ORESA Project – Summer 2021 Update

Project Overview

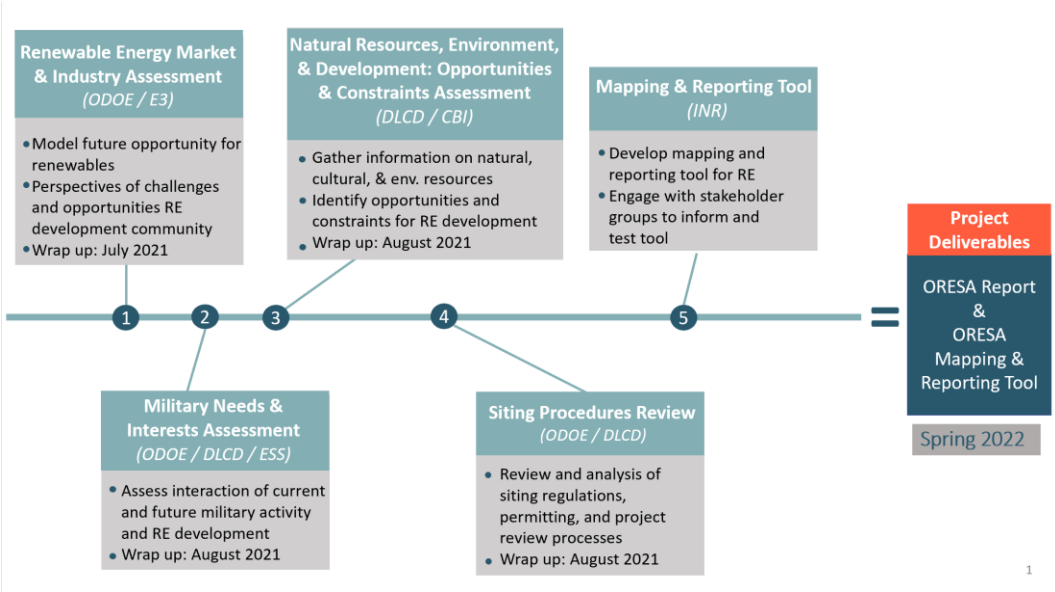
The Oregon Renewable Energy Siting Assessment (ORESA) is funded through a $1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation. The grant team includes the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), and Oregon State University's Institute for Natural Resources (INR). The team is also incorporating the expertise of state, local, and tribal governments through interagency agreements, along with input from industry and technical advisors, and cross-sectoral stakeholder engagement.

The ORESA project aims to create a transparent, consistent collection of information about renewable energy and transmission development opportunities and constraints, without recommendations or endorsements, and noting where information may be imprecise or uncertain. Policy makers and stakeholders can use this collection of data to inform discussions related to the development of renewable energy in a way that minimizes conflict and supports economic development opportunities.

Project Update – Summary

Through stakeholder outreach and partner coordination, relevant data and information has been collected and used to inform three topic-focused assessments, a multi-jurisdictional procedures review, and in scoping and development of the ORESA Mapping and Reporting Tool. Outreach to, and participation of, state agencies, local governments, tribal partners, and stakeholders are continuing and will inform development of the mapping and reporting tool.

The project team will now focus on key findings of the four project elements (three topic-based assessments and siting procedure review) as a core component of the final ORESA report, which will accompany public release of the Mapping and Reporting Tool. The Mapping and Reporting Tool will also move into beta testing and revision, including focus group and user group feedback. A majority of the ORESA project will be completed in Winter 2021/22. Additional education and outreach to share the tool and the report to follow.



Project Update – Detailed Review

1) Renewable Energy Market and Industry Assessment - Completed

Energy + Environmental Economics (E3) collected and analyzed data to explore the future opportunity for cost-effective development of renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure in Oregon. E3 conducted stakeholder outreach and gathered feedback to develop renewable energy build out scenarios for Oregon over the next 15 years (by 2035). This included collection of data, stakeholder engagement, development and refinement of scenarios, and subsequent modeling work. The assessment also explored diverse perspectives from the renewable energy industry, using surveys and interviews, on the constraints and opportunities related to renewable energy development.

Next Steps: Key findings and analysis of the assessment report will be included in the final ORESA report. Relevant datasets and metadata were provided to INR to use in development of the Mapping and Reporting Tool.

