CLEAN ENERGY SITING COUNCIL AGENDA

Date: January 10, 2023, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Council Co-leads:

Ecology: Joenne McGerr, Diane Butorac, Brenden McFarland, Abbey Wellemeyer, Lila Costello
Commerce: Michael Furze, Glenn Blackmon, Brian Young, Nora Hawkins, Aaron Peterson
Council members: *DAHP:* Allyson Brooks; *DNR:* Natalie Waid; *EFSEC:* Stewart Henderson; *EJ Council:* Jonathan Chen; *GOIA:* Craig Bill; *GOV:* Becky Kelley; *ORIA:* Dan McConnon; *UTC:* Payton Swinford; *WDFW:* Ben Blank; *WSDA:* Gary Bahr

Attendees: Andy Chinn, *Ross Strategic*

MEETING SUMMARY

Rural Clean Energy Report *(Aaron Peterson, COM and Andy Chinn, Ross Strategic)*

Aaron discussed the direction from the Legislature in House Bill (HB) 1216 for Commerce to conduct a rural clean energy study. The study is due Dec. 1, 2024. Commerce hired Ross Strategic to support the study and they have begun work. The team is conducting stakeholder engagement through interviews and working on in-person meetings in Eastern, Central, and Western WA. They have also developed a website and have a survey to get input from interested parties. They are focusing on equity and serving overburdened communities and working with community members.

The report will also include an economics assessment. The consulting team is reviewing recent clean energy projects for data about economic impacts and impacts on community and property owners. This includes considerations of tax scenarios and impacts on local jurisdictions.

Council members asked about what is being surveyed and the importance of sharing accurate information. They asked if the Environmental Justice Council guidelines are being utilized for the stakeholder outreach work.

Legislative session updates
The Council discussed proposed legislation on clean energy for awareness and coordination. Bills which may include possible work for the Council in developing recommendations include HB 1924 on nuclear fusion energy and Senate Bill (SB) 6039 on geothermal energy resources. For SB 6039, WDFW and DAHP said they want to be engaged in the collaborative process if it includes endangered species and cultural resources. Ecology, Commerce, and DNR are already included in the bill and will coordinate with the others. The language for the Council to develop recommendations is expected to be similar to the language in HB 1216.

Members also mentioned HB 2039 which modifies the appeals process for environmental hearings boards of clean energy projects and HB 2070 on integrating environmental justice considerations into certain project decisions. This bill isn't just clean energy and was shared for awareness.

Agency updates

Agencies provided information on clean energy work. Several agencies are working to hire staff.

- There is work at the federal and state level on offshore wind energy planning. Commerce's Offices of Economic Development and Clean Energy and Ecology's Clean Energy Section and Coastal Section are involved in these discussions. Members also noted that the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Grid Deployment Office (GDO) and the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) are hosting a series of workshops to inform a set of recommendations for strategically connecting electricity transmission infrastructure to U.S. West Coast offshore wind energy.
- The Nature Conservancy sent a letter to the Council asking about advisory boards and meetings. The co-leads have scheduled time to meet with their coalition and provide updates at the next meeting.