

EXCERPT from May 14, 2008 FL GP TWG Call

Agenda Item #6: Presentation of Oregon's Success in Fostering a "Green" Growth Economy

Jeff Wennberg introduced Nathan Buehler, Marketing & Communications Manager at Oregon Economic & Community Development Department.

Nathan began by explaining Oregon's historical connection between the economy and the environment through the timber industry. He pointed out that with only 3.8 million people Oregon could not compete with Florida or other large states for R&D, so they had focus on their competitive advantages. These included an image of being "green," and a significant existing industry in microchip manufacturing, which is akin to photocell manufacturing.

Oregon has invested heavily in building a PV manufacturing industry based upon the existing skilled workforce and relatively low power costs due to hydropower. They increased a business energy tax credit to 50% of the capital cost up to \$14 million, and they made the credit transferrable so small businesses without a tax obligation could sell the credits for cash. This brought in 500 jobs and they expect it to grow to 1,500 in the next 3 years. At that time Oregon will be home to the largest PV manufacturing industry in North America.

Oregon has one of the most aggressive RPS' in the U.S. at 25%. This is encouraging the creation of wind farms and ocean wave investments, with prototypes in place. They also invested in the professional development of design professionals and there are now 262 green building projects underway. They view the development of this expertise as responding to a global need.

The Governor is also looking at C&T policies and is working with the Western Climate Initiative. Nathan added that the Oregon Business Council sponsored a conference focused on sustainability, adding that the business community is an important partner in this effort.

There was an extended discussion with questions from the TWG members. Some of the key answers were, Oregon has a prevailing electric power cost of between 5 and 7 cents per kWh; Oregon has no general sales tax; Oregon has a utility fee to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy programs; facility siting regulatory efforts are integrated in Oregon.