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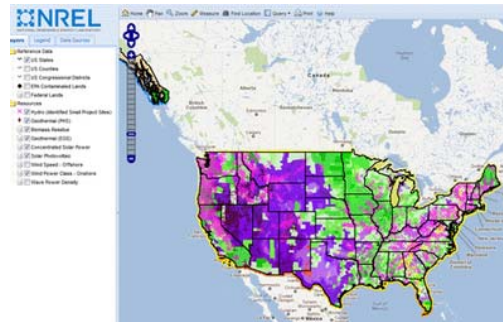
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Electronic Atlas Maps U.S. Renewable Energy Resources

A new geospatial application developed by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) allows users to easily and accurately map potential renewable energy resources in the United States.



The interactive tool, RE Atlas, is free to use and available online.

“Ease of use and breadth of data make RE Atlas an excellent tool for policymakers, planners, energy developers and others who need to better understand the renewable resources available in the United States,” said Dan Getman, whose team in NREL’s Strategic Energy Analysis Center developed the tool. “RE Atlas is an important addition to NREL’s suite of geospatial tools, because it brings together so many renewable energy datasets in one easy-to-use tool.”

RE Atlas is designed to facilitate energy policy development, investment and education by making high quality data accessible and easy to understand. The tool creates dynamic maps of renewable resources, including biomass, geothermal, hydropower, solar and wind. RE Atlas can display resources individually or in a composite fashion.

NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for DOE by the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

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Projects

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SAFER Case Study Series: Bioenergy at Longwood University

With a mission of serving “as a catalyst for regional prosperity and advancement,” Longwood University has turned its need for energy into an opportunity for regional innovation.



Longwood University's campus of 4,500 students in Farmville, Virginia, now supplies 85 percent of its heating and hot water needs from bioenergy. The feedstock used to fuel that energy comes from regional mill operations, all within 45 minutes of the campus.

In 1973, Longwood's primary energy source was fuel oil, which cost 10 cents a gallon. In the early 1980s, when fuel oil prices soared to more than \$1 per gallon, the university sought new fuel sources to supply its energy needs. With limited access to coal and natural gas, the university found biomass to be the most cost-effective alternative to fuel oil.

In 1983, the university converted its two boilers to biomass. Then, in 2004, the university replaced both boilers with one wood-fired boiler. A new plant opened in 2011, adding a second biomass boiler.

The SAFER Southern Bioeconomy Case Study Series is a project of the Southeast Agriculture & Forest Energy Resources Alliance (SAFER) with funding from Energy Foundation. Download the case study from the SAFER website.

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TVA Activates Wind Power Contracts

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) has started the new year with the addition of 535 megawatts of renewable power from four wind farms in Kansas, Illinois and Iowa.



New renewable wind power sources that began delivery in January to the TVA power grid are:

- 201 megawatts from ENEL Green Power's Caney River wind farm in Elk County, Kansas
- 150 megawatts from NextEra Energy Resources' White Oak Energy Center in McLean County, Illinois
- 101 megawatts from EDP Renewables North America's Lost Lakes wind farm in Dickinson County, Iowa
- An additional 83 megawatts from EDP Renewables' Pioneer Prairie site in Howard and Mitchell counties, Iowa, which began producing wind energy for TVA in 2010.

With these newly added wind power sources, TVA now has contracts with five

operating wind farms in the Midwest with a combined 542 wind turbines as a result of a 2008 request for proposals for more than 1,500 megawatts of renewable and clean energy. TVA's total wind energy now activated is 950 megawatts, or more than 3 million megawatt hours annually. That amount provides enough electricity to power more than 200,000 homes in the TVA service region.

TVA's renewable and clean energy capacity is now more than 5,600 megawatts, including hydroelectric production at its dams, wind contracts, TVA's Generation Partners and Renewable Standard Offer initiatives, and other TVA-owned wind, solar, landfill methane and biomass generation.

TVA's clean energy contracts include 300 megawatts from Iberdrola's Cayuga Ridge wind farm in Illinois, which began generating in 2010. TVA has not yet purchased renewable energy credits associated with this contract but retains the option to do so in the future.

More information on wind power contracts is available on TVA's website.

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Study Finds Economic Benefits From Passing Renewable Energy Legislation

From wfpl.org. A report commissioned by a Kentucky non-profit supports the establishment of a statewide renewable energy standard. This is the third time legislation that would require a certain percentage of the state's energy to come from sustainable or renewable sources has been introduced in the General Assembly.

In the past, the Clean Energy Opportunity Act hasn't gained much traction. This year, the Mountain Association for Community and Economic Development (MACED) commissioned a study from Boston-based Synapse Energy Economics on the bill's economic impact.

Kristin Tracz of MACED says there needs to be more conversations about the state's energy future.

"And I think providing data like this that gives some, not predictions, but an indication of which direction we're headed in and the choices we have in front of us really helps to inform that conversation and we can talk more specifically about this crossroads that we're at," she said.

Kentucky's days of cheap energy are nearing an end. The report found that energy costs will rise even if the state does nothing, because Kentucky's power plants are aging and new environmental controls will make coal less economical. The analysts found that passing the renewable energy portfolio legislation would create thousands of jobs and result in smaller rate increases for consumers.

MACED president Justin Maxson says the bill should be a no-brainer, because energy costs are going to rise anyway—whether the state takes action or not.

"This sort of legislation really is a way to do something about the rising costs but do it in a way that creates 28,000 jobs and creates huge economic opportunities, entrepreneurial opportunities across the state."

The bill's lead sponsor is Louisville representative Mary Lou Marzian.

The report, "Potential Impacts of a Renewable and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard in Kentucky" is available online.

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USDA Invites Applications for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects



USDA is seeking applications to provide assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to complete a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Funding is available from USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill).

REAP is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the nation's critical energy needs. For 2012, USDA has approximately \$25.4 million budget authority available to fund REAP activities, which will support at least \$12.5 million in grants and approximately \$48.5 million in guaranteed loan program level awards. USDA is accepting the following applications:

- renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grant applications and combination grant and guaranteed loan applications until March 30, 2012
- renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement guaranteed loan only applications on a continuous basis up to June 29, 2012
- renewable energy system feasibility study applications through March 30, 2012
- energy audits and renewable energy development assistance applications through February 21, 2012.

More information on how to apply for funding is available in the January 20, 2012 Federal Register, pages 2948 through 2954.

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Submit an Article to REnews!

KREC would like to publish your thoughts on renewable energy and energy efficiency in Kentucky in the "Members' Forum". Please send your opinions, articles or news about RE happenings in the Commonwealth to KREC@kppc.org. A short piece is preferable (300 or fewer words work best).

Make your voice heard – we want to give KREC members a forum to spread the word about renewable energy efforts and issues.

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