

7/14/2017



Some Dam – Hydro News™ And Other Stuff



Quote of Note: "The government cannot give to anyone anything that it does not first take from someone else." - Dr. Adrian Rogers

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"Good wine is a necessity of life." - -Thomas Jefferson
Ron's wine pick of the week: 2014 Chateau Souverain Cabernet Sauvignon
"No nation was ever drunk when wine was cheap." - - Thomas Jefferson



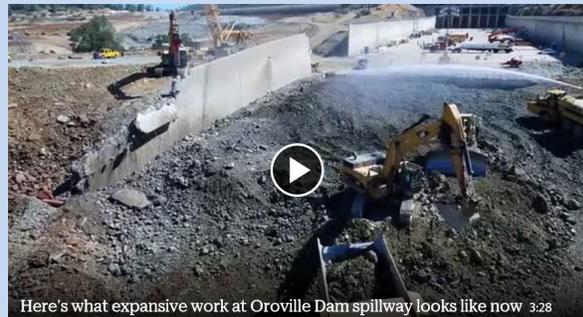
Dams:

(New blog site, try it you'll like it.)
<https://damstraight.net/>

(Now, they're going after people. The Sacramento Bee is a pain in the giabondaretta.)
He oversaw dam safety as problems lurked at Oroville. Should he be advising state?

By Dale Kasler and Ryan Sabalow, sacbee.com, June 29, 2017

Facing a crisis after a huge crater formed in the main flood-control spillway at Oroville Dam, officials at the California Department of Water Resources called in an old hand to help: David Gutierrez, a nationally known engineer who had just retired as chief of the agency's dam-safety division. He seemed like an obvious choice for dealing with an emergency at America's tallest dam – valued



Here's what expensive work at Oroville Dam spillway looks like now 3:28

for his technical expertise, his coast-to-coast connections in the engineering field, and his years of experience. Before long he was advising DWR on repairing the spillway, conducting briefings with reporters and fielding testy questions from legislators and townspeople. It's as if Gutierrez never left state government. The difference? He's now working for Boston engineering firm GEI Consultants Inc., brought in under a contract that could pay GEI as much as \$474,876 for Gutierrez's services through Nov. 1. That's far more than the \$179,000 base pay he earned in his last year with the state, although he said his work probably will end well before November and the total payout to GEI will be considerably less than the contract maximum. Gutierrez doesn't receive a share of the contract payments; he's collecting his regular GEI salary, which he said is "just a little more" than what he made at the state. Financial arrangements aside, critics of the state's handling of the Oroville crisis are questioning why Gutierrez – who for years ran the Division of Dam Safety, or DSOD – was brought back at all. Citing preliminary investigative reports, these critics say DSOD's inspectors appear to have missed critical problems at the Oroville spillway that may have contributed to the near-catastrophe in February. "Clearly DSOD failed to catch the vulnerability of the main spillway," said Ron Stork of Sacramento environmental group Friends of the River. "To have missed that developing problem is a big miss and a consequential miss. It set up that cascade of failures that almost killed a bunch of people....It certainly has the appearance that Dave may be there to cover up DSOD's mistakes." Republican Assemblyman James Gallagher, whose constituents were among the 188,000 residents forced to evacuate at the height of the crisis, said Gutierrez is too much of an insider to give DWR the advice it needs.

"Why not bring in someone who is actually, truly independent and who wasn't their career employee?" said Gallagher, who has clashed with Gutierrez at legislative oversight hearings. "It just seems there's a lot of circling the wagons." Gutierrez made no apologies for the work he's done since February. "I never approached DWR; DWR approached me," he said in an hour-long interview. "In a situation like this you can't say no. I mean, you've got to go help." He said his primary role is "technical expert," and his lengthy history with DWR and his deep institutional knowledge about dam safety has served the state well in his new capacity. "DWR does have confidence in me, and I do have a lot of experience in this area," said Gutierrez, who spent 37 years at the agency. "If somebody doesn't think I've got the experience, hey, I've got plenty of other stuff to do."

It's hardly unusual for a state agency to hire outside help on construction, communications and other matters. Experts consulted by The Sacramento Bee said it doesn't appear the contract for Gutierrez's services violates the law governing work performed by retired state workers. He also isn't running afoul of the one-year "revolving door" rule that forbids recently departed state employees from lobbying their former agency.

