

# POWER LINE

NEWS FROM THE GRASSROOTS – AMERICA'S COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES • SUMMER 2009

## Oregon

OREGON RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

### Electric Cooperatives Are at the Table in Climate Debate

By Ted Case, Executive Director, Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association – Salem, OR



Ted Case

It's an interesting and challenging time for electric cooperatives. The Oregon Legislature spent considerable time pushing climate change legislation and the U.S. Congress is working overtime to pass their own version. With so much at stake, we need to be at the table.

The Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA) is urging lawmakers in Salem and Washington D.C. to craft responsible legislation that does not dramatically raise electric rates and harm small communities already reeling from the economic downturn.

The numbers tell the story of why we're so concerned: Over 200,000 Oregonians are out of work and some rural communities are experiencing 20 percent unemployment. Climate change policies should not exacerbate the economic situation. We also cannot overlook the fact that Oregon electric cooperatives have one of the lowest carbon footprints in the country.

Your local electric cooperative is using electricity that is 97 percent carbon free because of our reliance on clean, renewable hydropower. It all adds up to a minimal carbon footprint and affordable electricity. Yet, we are not immune to the impact of climate change legislation. In the future, many co-ops will be looking at a diverse mix of resources to meet their consumers' energy needs.

We're willing to do our part—and more. Oregon electric cooperatives have introduced legislation in Salem to increase our energy efficiency and conservation programs in a way that makes sense for small utilities and rural communities. We believe this approach is superior to a complicated, bureaucratic cap and trade program that will simply drive up the cost of electricity and create wealth for Wall Street investors. Legislators have expressed gratitude that electric cooperatives have brought forward a responsible plan to do our part for carbon reduction.

Your efforts have made a difference. The Power of Community program has helped press our message to lawmakers to focus on affordable, workable and sustainable programs to meet carbon objectives. All Oregon co-op consumers will

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benefit from your participation in this important program. Thank you.

Oregon's electric cooperatives are proud of our record of providing reliable, affordable electricity while protecting the environment. Working together, we can keep it that way. \*

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<http://oreca.org/powercom.php?signup>.

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# CCEC Members Show Their Conservation Know-how

Megan Walters, Energy Conservation Specialist, Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Port Orford, OR

Since 2006, Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CCEC) members have saved 3,880,000 kWhs through a variety of conservation programs administered by CCEC and specifically selected based on member interest and participation throughout our unique service territory. Low-Income Weatherization, EnergySmart, Ductless Heat Pumps, Commercial Lighting Retrofits, Residential Water Heaters, Energy Star® CFLs, Energy Star® Appliances, and Energy Star® Manufactured Homes are just some of the ways our members are saving energy and money.

To administer the Low-Income Weatherization Program, CCEC partners with Oregon Coast Community Action (ORCCA). Since 2007, 80,000 kWhs have been saved through residential weatherization upgrades like floor insulation and window replacements. Many of our members saved money, but

they also had a much warmer and more comfortable winter thanks to this program and the crew at ORCCA.

EnergySmart has been a very successful program and new businesses with commercial refrigeration continue signing on to participate. Fred Meyer has made a 52% wattage reduction in their store lighting and that along with installed Efficient Evaporator Fan Motors (ECM's) means a savings of 500,000 kWhs annually. C&K Markets is still in the process of making some major efficiency upgrades at their locations, but they are already realizing a savings of over 161,000 kWhs annually with the installation of LED Case Lighting and Anti-Sweat Controllers in their low temperature frozen food cases.

The Northwest Ductless Heat Pump Project, which began October 1, 2008, continues to be a flourishing pilot program for CCEC members. To date, 22 units have been installed and over 94,000

kWhs have been saved.

Many CCEC commercial accounts have seen significant energy savings thanks to lighting retrofits; Brookings-Harbor School District gymnasiums, Brookings City Hall, Brookings Presbyterian Church, Brookings Eye Center, and Gold Beach Lumber have already saved 111,000 kWhs—and many businesses in other service areas have projects being completed soon that will only add to that number!

Last year, Pacific Reef Resort in Gold Beach replaced

all their incandescent bulbs with CFLs. But, they didn't stop there. They wanted to help educate employees and visitors staying at their resort about the importance of energy efficiency so they asked CCEC to put a display in their lobby.

