

**Southeast Conference  
Energy Committee Meeting  
2:00 p.m. Tuesday, November 21, 2017  
Teleconference: 1-877-378-0449 code: 8249 4332**

**Notes**

1. Call to Order – Alec Mesdag, Chair called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm
2. Roll Call – Alec Mesdag, Jon Bolling, Trey Acteson, John Heberling, Jason Custer, Connie Hulbert, Jodi Mitchell, Bob Deering, Paul Bryant, Hal Dryer, Shaina Kilcoyne, Connie McKenzie, Duff Mitchell, Jan Hill, Karen Petersen, Robert Venables
3. USDA Energy Audits/H.E.L.P. – Shaina Kilcoyne (REAP) gave an update on the energy efficiency and outreach efforts that Southeast Conference and REAP have been doing in the region for the past 3 years. This round is for businesses and pays for 75% of the energy audit costs. More than 30 businesses have been helped to date with funds available for a few more. The efficiency measures identified to date would yield over \$400,000 in savings once implemented.

A spinoff of our Energy Efficiency work in the rural communities is a “The Home Energy Leader Pro-gram” which is designed to provide education and resources to residents in high energy cost "Target Communities" in Southeast Alaska and build human capacity to lower their energy bills through efficiency and conservation measures. It will include a free one-day training offered in 2017 in Juneau for one to two residents of each Target Community to become "Home Energy Leaders." Those Home Energy Leaders will then engage their fellow community members to become more energy efficient. Home Energy Leaders will be paid on an in per home basis for the out-reach.

There is always low hanging fruit in the most vulnerable homes. By developing skills, providing tools and hardware, increasing energy knowledge and offering simple, low cost ways to save energy and money, the program will help empower residents to take charge of their energy costs. This program is unique because it provides the Home Energy Leaders with the knowledge and hardware to enable them to immediately implement efficiency improvements in their community when they return from the training.

4. Biomass Update – Karen Petersen reported on the biomass operator training scheduled for March on POW Island. This will be a (free) hands on training utilizing the Garns in use on the island. She recently attended the “Renewables in Remote Communities” conference in Whitehorse (lots of discussion about solar and

now co-generation opportunities) and reminded all that the Alaska Wood Energy Task Group (AWETG) is accepting applications for pre-feasibility studies (there has been a lot of interest in southeast).

Bob Deering added that there are ongoing studies at both the Lemon Creek prison and Bartlett hospital with preliminary results due in the next couple of weeks. Juneau has a lot of “urban forest waste” and those wood chips could displace up to 200K gallons of diesel. The AWETG pre-feasibility studies are the first step that then can lead to the USFS Wood Innovations grant (up to \$250K for 2 grants – deadline January 2<sup>nd</sup>)

#### 5. Southeast Energy Infrastructure Development Updates

- a. Gunnuck Creek Hydro – Jodi Mitchell, IPEC reported that Hoonah’s Gartina hydro is displacing 1/3 of the diesel previously used and that they have plans to begin groundbreaking activities in Kake for the Gunnuck Creek hydro. IPEC has spent a lot of time working with the SEAL Trust, Kake Tribal and the City on site control and other issues. While diesel prices were very low last year (\$2.01), prices have climbed close to \$2.50/gallon now. The Gunnuck hydro will have joint activities with the hatchery and could displace nearly half of Kake’s diesel consumption. There is already a dam in place and just needs penstock and powerhouse to generate electricity.
- b. Metlakatla Intertie – Paul Bryant, Metlakatla Power & Light reported on the project that has been 20 years in the making. 14 miles of intertie is operational to the ferry terminal and needs only 4 miles of submarine cable to complete the intertie. While originally envisioned to export surplus hydroelectricity after the mill closed in 1997, there is now a need to import power for peak loads. Conversions to electric heat and climate change has contributed to the shortage. There are upgrades occurring at the Chester Lake hydro and the community is still looking at both biomass and additional hydro (Triangle Lake) opportunities.
- c. Thayer Creek Hydro – Melissa Kookesh and Hal Dreyer, Kootznoowoo gave an update on the Thayer Creek hydro project. There is a community meeting scheduled for November 30 that will bring all the stakeholders together with the community to go over the latest changes and status of the project. Participants include Kootznoowoo, ACA (Tribe), City, IPEC and the USFS. Southeast Conference is assisting with the meeting facilitation. Heat pumps are likely a good fit for the community with the hydro forecasted to generate more electricity than is currently used. All the needed permits are in hand or pending. Thayer has had strong regional support and was recognized as a “committed unit” in the SE IRP. Southeast Conference continues to lend support to the project as it works toward an economically viable – and completed project.