'He has the chops'

State officials said Gutierrez's technical know-how has helped guide DWR's response to the spillway crisis, which is expected to cost more than \$500 million and consume two years. His ability to convey complex engineering information to the public in understandable ways also has proven invaluable at legislative hearings and town hall meetings, said spokeswoman Erin Mellon of the Natural Resources Agency, which oversees DWR.

(Fix the problems and just maintain it because failure is not an option.)

Risk management expert lays out changes needed to keep Oroville Dam safe for next 50 years

Robert Bea, risk management expert, visited Oroville Tuesday to lay out changes he thinks are needed to keep the dam safe for another 50 years.

By Risa Johnson, chicoer.com, 06/28/17 — Mercury-Register

Oroville >> With repairs at the Oroville Dam spillway underway, a risk management expert says there is still a lot of work to be done within the organization managing the infrastructure.

Visiting town this week was Robert Bea, a retired UC Berkeley professor previously recognized by the U.S. Senate for his review of disaster management following the BP oil spill and Hurricane Katrina. He has written an extensive report about what may have led to the Oroville Dam spillways' failing and several papers on the subject. He hosted several informal gatherings and gave a speech at the Butte County Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday, detailing what he referred to as "the five C's." The first word was "culture" – as in that of the state Department of Water Resources. He said that needs to change.



"The culture I'm suggesting has to be focused on safety," Bea said. "There are other countries in the world struggling with exactly the problem you are facing and they've learned how to spell the word 'safe' correctly." The organization making people unsafe should also be liable for all costs, he said. While DWR officials have repeatedly stated that public safety is the organization's first priority, it needs to go further, in Bea's opinion. "Something has to change in that culture and it has to be dramatic," he said. The Association of State Dam Safety released a statement in May that new members of the forensic team looking at what caused the spillways' failure would consider "human and organizational factors" as well. There were none listed in the preliminary findings published, though the group's final report does not come out until fall 2017. The forensic team is supposed to be independent, but Bea suggested team members may face pressure to not include those factors.

The next points were "cognizance" of hazards and "capabilities" of those in the organization. "They aren't unnatural disasters. They are unnatural hazards," Bea said. "These are disasters caused by people and organizations." There also needs to be "commitment" to see the project through, coming from the top-down, he said. "We aren't leaving here until it's done right. That's commitment," Bea said. "No more of this BS, telling me 'I think it's safe. Safety is our No. 1 public duty.'" Finally, his last key point was to ensure there was "counting." Safety needs to be quantified, he said, having seen other countries like Canada and Mexico do so successfully. Who is going to really pay also needs to be made transparent, he said. Previously the State Water Contractors took responsibility for covering any remaining costs for the project. "It costs money to be safe. It costs 10 million times more not to be," Bea said after the meeting. Where will they get the money? He expects water bills to go up and would rather "pay a little now" than put it off as a lump sum.

Robert Bateman, OrovilleStrong! advocate and owner of Roplast Industries, organized Bea's visit upon being impressed with what he had to say at a legislative hearing. "It seems to me now he could be very helpful to us and that's by acting as an adviser," Bateman said. "This is pro bono. He will help us what we're being told by the DWR." Speaking as a private citizen, he said some residents would like to see local oversight in the future, with regard to maintenance and operations of the dam. "Then I think we can create some change, otherwise I think we'll be back to the same thing, and if I'm alive, will be regretting it in 20 years' time." Supervisors Maureen Kirk and Bill Connelly voiced support for the idea. Connelly said it should be inclusive of communities downstream under threat if there was a breach at the dam. "It needs to be followed through on," he said. "There's an emergency, everybody's excited, then we forget. I'm a great (student) of history. I don't like to forget things." Resident Tasha Levinson said she feels getting the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license is prioritized over residents' safety and said she would also like to see a local oversight group be instated.

(Moving right along.)