All of these programs, in addition to the Water Heater and Energy Star® programs, assist our utility members in their effort to conserve. Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc. thanks its members for their commitment to conserve now, for a better future tomorrow. \*

## 2008 ORECA Cooperators of the Year

Rep. Debbie Boone is considered a visionary on clean energy technology and is constantly looking for innovative ways to promote renewable energy—and jobs.



Rep. Debbie Boone



Rep. Brad Witt

As an active member of the Coastal Caucus, Rep. Boone has worked on ocean mapping projects to find ideal locations for wave energy technology. She is also working to create green jobs, citing an example of a business that repairs windmill parts—a venture that could employ out-of-work fisherman.

“Co-ops are positioned to be real heroes in the debate over renewable energy,” Boone said. “They are on the cutting edge.” Rep. Boone knows a bit about electric co-ops—she is

a proud member of West Oregon Electric Cooperative.

“Debbie Boone understands the challenges of electric co-ops,” said ORECA President Robert VanNatta. “She is one of us.”

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In the 2007 Legislative session, Rep. Brad Witt fought for electric cooperatives in the battle over the Renewable Portfolio Standard. During the 2009 session, he has demonstrated the same level of com-

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## POWER LINE

**POWER LINE** is published by the Government Relations Department of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in conjunction with the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA).

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# Wave Energy Development Focused on Ocean Power Technologies

By Kathi VanderZanden, Manager, Communications & Marketing, PNGC Power, Portland, OR

Planning and negotiations over a period of years are yielding results in a first-on-the-West Coast wave power project. The Reedsport OPT Wave Park will be located about 2.5 miles offshore near Reedsport, Oregon.

PNGC Power, an electric power services cooperative owned by 16 Northwest electric distribution cooperative utilities with service territory in seven western states, is working closely with Ocean Power Technologies (OPT). OPT is a wave energy developer based in New Jersey. In particular, PNGC members Douglas Electric Cooperative

(Roseburg), Consumers Power Inc. (Philomath) and Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative (Port Orford) have been closely involved.

The clean, renewable power that the Wave Park will generate will provide energy to about 375 homes. PNGC Power will take delivery of the power and handle distribution.

“As PNGC Power strives to maintain competitive prices and reliable service for its members we are increasingly looking at promising new technologies to meet load growth,” said PNGC Power President and Chief Executive Officer, John Prescott. “Our participa-

tion in the development of the OPT Reedsport Wave Park demonstrates our member cooperatives’ commitment to explore alternative energy resources to meet customer needs into the future.”

Installation of the first buoy is the initial phase of OPT’s plan to install ten buoys generating a total of 1.5 megawatts, near Reedsport. OPT expects to deploy the first buoy in late 2010. This will be followed by the manufacture and installation of an additional nine buoys. OPT anticipates that the ten-buoy wave power station will provide important operating and environmental

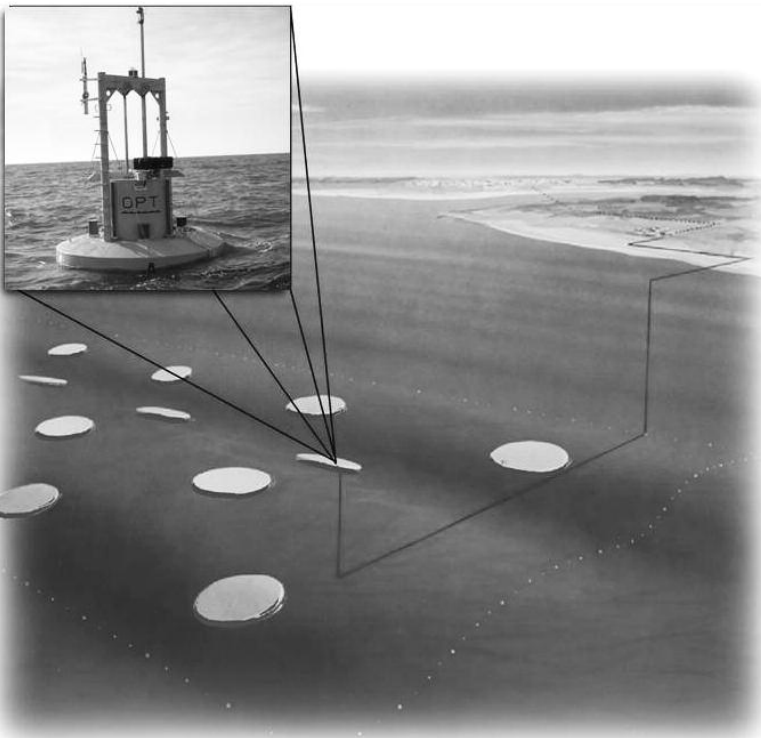
data for the future development of wave energy on the Oregon and the West coast. It will be the largest installation of its kind in the US.

