Renewables Energy Siting
Challenges and Opportunities

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Sustainable Northwest Northwest 2018 Fall Energy Symposium
Overview

• Oregon Renewable Energy Market
• Solar Siting in Oregon – lay of the land
• Siting Conversations underway
• Challenges for siting renewables
• Opportunities for siting renewables
Renewable Northwest

• Regional, renewable energy advocacy organization (Oregon, Washington, Montana, and Idaho)
• Mission is to promote the environmentally responsible development of renewable energy resources.
• Members consists of renewable energy developers, energy companies, environmental non-profits, consumer advocates.
Oregon “Utility Scale” Renewable Market

• Oregon RPS
  – Large Utilities (PAC, EWEB, PGE) 50% by 2040
  – Consumer Owned Utilities 25% by 2025

• PURPA
  – Small solar (>10MW) developers may sell power to IOU at a set price

• Net Metering
  – Allows customers to offset electricity requirements with on site generation (up to 2MW).

• Community Solar (Investor Owned Utilities only)
  – Project Size: 25kw – 3MW
  – Projects must be in same service territory as customer
  – Initial Capacity: 2.5% of 2016 peak load
    • PGE: ~100MW
    • PAC: ~73 MW
    • IDP: ~2.5 MW
Benefits of PV Solar

- Compatible with adjacent land uses and agriculture
- Does not require significant modifications to the landscape (can be restored upon decommissioning)
- Environmental impacts minimal with proper siting
- No water use required
- Agricultural uses are possible in combination with infrastructure
# Solar Siting

## Multiple Options for Solar Siting: Local or State review?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Value</th>
<th>Arable</th>
<th>Non-Arable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL: Conditional Use Permit (CUP)</strong></td>
<td>&lt; 12 acres</td>
<td>&lt; 20 acres</td>
<td>&lt; 320 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL: CUP + Goal Exception</strong></td>
<td>&gt; 12 acres, &lt; 100 acres</td>
<td>&gt; 20 acres, &lt; 100 acres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATE: Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC)</strong></td>
<td>&gt; 100 acres</td>
<td>&gt; 100 acres</td>
<td>&gt; 320 acres</td>
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Goal Exception Process

• 19 Statewide Planning Goals – Solar on Farmland within certain size thresholds requires exception to Goal 3: Farmland protection

• Justification for the exception:
  – Set of reasons established in regulations
• An alternatives analysis – can other lands nearby be used and not require an exception?
• Demonstration that the environmental, economic, social and energy (ESEE) consequences are not more significant on the subject property than other agricultural lands not requiring an exception.
• Typically considered by the local Planning Commission and recommends action to the Board of Commissioners
Local Siting Discussions

• Yamhill County
  – Ban on new solar applications on HVF

• Marion County
  – Moratorium on new solar applications on HVF
  – Public process underway to revise zoning codes

• DLCD Solar PV Rulemaking
  – Does 12-acre limit for solar on HVF adequately protect HVF?
  – Wildlife, temporary rules
State Siting Discussions

• **Legislative Workgroup**
  – Chaired by Senator Alan Olsen
  – Exploring inefficiencies at EFSC and how to increase public participation
  – Goal is to produce legislation

• **EFSC Solar PV Rulemaking**
  – Can multiple non-jurisdictional solar projects functionally aggregate to become jurisdictional?
Siting Challenges

Local

- Rulemakings could lead to increased limits on solar siting
  - 12-acre threshold up for discussion
- Extremely difficult to get a Goal 3 Exception
  - Statewide planning goals do not consider solar
- Temporary Rule limits dual-use projects
  - “preclude” to “use, occupy, or cover”
  - More difficult to innovate ag + solar

State

- EFSC Process has its challenges
  - Public – “No meaningful public engagement”
  - Counties – “More local control – we have the capability to do this”
  - Developers – “Cost- and Time-Prohibitive”
Siting Opportunities

Local

- Extremely difficult to get a Goal 3 Exception
  - Solution: Add Renewable Energy to Planning Goals
- Rulemakings could lead to increased limits of solar siting
  - Solution: Look holistically at state
- Temporary Rule limits dual-use projects
  - Solution: Update language

State

- EFSC Process has its challenges
  - Solution: Update Thresholds for Renewable Energy
Help us pass these policies!

To get involved or find out more, please contact me:

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