

NEW INTERACTIVE TOOL AND REPORT CONNECTS OREGON RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL WITH IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

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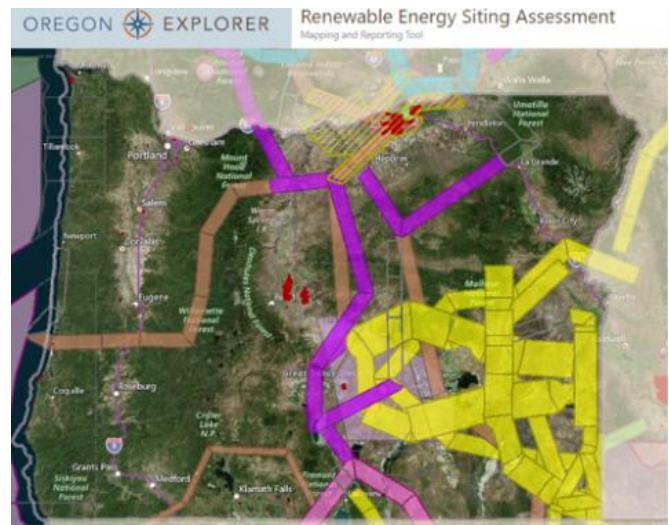
SALEM – A public partnership with the Oregon Department of Energy, Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development, Oregon State University’s Institute for Natural Resources, and the U.S. Department of Defense has published new educational materials that will help local governments, Tribes, communities, policymakers, agencies, energy developers, and other stakeholders access important information and considerations for potential renewable energy in Oregon.

The **Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment** (ORESAs) project was funded through a \$1.1 million **U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) grant**, with the goal of providing baseline data to support important conversations around potential energy and transmission development in the state.

“Oregon is host to a number of unique and vital military capabilities in the form of installations, training and testing ranges, military training routes, and special use airspace — all vital to ensure National security interests and mission readiness,” said Kim Peacher, the Northwest Training Range Complex and Northwest DoD Regional Coordination Team representative. “This grant fostered the transparency of information and processes to raise awareness of potential impacts to Department of Defense operational equities, while facilitating early notification and ongoing coordination to support mission-compatible renewable energy initiatives.”

Experts anticipate continued renewable energy development in Oregon in the coming decades, particularly solar energy, wind energy, and associated transmission line development.

“As we work to meet Oregon’s long-term energy needs and clean energy goals, we must balance new energy development and policy choices with the effects of those choices,” said Oregon Department of Energy Director Janine Benner. “We hope the tool and materials developed through this project encourage productive conversations and solutions to meeting Oregon’s energy needs.”



Housed on Oregon Explorer, the new [interactive online reporting and mapping tool](#) combines data on renewable energy, military training areas, economic development, land use, natural resources, community characteristics, and other important considerations.

“Users can explore hundreds of data layers, generate a site-specific report, and learn about the renewable energy considerations for potential projects both onshore and offshore,” said Institute for Natural Resources Director Lisa Gaines. “Understanding these considerations early will help with the communications and agency coordination that is often needed where projects overlap with military operations, sensitive wildlife habitats, and/or other natural resource assets.”

While the ORESA project will not supplant the permitting information required in regulatory processes or decisions, the project resources will provide information to ongoing siting and permitting processes and future policy conversations for renewable energy. Access to quality data early in the process is critically important for ensuring that renewable energy is developed responsibly, balances state and local concerns, is administratively efficient, considers cumulative impacts, and includes appropriate engagement with affected communities.

“In Oregon, we value our natural resources and lands while also supporting community economic development and inclusive engagement in land use decisions,” said Department of Land Conservation & Development Director Brenda Bateman. “This project takes a sensible approach to energy siting and development, mapping the location of our natural resources, while also highlighting community characteristics and needs.”

In addition to the interactive mapping and reporting tool, the [project report](#) summarizes key findings, data, stakeholder perspectives, and analysis on renewable energy across the state. The report acknowledges that there is enough renewable energy potential to meet Oregon’s energy and climate goals, while recognizing that there are tradeoffs related to impacts and benefits of development that need to be evaluated through sustainable and responsible processes. There are also notable challenges to renewable energy resource development associated with transmission infrastructure and with siting and permitting criteria that weigh policy and legal priorities.

Additional information and background materials, including a set of topic-based assessments and siting procedures review are available on the [Oregon Department of Energy’s website](#).