PNGC Power has contributed funding for the Reedsport project, and is supporting OPT by providing grid interconnection expertise with the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), which operates much of the region’s power system. The interconnection goes through Douglas Electric Cooperative lines to the BPA Gardiner Substation, and DEC is playing an active role coordinating this effort. PNGC

believes Reedsport is an important demonstration project and is closely watching the outcome



An OPT buoy installed off the coast of New Jersey in 2005.



Power generated by an OPT buoy is transmitted ashore via an underwater cable.

with hopes that it will lead to even more wave energy development off the Oregon coast.

A Department of Energy (DOE) grant will help fund the fabrication, assembly and factory testing of the first buoy at Reedsport. This will be a 150 kilowatt-rated buoy, major portions of which will be fabricated and integrated in Oregon. This is the first award for the building of ocean wave energy systems by the DOE, and OPT believes it is indicative of the growing recognition and support of wave energy within the federal government. OPT has been an active participant with the many interested parties in Oregon and along the coast, working with fishing, conservation, municipal, state, federal and other groups. •

# Conservation at OTEC – A Bright Prospect for Business

By Michael Howe, Communications Specialist, Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative – Baker City, OR

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC) demonstrates its commitment to energy conservation by offering several programs to its members. Whether it is saving water with a low flow shower-head or providing water to livestock with freeze resistant cattle fountains, OTEC's conservation programs cover the gambit. One of OTEC's most successful conservation programs is offered to its commercial members, and that is the Commercial Lighting Program.

The idea behind the program is to provide significant energy conservation, though members also receive a better quality of light, more light, new and upgraded equipment and lower maintenance requirements to the commercial membership. OTEC incentivizes the program with cash payments and lower electric bills. With these incentives, and a solid promotional effort, the program has been very successful.

OTEC has offered the successful Commercial Lighting Program for about seven years. This program has helped several hundred commercial members become more energy efficient, thus saving them money. Those who have taken advantage of the program range from schools to fire departments to large industrial loads to small 'mom and pop' stores. Schools have seen entire lighting systems changed. One large industrial member participated in the program early on, and then did it again when the lighting technology changed offering even more efficient lighting. The reality is that any commercial operation can benefit from OTEC's Commercial Lighting Program.

On average, an OTEC member that participated in the Commercial Lighting Program will experience a 25% Watt reduction and the rebates will cover up to 70% of the costs for the lighting retrofit.

Those who have participated in the program have realized significant energy savings and

financial benefits. Since the inception of the program, OTEC has paid out nearly \$1.5 million in incentives and has conserved tens of millions of kilowatt hours (kWh).

More specifically, for the six month period covering October 2008 through March 2009 OTEC completed 20 Commercial Lighting Projects. These 20 projects resulted in conserving 370,107 kWh and \$49,687 in rebates to OTEC members.

OTEC offers all of its conservation programs voluntarily

because they help the membership. Not only does OTEC choose to voluntarily offer these conservation programs, but it also actively promotes them via several media and through the OTEC web site ([www.otecc.com](http://www.otecc.com)) where informative videos are even offered to help explain the programs further.

OTEC, like most electric utility cooperatives, is committed to energy conservation and the Commercial Lighting Program is just one of many successful programs offered. •

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## 2008 Cooperators

*continued from page 3*

mon-sense leadership on cap and trade legislation.

"Carbon reduction is not a bad thing, but it has to be done right," Witt said. He raised many of the same concerns voiced by U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio about the dangers of a cap and trade system. Because of the persistence of legislators

like Witt, a cap and trade bill that seemed destined for passage was derailed. Instead, Witt believes the legislature should focus on more efficient ways to reduce carbon instead of rewarding Wall Street speculators.

"Rep. Witt is a true friend of rural electric consumers," said ORECA's Sandy Flicker. "He's always looking out for hard-working families." •



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