.25 a month for a minimum of one year. For each block sold, SMPA will donate \$1 to the school, and will recognize top sellers with cash prizes.

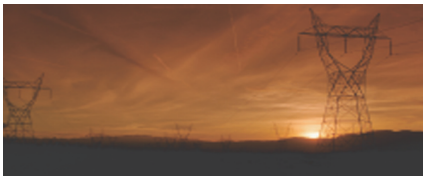
"The promotion will help schools raise money, encourage the purchase of more renewable energy blocks and raise the level of awareness about renewable energy among students and consumers," Blair said. "We don't know what to anticipate, but we could potentially add 5,000 to 10,000 new blocks," he added.

The school partnership is SMPA's first promotion since it announced the 80/20 goal, but Blair acknowledged that the co-op's green tag program had been around since 1998. "It's the environmental issues that are getting people's attention right now," he said.

Those issues are the same whether people live in a big coastal city or a small mountain town, but the best strategies for dealing with them differ from place to place. Utilities that are part of the communities they serve are turning out to be a source of innovation and action, and show that good leadership begins at home. ⚡

Want to know more?

Visit www.wapa.gov/es/pubs/esb/2007/mar/mar072.htm



TOPICS from the POWER LINE

Editor's note: The Energy Services Bulletin features real answers to real questions posed to our staff at the Energy Services Power Line. We hope you find it useful.

Church seeks guidance on energy use

Question:

What can we do to reduce utility bills at our church?

We have a poorly-maintained 34,000 square foot facility with monthly utility bills of \$2,200, and a congregation of only 25 people! Problem areas include:

- No zone controls on the oil-fired, hot-water boiler heating system; the whole building must be heated to use one room. We heat office areas with portable 110-volt space heaters to keep from running the boiler during the week.
- Sanctuary lighting consists of fixtures holding three 300-watt floodlights, mounted to the beams 30 to 60 feet above the floor. Most are burned out since we can't reach them.
- Lighting in classrooms and other areas is a mixture of bulbs and tubes. Most are very old, and some rooms have been abandoned because the old tube fixture transformers have leaked or burnt out.

Answer:

You seem to have much more facility than you can support—unfortunately a common situation for churches. Perhaps other small congregations in need of a building would be interested in sharing space and costs.

Churches pose a special challenge because their energy consumption is often too small to interest energy service companies, and separation of

church and state can interfere with receiving services from some publicly funded groups. Ask your utility about auditing or other services it offers, since it is likely to be your best source of free information regarding your heating system. Heating contractors may provide information about your specific needs, although they are frequently hoping to make a sale. Some contractors charge a fee for evaluating a heating system, but it may be less than an independent consultant.

Interfaith Coalition on Energy is an excellent resource for churches concerned with energy matters. ICE offers information and seminars on conserving energy in religious institutions. For a fee they also perform energy audits of institutions. ICE publishes a quarterly newsletter you should consider subscribing to, and sells and rents audio and video material you may find helpful.

Otherwise, the steps for managing energy consumption are very much the same for a church as they are for any other facility:

Develop a plan

Any good energy management program needs support from people it will affect. If a congregation wants to change its energy expenses, they should come to consensus about what behaviors they are willing to change. Secondly, they should discuss what the changes will cost.

ICE publications offer biblical arguments supporting energy efficiency and conservation as ethically, morally and fiscally responsible. For example, an article by Orin G. Gelderloos titled "Energy and the Bible" argues that humans should care for the earth out of concern for creation, not profit or benefit. Such philosophies and beliefs strongly support an energy management approach.

Implement changes

To change a congregation's energy consumption, change its behavior. ICE has documented churches reducing their energy use by 10 to 20 percent simply by getting the congregation to make behavior changes. Here are some ideas:

- Schedule building use. This can be one of the most effective measures to reduce energy consumption. Since many church buildings are used sporadically, consolidating meetings to fewer days or evenings cuts down on the need to turn on the heat and lights.
- Use smaller rooms. Moving your worship area from the sanctuary to a smaller part of the building could save a substantial amount of money. For the number of people currently attending services, use as small a room as will accommodate the number of people currently attending services, and heat it with a few space heaters rather than the boiler.
- Watch those open doors. How worshippers enter and exit a building can contribute to significant heat loss. A vestibule cannot buffer outside temperatures if the pastor greets parishioners in a waiting line that keeps outer and inner doors open. Try a covered visiting area

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Energy Shorts

RM Energy Services representative retires

Western and customers in the Rocky Mountain Region said goodbye to Energy Services Representative Peggy Plate, March 2. Plate retired after 28 years of Federal service, most of those years spent helping Western's preference power customers use energy more efficiently.

After starting her Federal career with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Plate moved to Western in 1981 and became an energy conservation specialist in 1983. Shortly thereafter, she was in charge of the region's Conservation and Renewable Energy Program. Since then, she has managed a highly visible, highly successful Energy Services program for Western's Rocky Mountain Region.

RM customers have spent many hours with Plate, on the phone and at their facilities, discussing their needs and devising ways to meet them. Throughout her career, Plate has been actively involved with organizations that support our customers, including the Colorado Power Council, Rocky Mountain Electric League, Colorado Association of Municipal Utilities and Colorado Rural Development Council.

Through Plate's efforts, RMR customers piloted several remote photovoltaic applications. She was instrumental in establishing the Photovoltaic Services Network as a means of making bulk equipment purchases that lower the cost of installing photovoltaics.

