

OregonSmart Siting Collaborative

Oregon has set a goal of meeting 100 percent of its electricity needs with clean and renewable energy resources such as wind and solar by 2040. Meeting this goal is critical to combating the effects of climate change, which already threatens Oregon's natural resources, wildlife, and wild places.

Seizing opportunities and preventing conflicts

While there is enormous potential for renewable energy in Oregon, large-scale development can also conflict with the protection of natural and cultural resources. Wind energy facilities, solar arrays, transmission lines, and other supporting structures, such as service roads and fences, can transform natural and working lands resulting in the loss of habitat, agricultural lands, cultural resources, and open spaces. This can lead to unintended consequences that further threaten natural resources under the pressure of climate change.

Clear policies are needed

To guide the strategic planning of wind and solar energy development, more detailed resource information is needed for natural and cultural areas, as well as information on transmission needs and economic considerations. In the absence of information and principles and policies for siting renewable energy projects, Oregon may struggle to meet its clean energy goals to mitigate climate change impacts while also putting its conservation heritage at risk. Community opposition to renewable energy development is also exacerbated by a lack of clear policies.



Collaboration is the key to a renewable future

Local communities, Tribes, the conservation community, the renewable energy industry, and other stakeholders can overcome this challenge by working collaboratively to develop a framework for how Oregon can achieve its renewable energy goal while preserving natural and cultural resources and addressing community needs and values. Proactive planning for renewable energy can help avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on natural and cultural resources, agriculture, forestry, and other public values that are fundamental to Oregon.

The OregonSmart Siting Collaborative aims to use information gained through stakeholder-driven planning to identify voluntary statewide siting guidelines and best practices for renewable energy development. The voluntary guidelines can include best practices for siting, developing, and operating projects throughout their lifecycle to conserve and protect natural and cultural resources, agriculture, forestry, and other public values while also facilitating renewable energy development.



More information

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