Oroville's primary spillway reconstruction 'ahead of schedule'

State credits dry weather to allow for construction to start early

By Vicki Gonzalez, Reporter, Jun 13, 2017, kcra.com

OROVILLE, Calif. (KCRA) — With an ambitious deadline approaching for the recovery of Oroville Dam's primary spillway, the state is reporting a strong start to reconstruction. "We were able to start construction a little bit earlier so we are a couple of days, maybe even a week, ahead of schedule," said Oroville Recovery Project spokesperson Erin Mellon, who is with California Natural Resources Agency. "What you see today, you won't see tomorrow." Nearly 50 years old, Oroville Dam is the tallest in the country. Its primary spillway is around 3,600 feet, and almost twice the width of the Golden Gate Bridge. On Feb. 7, heavy storms revealed erosion on the dam's primary spillway, prompting the use of the neighboring emergency spillway days later for the first time. The emergency spillway failed and began eroding, threatening massive flooding downstream. On Feb. 12, mandatory evacuations were issued for 188,000 residents along the Feather River. Department of Water Resources is now working to reconstruct both spillways, hiring Kiewit Construction which was awarded a \$275 million contract. "They come fresh from working on Folsom's spillway so they know this work and they can do it very quickly," Mellon said. Kiewit's peak staffing in August will be upward of 550 employees. They will be living in hotels and additional housing in Oroville.



"That doesn't include the DWR employees that have been living and working here even before the erosion occurred, and then the new team that came up once the incident happened in February," Mellon explained. "We are also talking with Chico State to use their dorms in the summer." Around two-thirds of the primary spillway will be rebuilt by the state's Nov. 1 deadline. Around 2,600 feet of concrete has already been excavated, according to Mellon. "What they are working on is moving a lot of the power lines, and building in new power lines, up there on the spillway, as well as washing the rock, so that when we put the roller compacted concrete on top of the rock, it's clean and ensures a very good bond," Mellon explained. The remaining 1,000 feet of the upper primary spillway will receive patching and additional bolting, but it will remain largely intact this year, Mellon said. The plan is to save excavation for next year when the final leg of reconstruction is expected to be complete.

(Does anybody know anything we don't?)

Team investigating spillway wants public input

By Risa Johnson, orovillemr.com, 07/02/17

Oroville, CA >> The independent team looking to close the case of what caused the Oroville Dam spillways to fail in February is seeking tips and taking questions. The group is interested in any information which may be helpful to its investigation, which could relate to physical or human factors, according to an announcement emailed Friday by the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. "The information can involve any phase or activity of the project up to the time of the incident, including planning, design, construction, inspection, maintenance, repair, and operations," the announcement reads.



The group can be reached via email at oroville.forensic@gmail.com. All messages will be reviewed, though the group may not have time to respond to each one individually, according to the announcement. They will be treated in a confidential manner. "Sources of the information will not be shared with DWR or any other parties outside the six members of the forensic team unless either (a) a legal requirement arises to do so, or (b) the individuals providing information give

permission to share their identity," the announcement reads. The forensic team released a preliminary list of potential causes in May and will release its final findings sometime in fall 2017.

(Zeroing in on the obvious.)

Independent team's list of potential causes of spillway collapse released

By Risa Johnson, chicoer.com, 06/10/2017

Sacramento, CA >> The state Department of Water Resources released Wednesday the preliminary findings of the independent team investigating what caused the Oroville Dam spillway to collapse. Some of its ideas for what caused the main spillway to crumble included limited reinforcement of the concrete slabs, not enough backup collector drains, and a weak foundation because of an extended drought. The team said it did not think groundwater pressures and cavitation were significant factors. For the emergency spillway, the forensic team found absence of protection against erosion downstream may have been a factor, and surmised that heavily erosive rock and soil may have led to head cutting, abrupt erosion which creates a ravine.



The report, addressed to Paul Dunlap, a DWR engineer, lists a total of 24 potential causes for the compromise of the spillway and four for the emergency spillway. See it in its entirety at <http://tinyurl.com/kvpugkh>. The forensic team's findings are supposed to be factored into the spillway's redesign, though work has already begun and its investigation is ongoing. The final report is to be issued in the fall. Local legislators were quick to comment on the released report. State Sen. Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) and Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) issued a joint statement Wednesday, after sending a letter to DWR last week calling for publishing the documents publicly. They said they were troubled to see some of the factors appearing in previous inspection records and also long-term geological issues, which may be because of a lack of testing beneath the spillway. "Most notably, Mother Nature was not listed as a contributing factor," they wrote.

