

SSTI Monthly Newsletter

Maximizing Regional Solar Potential Across the Southwest

March 2012

Rooftop Solar Challenge - Official Program Launch

The U.S. Department of Energy's Rooftop Solar Challenge - a program designed to spur solar power deployment by streamlining permitting processes and improving market condition - officially launched on February 29, 2012. The Southwest Solar Transformation Initiative (SSTI), the largest of 22 national teams in geographic scope and number of participants, has started project activities with all participating jurisdictions across the Southwest.

"President Obama has made clear that we need an all-out, all-of-the-above American energy strategy fueled by homegrown and alternative energy sources designed and produced by American workers," said U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "Through the Rooftop Solar Challenge, the Energy Department is helping to unleash America's solar energy potential in the Southwest and communities across the country. These awards will reduce the costs homeowners and businesses pay

to install solar energy systems, while at the same time saving time and money for local governments faced with tight budgets."

The SSTI will be working with jurisdictions to reduce barriers and lower costs for rooftop solar systems via improvements in permitting and interconnection processes, planning and zoning regulations, interconnection and net metering standards, and financing options.

For more information on the Rooftop Solar Challenge, visit: <http://www.eere.energy.gov/solarchallenge/>

SSTI and Solar Roadmap Online Platform Now Live

The SSTI program website is now live! The Solar Roadmap platform organizes global best practices and makes them easily accessible for all stakeholders in solar. This online resource center will be the home for SSTI municipal partners to learn about the SSTI program, discover what's happening regionally, access technical resources, and view their respective roadmaps to achieve solar success. Find the Solar Roadmap here: www.solarroadmap.com/ssti

What's Happening This Month

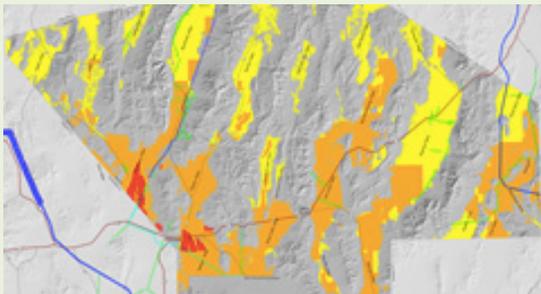
The SSTI team will be conducting launch events and site visits to define existing solar processes and determine specific needs for each jurisdiction.

Sign-ups for participating jurisdictions open until March 16th.

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Participant News: Nye County, Nevada

Nye County has created a website to highlight the potential of renewables in their region. In addition to news on solar happenings and projects in the County, the website has information on workforce development, power transmission projects, and the local solar business environment. Find the website here: <http://www.nye-renewables.com/solar.htm>



Meet the SSTI Team Members



California Central Valley

Municipal Partners: Arvin, Atwater, Clovis, Delano, Fresno, Hanford, Livingston, Madera, Mendota, Merced, Modesto, San Joaquin, Turlock, and Visalia

Regional Partners: California Energy Commission, San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Council, California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, Smart Valley Places, San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization, Paul Everett Johnson & Associates

State Partners: Governor's Office of Planning & Research, California Energy Commission, CA Department of Housing and Community Development



Nevada Southwest

Municipal Partners:

Esmeralda County, Gardnerville, Lyon County, Nye County, and Pahrump

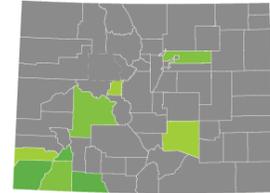
Regional Partners: Nevada Association of Counties, UNLV, Nevada State Energy Office



Northern Utah

Municipal agencies: Brigham City, Logan, North Logan, and Tremonton

Regional partners: Bear River Association of Governments



Colorado Southwest + Denver Area

Municipal Partners: Adams County, Cortez, Crested Butte, Durango, City of Gunnison, Gunnison County, Lake County, Mt Crested Butte, Pagosa Springs, Pueblo County.

Regional Partners: Governor's Energy Office, 4CORE, ORE, and COSEIA



Regional map of Rooftop Solar Challenge teams & participants

With national support from: Vote Solar, National Association of Regional Councils, World Resources Institute, Interstate Renewable Energy Council, and Environmental Protection Agency

For more information on our regional project teams, visit: <http://www.solarroadmap.com/regional/>

Regional Project Highlight – San Joaquin Valley Regional Energy Planning

California's San Joaquin Valley faces a battery of complex and interrelated environmental and economic challenges. Home foreclosure rates among the highest in the country and unemployment rates in some communities over 40 percent, all at a time when virtually all jurisdictions are faced with significant budget cuts, service reductions and staff layoffs. Coming from this perspective, San Joaquin Valley communities manage to understand the value of committing to greater use of clean energy sources as a means of addressing their challenges. Solar and other forms of renewable power can provide a positive path forward to improve the quality of life for Valley residents: create jobs, reduce household energy costs to stave off foreclosure, and reduce emissions from electricity and natural gas usage. This broad embrace of clean energy, however, cannot come at the cost to pristine agricultural lands, as the Valley prides itself in feeding citizens around the world.

Participant News: Colorado SW Corner

A new industry group has formed in the four corners area of Southwest Colorado. The Southwest Solar Installers Industry Association (SSIA) has formed with the goal of overcoming market barriers to solar adoption, quantifying the trickle-down benefits of local solar activity, and speaking with a unified voice to work toward common regional goals. The objectives of this group align well with the SSTI program and we look forward to engaging with the SSIA this year.

www.southwestsolar.org

Substantial resources are currently being invested in all forms of energy in the Valley. In 2009-2010, for example, the Governor's California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley indicated that over \$100 million in federal funding for clean energy investments was brought into the region. What the Valley lacks, however, is a comprehensive understanding of the breadth and depth of these energy-related investments and how they can collectively contribute to the regional economy. To address this gap, a group of San Joaquin Valley partners are coming together to undertake a regional energy and economic development planning process to develop an 'energy economy roadmap' for the Valley and to solicit jurisdictional commitments to implement identified policies, investments and strategies. This regional energy planning effort draws on local, statewide and national talent to map the proposed investments and opportunities that will provide economic development decision makers with a long-term, sustainable and unified compass for growth.

About Optony

Optony is a global research and consulting firm focused on enabling governments, schools, investors, and commercial organizations to bridge the gap between solar energy goals and real-world results. Leveraging our independence, domain expertise and unique market position, our clients are empowered to make informed decisions that reduce risk, optimize operations, and deliver the greatest long-term return on their solar investments.

www.optony.com

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About SEI

Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI), a nonprofit organization established in 1997, helps empower schools and universities, small businesses, local governments, affordable housing agencies, and agricultural communities to reduce pollution and save money through energy and resource efficiency.

www.seiinc.org

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