2) Military Needs and Impact assessment - Final Draft in Progress

Epsilon Systems Solutions (ESS) collected and analyzed data and information regarding Oregon's military assets, uses, and needs, including use of Oregon's air, land, and sea utilized by the Department of Defense (Oregon Military Department/Oregon National Guard, Air Force, Army, and Navy) and US Coast Guard. This included analysis of military data and identification of priority datasets of relevant military training and operating areas, along with the assessment of constraints and opportunities between renewable energy development and military uses. ESS also completed a final draft of a brochure discussing Oregon's military operations and coordination activities to support compatibility.

Next Steps: Relevant datasets and metadata were provided to INR to use in development of the Mapping and Reporting Tool. Key findings from the report will be included in the final ORESA report. The brochure will receive final review and will be released after publishing edits.

3) Natural Resources, Environment, and Development: Opportunities and Constraints Assessment – Final Draft in Progress

Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) collected and assessed renewable energy development data and information, including information on natural and environmental resources, regulatory structure and jurisdictional protections, and other development constraints and opportunities. CBI conducted broad stakeholder outreach, including conversations with project partners and a suite of interviews. This outreach was used to determine best sources of data to collect and analyze, and gather perspectives on a range of factors and issues around renewable energy development. CBI hosted six webinars representing subregions of the state, with 187 attendees, focused on the spatial data associated with the primary renewable energy resources for each subregion. The webinars provided the opportunity to review assembled datasets and identify any important data gaps. CBI also hosted a cross-sector roundtable webinar to initiate discussions on military operations and renewable energy development. Complementary to the assessment report, CBI reviewed over 650 different spatial datasets and developed a catalog of 300 datasets for review and consideration by the project team.

Next Steps: When the assessment is complete, the key findings and analysis of the assessment report will be included in the final ORESA report. All relevant datasets and metadata have been provided to INR to use in the Mapping and Reporting Tool.

4) Procedures Review – Final Draft in Progress

The ORESA team, led by ODOE siting staff, assessed relevant local, state and federal, and military procedures as they relate to renewable energy development, including known constraints and opportunities. Process maps were also developed to clarify current processes, permitting, and coordination. Documentation will include procedures used for the siting of renewable energy facilities, processes used by the military to review projects, and known best practices related to notification and coordination.

Next Steps: When complete, the key findings will be included in the final ORESA report. Documentation will also be provided to INR for use in development of the Mapping and Reporting Tool, which will include a "Learn" section with reference to relevant information from the procedures review.

5) Mapping and Reporting tool - In Progress

Leveraging the Oregon Explorer platform, the ORESA Mapping and Reporting tool will serve as a centralized location to access best available data and inform discussion related to future renewable energy development. Current work includes collecting and prioritizing relevant data layers including military, generation and transmission, natural resources, land uses and zoning, economic development areas and opportunities, public infrastructure and energy resources, and renewable energy. The development process includes cross-reference to the assessment reports and procedures review, along with developing use cases and collecting feedback through review of mock-ups and beta tool testing.

Next Steps: INR has initiated a series of sector-based focus groups to provide input. INR is also in the process of identifying participants to join a cross-sectoral user group and future beta testers to support tool testing and revision.

Outreach and Education

Project outreach has included summary updates, requests for feedback in the development process, and presentations from the project team. Outreach tools include multiple communication channels, including a public website, listserv, social media, and partner communications. The project team and consultants have conducted specific outreach to renewable energy developers, utilities, local governments, and organizations to encourage awareness and future use of the ORESA Report and Mapping Tool. The project team has created a variety of presentations, visuals, and project documents to share with stakeholders, and has shared project information at multiple meetings and venues including Government-to-Government meetings, Energy Advisory Work Group, Energy Facilities Siting Council, and Association of Oregon Counties. Supporting materials and engagement opportunities are posted on the ORESA project website.

Next Steps: The ORESA team will continue to seek opportunities to provide project updates and gather feedback, along with sharing project milestones, upcoming events through the ORESA website, and ODOE newsletters.

If you are interested in learning more or scheduling a presentation with the ORESA team, please contact Kaci Radcliffe at Kaci.radcliffe@energy.oregon.gov.

Learn more about the ORESA project at https://www.oregon.gov/energy/energy-oregon/Pages/ORESA.aspx and sign up for email updates at http://web.energy.oregon.gov/cn/a6n53/subscribe.