The list of factors may also seem familiar because experts have proposed the same ideas. Robert Bea, a former engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and UC Berkeley professor, outlined many of the same points in a 78-page report he compiled for a review of the Oroville Dam spillway emergency. He talked about problematic clogged drains, including because of tree roots, and light concrete lining and leaky joints between the concrete slabs.

He did find one egregious error. "They are technical causes, engineering mechanics," Bea said in a phone interview Wednesday. "They haven't identified any causes attributed to human and organizational factors." He does not think the members of the forensic team are incapable. In fact, he has worked with two of them closely in the past.

The issue he has is no member of the team appears to have had any training or done work relating to human and organizational factors leading to the failure of engineered infrastructure systems. In his experience, including recognition by the U.S. Senate for his review of Hurricane Katrina and the Gulf Coast BP oil spill, those components make up the root cause of infrastructure failures, 80 percent of the time. He says his contacts, John France, the group's lead, and David Rogers have been sworn not to talk to Bea while they complete their investigation. Bea would like to see a shift in the way DWR and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission operate, to own up to mistakes, try to learn from them and be more transparent going forward. "They want the public to like them, so they call seepage from a dam a 'natural spring,' say no reports show any sign of distress," he said. "That's distortion of truth and fact. This is a time for honest people to stand up and the other ones should sit down and shut up, (or) we'll be destined to keep repeating these things." Bea will speak at a legislative hearing at 1 p.m.

Thursday regarding the Oroville Dam on a panel with Butte County Supervisor Bill Connelly and Ron Stork of Friends of the River

(Onward to the new spillway chute.)

They've demolished most of Oroville Dam's troubled spillway. What's next?

By Dale Kasler, sacbee.com, July 5, 2017

The preliminaries are just about over. Permanent structural repairs are about to begin at Oroville Dam. Five months after an unprecedented emergency forced a mass evacuation, state officials said Wednesday they're ready to start replacing the now-demolished lower portions of Oroville's main flood-control spillway.

Construction contractor Kiewit Corp. plans to install the first slabs of concrete Thursday in the lower 350 feet of the spillway chute. The so-called "leveling concrete" will create a smooth foundation for structural concrete that will be poured on top, said Jeff Petersen, Kiewit's Oroville project director.



"It's significant," he said on a media conference call. "We call it a major milestone of permanent work starting in that portion of the spillway." Leveling concrete has been placed elsewhere on the chute, but in smaller amounts, he said. There have been some hiccups, including a temporary halt to demolition on a segment closer to the top of the chute to review quality control issues, said Jeanne Kuttel, incident commander at the state Department of Water Resources. Nonetheless, demolition will resume soon, that phase of the project is nearly complete and the overall reconstruction at Oroville remains on schedule, officials said. DWR officials have sketched out a two-year timeline for repairs.

Kiewit, which was awarded the \$275 million contract, will completely replace the lower portion of the spillway this year. It will also make improvements to the adjacent emergency spillway, including fortifications in the hillside below the structure to limit erosion. DWR officials said they believe those repairs will be enough to get through the upcoming rainy season, which begins in November. Next year Kiewit will complete the project by replacing the 1,000-foot upper portion of the main spillway. The upper portion escaped damage in the February incident, but DWR officials said they want an entirely new spillway anyway. An outside team of forensic investigators has said longstanding flaws might have caused the February failure of the main spillway, including crucial inconsistencies in the thickness of the concrete slabs and an inadequate drainage system beneath the structure.

State officials have said they expect the Federal Emergency Management Agency to reimburse the state for the bulk of the repairs, and state water contractors to pick up the rest. The contractors are the urban and agricultural agencies, such as the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, that store water at Lake Oroville. The Oroville crisis began when a giant crater sprouted in the main spillway Feb. 7. Dam operators limited water releases through the spillway's gates to contain the damage as a massive storm rolled in. Lake levels rose so high that on Feb. 11, water flowed over the emergency spillway – an ungated concrete lip atop an unlined hillside – for the first time since the dam opened in 1968. When the hillside began eroding badly, jeopardizing the integrity of the emergency spillway, officials ordered the evacuation of 188,000 downstream residents. Officials then dramatically ramped up water releases from the main spillway, reducing lake levels enough so residents could return home.