- d. Hiilangaay Hydro & Heat Pumps – Jason Custer, AP&T gave a status report on the Hiilangaay hydro. The transmission line is complete which allows for grid power to be brought onto the construction site. The powerhouse building (pre-fab) is on site and contractors blasting for the penstock route. Four miles of road are already constructed. The turbines are being tested (China) before being shipped. They have had some access issues at Copper Harbor with DNT limiting marine access. AP&T is hiring a lot of local labor and sub-contractors and hope to be completed in December 2018.

Gustavus only utilizes about 30% of the Falls Creek hydro and agreements are finally in place to construct the intertie to the Glacier Bay National Parks facilities. Construction is planned for 2019.

Heat pumps are of interest on Prince of Wales Island and AP&Y is considering an incentive program (i.e. \$500 rebate and possible matching funds?). Southeast Conference, USDA, REAP, ACAT and others have been working to encourage heat pumps in the region. (There was a heat pump expo in Craig earlier this year). Bob Deering suggested reviewing the CCHRC report and mentioned an air to water heat pump that had been recently reported on.

#### 6. Action Item:

- a. Letter to Governor Walker re: FY19 Budget – Robert spoke to the draft letter which focused on the opportunity to use PCE fund earnings to pay for renewable energy projects – and Gunnuk Creek hydro specifically. With the earnings of the fund high this past year and diesel prices low, there should be sufficient funds to pay for PCE needs, fully fund the municipal assistance program and energy projects. There is a lot of competition for use of those funds and the committee should urge the Governor to invest in energy in his FY19 budget to be released on December 15. The draft letter also encouraged funds to be made available to the Power Project loan fund for projects like Metlakatla's intertie which is also a regional priority. The letter ended with acknowledging the need for Thayer to be built in Angoon and thanked his Administration (AEA) for their assistance. The committee unanimously endorsed sending the letter to Governor Walker. (PS – Governor Walker did include \$3.2 million in his FY19 budget for Gunnuk Creek hydro!).

#### 7. Good of the Order / Announcements:

- a) AEA is currently accepting comments from the public and interested parties to determine what types of eligible pollution-reducing projects are of priority to Alaska communities and to identify possible synergies and partnerships that might leverage Trust funds. Following this informal public input, AEA will post a draft Beneficiary Mitigation Plan for a formal public comment period.  
<http://www.akenergyauthority.org/programs/vwsettlement>
- b) Mid-Session Summit – new date: February 13-14, 2018. With the shorter sessions and earlier efforts marking up department budgets, we need to engage while the discussions take place.
- c) The 2018 Rural Energy Conference is being held April 9-12 in Fairbanks at the Westmark Hotel.
- d) NREL Solar PV Training Program (see below)



## Solar PV Training Program for City and County Staff

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), in support of the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office, is offering a no-cost solar photovoltaic (PV) training program for cities and counties seeking to add solar energy to their facilities (on both buildings and land). The training commitment will be approximately 20 hours over a 12-month period, primarily in 2018.

---

The training modules, which take about one hour each, cover the following topics:

1. Evaluation Framework and Goals
  - Who should be involved in this process? How should solar opportunities be evaluated?
2. Site Screening and Evaluation
  - How much PV can be installed on municipal buildings, land?
3. Site Assessment and Permitting
  - How are projects permitted?
4. PV Financing
  - What types of financing options are available for a PV system, and what are the tradeoffs of different financing options?
5. PV Policies and Incentives
  - What policies and solar incentives can lower the cost of solar?
6. PV RFPs
  - How is a request for proposals (RFP) issued for PV? What are the most important aspects to include in the RFP?

The series is comprised of virtual and in-person training options, and virtual modules are designed for multiple staff members to view together. No city or county staff are required to attend in-person training.

To apply, please complete and submit the short [application form](#) by Thursday, Nov. 30.