

WASHINGTON STATE STRATEGIES

Process Summary

The Washington State partners in the Solar Plus strategy process met over the course of 2017, and provided input to strategies via online platform and in-person meetings. Through facilitated discussions, the Washington State Solar Plus group developed a set of state goals related to solar deployment in the state of Washington. The partners then created a list of potential strategies and activities that sought to meet those goals as well as the milestones outlined in the Solar Plus Statement of Project Objectives and the Equity Framework. This longer list was sorted and discussed through a final meeting on December 14th, 2017 and shared for additional input, leading to the final implementation strategies below.

Implementation of Strategies

For 2018, key Solar Plus partners will take lead roles in managing the work of teams, focused on different strategy areas. The team leaders will convene meetings, develop documents, provide reports, and coordinate research as needed to meet the strategy objectives. For some of these strategy groups, there will be collaborative efforts between Oregon and Washington, and these are noted below.

Strategies

The following reflect the broad strategy groups that partners agreed to work on in the following year, as well as the activity elements envisioned. These strategy elements are specific to the Washington State partners, though there may be complimentary activities focused in Oregon as well. Team leads and the organizations committed to participating are identified, although for many strategies it is likely that additional stakeholders will play roles as well. Not all partners have agreed to work on every strategy, and there is flexibility as to how partners prioritize their participation. Each team will be responsible for determining precisely what work products are created throughout the project, and teams will convene in January 2018 to scope their tasks and develop work plans.

Strategy A: Develop common understanding of solar valuation and net metering issues - (Washington State focused)

- Engage in net metering discussions with stakeholders
- Evaluate whether time-of-use rates help with resiliency & load variability
- Create a methodology that determines the value (grid, social, econometric, environmental) of solar or distributed energy resources
- Develop a report that assesses financing tools or models for maximizing federal tax incentives, state incentives, & other financial benefits

Strategy B: Define and deploy projects that increase community and grid resiliency - (Collaborative with Oregon team)

- Engage with utilities and the community to define what resiliency means in the context of the Solar Plus project, using plain language and including the relevance of social benefits to resiliency
- Work with communities to identify hubs that could serve as resiliency sites
- Identify broader community needs for energy security
- Work with leading cities to implement solar+storage on key facilities with community benefit

Strategy C: Increase equity and education related to solar - (Collaborative with Oregon team)

- Find areas where there is need and co-benefits using environmental justice mapping, evaluation of solar potential, vulnerable communities, likelihood to displace fossil-fuels, public benefits
- Scope & deliver educational programs to inform consumers around residential energy
- Create an Equity Targeting Analysis, including for rural areas, tribes, communities of color, and specific customer groups
- Deploy four group purchase education campaigns targeted to underserved communities

Strategy D: Plan and deploy community solar programs - (Primarily focused in Washington State, but with collaboration with Oregon team)

- Create technical assistance for community solar design for non-utility projects
- Support Puget Sound Energy effort for potential community solar project with 100% low-income benefit and share model with other utilities
- Identify housing authorities, community-based organizations from communities of color, and low-income residents who want to facilitate community solar programs
- Identify methods & sources of funding to subsidize low-income community solar subscriptions, including crowd sourcing
- Help a local government that runs a housing agency to launch a community solar project with low-income benefits

Strategy E: Coordinate and connect on workforce development - (Collaborative with Oregon team)

- Connect workforce training needs, licensing requirements, and industry capacity
- Develop recommendations on equitable hiring for both the solar industry and for broader state policy
- Educate the solar industry on equitable hiring recommendations
- Coordinate with targeted training & education programs to integrate skills in solar, electric vehicles, & distributed energy resources

Strategy F: Inform and share policy discussions – (Collaborative as part of overall Solar Plus project)

- Participate & provide technical input in solar-related rulemakings, including those at: Department of Ecology, Washington State University, Utilities and Transportation Commission
- Include equity targeting strategies in policy recommendations
- Develop a suite of policy recommendations for the Clean Energy Fund IV

Solar Plus is a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy through the Washington State Department of Commerce. This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technology Office (SETO) under the Solar Plus Strategies for Oregon and Washington award number DE-EE0007665.

Disclaimer: This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.