The repair project got under way May 20, when Kiewit began demolishing what was left of the battered lower portion of the main spillway

(Beavers do what they do best.)

Off the Beaten Path: Busy beavers create ponds near Ritchie Highway in Severna Park

By Rachael Pacella, Contact Reporter, capitalgazette.com, 6/30/17

Along Cattail Creek large trees are being cut down near the water's edge and used for development nearby.

The trees have been felled by the teeth of beavers, and the development is two beaver dams, built inside Cattail Creek near Ritchie Highway in Severna Park, MD. Over the past two years the beavers' work has transformed the area from an emergent wetland to that of a flooded wetland, said Magothy River Association President Paul Spadaro. The beavers have created nothing short of ponds and a shoreline in the area. Interested residents can check out the beavers' craftsmanship for themselves — the site is accessible by public property, the county-owned Cattail Creek Natural Area. "What's more natural than beavers in a natural area?" Spadaro said. An entrance trail to the natural area is found on the nearby B&A Trail. Instead of following the natural area trail, which leads into the woods, stick close to the water's edge and you'll find two beaver dams and a lodge, an earthy mound where the beavers live. It may be necessary to hike upland in some portions where the shoreline is muddy. The first dam built by the beavers is close to Ritchie Highway where it passes over Cattail Creek. The dam is at least three feet tall.



Farther upstream is a second dam, which Spadaro said has been built recently. He noticed a lot of activity this winter. The beavers did not apply for construction permits, so a precise construction date wasn't available. On its website the Maryland Department of Natural Resources offers these facts about the architects: Beavers are the largest rodents in North America, can weigh between 30 and 60 pounds and can be as long as 40 inches — including their fabled tail.

They're herbivores, and they're also monogamous. Cooler still, they have transparent eyelids that help them see while swimming. They're active from dusk to dawn, so the best shot at seeing a beaver is likely in the early morning. That's exactly what Magothy River Association intern Campbell Jones and volunteer Charles Germain did Tuesday. The pair caught the critters in action Tuesday around 5 a.m. and made a video available on YouTube and posted on the Magothy River Association's Facebook page. Soon there will be even more wildlife in Cattail Creek. The river association has received a permit to place 250 adult yellow perch in the creek, not far from the beaver pond. The association has stocked perch in the



Magothy in the 1960s and 1980s. And there is evidence of historic spawning in Cattail Creek, he said. The fish will be stocked in the creek this November, and the hope is they will adjust to conditions and spawn this spring. "The Magothy might be sick," Spadaro said, "but it's not dead."

(Guess they're tired of beating a dead horse.)

Auburn dam funding authority might disband

American River Authority moves to scrap dam mission

By: Gus Thomson of the Auburn Journal, Jul 01 2017, auburnjournal.com

The long-dormant Auburn dam project is moving closer to being stricken from the mission statement of an authority established in the 1980s to help fund it. And now members of the American River Authority are voicing support for a look at disbanding the joint-powers authority.



At the authority's annual meeting Monday in Auburn, representatives from El Dorado, Placer and San Joaquin counties joined Placer County and El Dorado county water agencies in voting to take a revised mission statement back to their respective boards that strips any mention of the Auburn dam from its joint powers agreement. The vote came a year after the last meeting in Auburn, when the authority board voted to begin a process to strip out the Auburn dam mission from its founding documents. "Based on what you folks told us, this should be accomplished," said Placer Water consultant Ed Horton at Monday's meeting in Auburn. Without debate, all members present voted to take the revised document back to their boards for consideration. A final decision could come at the authority's next meeting next June.