ORESAS PROJECT PARTNER & STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

“One of the biggest issues we face in achieving our state’s 100% clean goals is to ensure that projects are sited in ways that do not negatively impact environmental justice communities. The ORESA tool is an invaluable resource that communities can use to build

partnerships with developers to identify the places where projects can provide benefits instead of creating burdens." – ***Oriana Magnera, Energy, Climate, and Transportation Manager at Verde***

"As communities at the edge of the energy grid, understanding our clean, secure energy options is critical for early planning. The ORESA tool illustrates the challenges that our communities and state are facing when striving for our own energy independence – we need more certainty on siting and permitting renewable energy to meet our coastal communities' needs for resilient, clean power. Hopefully, the ORESA project will spur and facilitate some targeted work at the state level to reduce renewable energy project siting complexity without sacrificing our agricultural and ecological resources." – ***Shannon Souza, Policy Chair at Oregon Coast Energy Alliance Network (OCEAN)***

"We look forward to working with Oregon and other partners to use this tool to develop new renewable energy projects that are good for both the region and the environment. As stated in our recently released Tribal Energy Vision, we must all work together to create a reliable regional energy portfolio that protects and enhances environmental quality. Tools like ORESA will help prevent the region's energy transition from harming salmon and other natural and cultural resources important to the tribes and all residents of the Pacific Northwest." — ***Aja DeCoteau, Executive Director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission***

"This project underscores that Oregon has both the need for and the potential to supply the clean electricity grid necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, while also shining a light on some of the challenges and constraints to achieving that clean-energy future. Time is of the essence in the energy transition, as more Oregonians are suffering from climate impacts each day. We are excited to work with ORESA project partners and stakeholders to meet and overcome those challenges." – ***Diane Brandt, Oregon Policy Manager at Renewable Northwest***

"I use the ORESA tool on a regular basis to view and visualize the comprehensive layers that apply across Oregon. The ORESA tool is the first time in Oregon that I know of that a mapping tool has combined so many relevant sources of information. Being able to see how various state laws apply to the landscape is incredibly valuable. The ORESA tool is a perfect starting point to begin evaluating any number of energy and land use projects." – ***Andrew Mulkey, Rural Lands Attorney at 1000 Friends of Oregon***

"The ORESA project is a good first step in assessing the cumulative impacts of renewable energy development in Oregon. The tool can be used by landowners, developers, military, and citizens in Morrow County." – ***Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director with Morrow County***

“The ORESA tool will be a valuable asset for rural communities like Lake County, especially as we see increased solar development into the future. It’s a great starting point for community-based organizations and local governments to facilitate community conversations focused on project siting while ensuring community values are kept front and center.” – **Nick Johnson, Executive Director at Lake County Resources Initiative**

“Thoughtful siting of renewable energy is the key to ensuring sustainable fish and wildlife habitat while advancing our shared clean energy goals in Oregon. ODFW is very excited about the ORESA tool because it provides such a comprehensive library of information for everyone to access, including important fish and wildlife habitats. The ORESA tool is a great starting place, providing an important opportunity to avoid fish and wildlife habitat impacts early in project planning and design, and empowering developers and the public with resources as they explore potential projects as well as areas important for conservation.” — **Sarah Reif, Habitat Division Administrator at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

“With the rise of community energy plans and distributed renewables throughout Oregon, it’s more important than ever for communities to understand the benefits and constraints of the built environment around them. We’re excited that this tool can help to appropriately site and develop locally-owned renewable energy at the community level.” — **Bridget Callahan, Senior Energy Program Manager at Sustainable Northwest.**

“The practical tools developed in this project will help the Department of State Lands continue to explore innovative opportunities for managing school lands. Renewable energy projects on school lands have the potential to send significant revenue to the Common School Fund while also supporting Oregon’s clean energy and climate goals.” — **Vicki Walker, Department of State Lands Director**

The ORESA report and publicly available mapping tool are a big step forward in helping Oregon achieve a clean energy economy. This will help us find the right pathway to develop our high-value renewable energy resources while being compatible with local communities and protecting our natural resources.” – **Fred Heutte, Senior Policy Associate at Northwest Energy Coalition**

“The ORESA Project has compiled an impressive amount of data in this tool that will help users understand the potential impacts of different project sites, including numerous environmental factors. TNC encourages renewable energy developers to use this readily available information to prioritize project sites with the least impacts to nature and communities.” — **Laura Tabor, Climate Action Director at The Nature Conservancy**

“The ORESA mapping and reporting tool is very intuitive and informative. It is easy to

navigate and symbolized well. The tool provides an 'even playing field' for all stakeholders.” — ***Carrie Konkol, Pacific Offshore Energy Lead and Senior Project Manager at Tetra Tech***