Plate also facilitated the development of a 12-year irrigation efficiency

program involving five agencies. The project improved irrigation energy efficiency and crop management in Colorado and showed farmers how to save money using new technology.

Recently, Plate coordinated demand-side management, motor efficiency and power factor improvement workshops to help customers improve their energy use. Her efforts to negotiate and develop renewable energy contracts for Federal agencies and Western customers have enabled them to reach mandated renewable energy goals. In January, Plate received the Excellence in Sustainable Resources award from Fort Carson, Colo., for negotiating a renewable energy certificate purchase and assisting the Army installation with installing a large solar system.

Fort Carson is not the only Western customer to recognize Plate's work. At the Arkansas River Power Authority's 2001 annual meeting, Plate received the organization's Award for Excellence. The Poudre School District Board in Fort Collins, Colo., recognized her efforts with Fort Collins Electric Utility to help the school district save energy and dollars. Western honored Plate in 2001 with the Exceptional Service Award. Her numerous awards are a testament to a customer-focused career that has been a credit to Western.

Just one week before her retirement, at the Northern Colorado Clean Energy Utility Summit in Fort Collins, Senator Ken Salazar (D.-Colo.) presented Plate with congratulatory letter. Senator Salazar praised Plate's

Federal service and her commitment to promoting renewable energy.

Western customers and coworkers alike will miss Plate's energy, enthusiasm and expertise. We wish her the best of luck and success in her retirement.

Online service helps utilities find solar match

The Solar Electric Power Association is preparing to unveil an online solar dating service just for utilities. That's right—utilities will be able to find a solar match. O.k., so it's not really a dating service, but the general principle is the same.

Officially known as "Peer Match," SEPA members can find other utilities that have experience with challenges they are facing, such as:

- Working with home builders to incorporate solar into new home developments
- Structuring an RFP for utility-scale solar
- Funding solar school programs
- Determining criteria to set utility incentive levels
- Simplifying the interconnection process for customers

SEPA expects to roll out "Peer Match" on its Web site in early March, as soon as enough utility members have completed solar profiles and agreed to participate. Don't worry – no pictures required!

To update their solar profiles in the Peer Match database, member utilities must:

1. Login to their SEPA Members' Only account
2. Click "Edit Your Account" in the top right hand corner
3. Complete the "About Your Company" section at the bottom

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outside the building, or a reception line inside, slightly away from the door.

- Decrease thermostat settings. ICE Project Manager Andy Rudin suggests setting back your central heating system to 45 degrees. ICE found that a 27-degree interior temperature swing is normal through the spring, summer and fall seasons, and does not hurt church contents. If done daily, that measure can save about 1 percent on the heating bill for each degree of setback for an 8-hour period. Setting back the thermostat 10 degrees for 8-hours per day every day for a month could reduce your monthly heating bill about 10 percent.

- Talk to your utility. A utility rate schedule could offer significant savings, according to ICE. Often, churches operate mostly on “off-peak” hours. Some utilities give price breaks for energy used in evenings and on weekends.

Modify or upgrade systems

Investing in a new efficient system (whether it's lighting, heating or cooling) that is only used part of the time will not save as much as one used most of the time. In the big picture, simply practicing good conservation and efficiency may be a better choice. For example, replacing infrequently-used incandescent lamps with new and expensive compact fluorescent lamps is more expensive and less environmentally sound than using old lamps efficiently.

When the time comes to install new lighting in your building, T-8 fluorescent lamps with electronic ballasts provide energy savings and improved color rendering. If your fixtures are in good condition, you can reuse them by replacing lamps and ballasts.

If you have ballasts leaking polychlorinated biphenyls, you need to remove them from the building. Ballasts made before 1979 are likely to contain PCBs, and those manufactured without PCBs after July 1, 1978, must say so on the label.

PCBs appear as clear or yellow oil on the ballast surface. Do not touch it. Contact a trained professional, such as an electrical contractor, to remove leaking ballasts. ⚡

Want to know more?

Visit www.wapa.gov/es/pubs/esb/2007/mar/mar074.htm

Energy shorts

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4. Opt in (or out) of Peer Match under “Participate in Peer Match”
SEPA will notify members as soon as the service goes live.

For more information about Peer Match, contact Mike Taylor at 202-857-0898, ext. 3.

ACORE publishes new master REC purchase, sale agreement

Agencies that are just getting their feet wet in the renewable resources market can thank the American Council on Renewable Energy for providing a template for trading

renewable energy certificates.

ACORE released the long-anticipated standard-form contract, the Renewable Energy Certificate Purchase and Sale Agreement in February. “This contract is intended as infrastructure, or a paved road, to help buyers and sellers transact, foster market mechanisms to promote renewable resource development and, perhaps most importantly, stave off potential balkanization of U.S. REC markets,” said Jeremy Weinstein, co-chair of the working group that developed the master document.

Individuals and companies can use the agreement to acquire the renewable attributes of renewable energy no matter where they are

located on the national grid, without incurring transmission costs. Both the voluntary and compliance markets will be able to use the technology-neutral contract. “It is legally robust regardless of jurisdiction. This is release 1.0, and we look forward to monitoring legal and market developments to keep the contract current,” added Weinstein.

ACORE President Michael Eckhart stated, “This is an important step in creating a national system for REC trading, which will be essential to monetizing the environmental benefits of renewable energy and building those values into the long-term financing of the projects.” ⚡

Want to know more?

Visit www.wapa.gov/es/esnews.htm