The dam drive was all but silenced by a 2006 Bureau of Reclamation \$12 billion cost estimate and a 2008 state decision to rescind water rights. The authority has expanded its mission since then to include protection of water rights, an issue that resonates more with members. But even that mission was being called into question at last year's meeting and Monday's session. Placer Water Director Robert Dugan said that the authority's future should be considered at the 2018 meeting, particularly when area governments with water concerns have found other ways to collaborate on issues of mutual interest like groundwater and the delta tunnel proposal. With consent Monday from other members, the question of continuing the authority will be on the authority agenda next year – along with comments from members on the revised mission statement. The dam was authorized by Congress in 1965 and efforts in the 1980s and 1990s to restart a project plagued by cost concerns and earthquake safety stalled in Washington, D.C. The authority has provided a funding body to pay a local share of dam costs through bonds, while also setting up another sounding board to encourage the federal government to restart the project as a flood-control facility. Gary Estes, a member of Auburn's Protect American River Canyons, told the group that he has seen a change in perspective on the use of the Auburn dam site, which is part of the Auburn State Recreation Area. He noted that both the Auburn City Council and Auburn Recreation District Board of Directors recently voted in favor of retaining the federally owned site as a recreation area. "Maybe it's time for the American River Authority to consider that the task it was established for no longer exists," Estes said.

(This will solve everything.)

Bill in Congress Seeks to Preserve the Snake River Dams

A bill has been introduced in Congress that seeks to prevent the breaching of four Snake River dams in eastern Washington state.

July 2, 2017, usnews.com



Lower Granite Dam, WA

RICHLAND, Wash. (AP) — A bipartisan bill has been introduced in Congress that seeks to prevent the breaching of the four Snake River dams in eastern Washington state. The bill would keep in place the Federal Columbia River Biological Opinion until 2022. That's a plan created by a collaboration of federal agencies, states and tribes to protect migrating salmon while continuing to operate the dams. A federal judge has ruled that the biological opinion doesn't do enough to rebuild endangered salmon and steelhead populations, the Tri-City Herald (<http://bit.ly/2sBofqG>) reported. U.S. District Court Judge Michael Simon of

Portland, Oregon, has ordered a new environmental review, which is required to include a look at breaching the four Snake River dams. The bill also would effectively overturn an April decision by Simon requiring the Army Corps of Engineers to spill more water for fish at eight Columbia and Snake river dams starting next year. Environmentalists say the increased spill over the dams would deliver out-migrating juvenile salmon more quickly to the ocean.

But Northwest RiverPartners — which includes farmers, utilities, ports and businesses — said the bigger spill would increase electric bills in the Northwest, while doing little to help fish and possibly even harming them. Too much spill creates high gas levels in the water that can harm juvenile

fish. Sponsors of the House bill include U.S. Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Dan Newhouse, both Washington Republicans. "Removing the Snake River dams would be harmful to our communities, the environment and our economy," Newhouse said. "This legislation is needed to support the critical role that Snake River dams play by providing Washington communities with clean, renewable hydropower." The Snake River dams also play a role in flood control, navigation, irrigation and recreation, Newhouse said. "There is still work to be done, but dams and fish can coexist," McMorris Rodgers said. The Northwest Energy Coalition, an alliance of environmental and other organizations, said the legislation was ill-timed, coming as adult returns to the Columbia and Snake rivers and their tributaries are expected to be significantly lower this year than last. "This legislative proposal is misguided, counter-productive and based on an extremely poor understanding of the plight of our salmon and any realistic changes to how Columbia Basin hydro-system would operate to better protect salmon," said Bill Arthur of the Sierra Club. In addition to McMorris Rodgers and Newhouse, the bill was introduced by Reps. Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash.; Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., and Greg Walden, R-Ore.



Hydro:

(Relicensing is next.)

Gardners Falls hydroelectric plant seeks recertification

By RICHIE DAVIS, Recorder Staff, June 29, 2017, recorder.com

SHELBURNE FALLS, MA — The Gardners Falls hydroelectric project has applied for recertification as a "low-impact" hydroelectric project. The 3.5-megawatt plant, recently sold by Essential Power LLC of Princeton, N.J., to Nautilus Power LLC of Charlotte, N.C., has had its 2011 five-year certification from Lexington-based Low Impact Hydropower Institute renewed three times — most recently on March 1. Its April 26 application, has a comment period that extends through Aug. 13. Like other hydro facilities on the Deerfield River, low-impact hydropower certification is used by hydroelectric generators to be eligible for renewable energy credits in conjunction with the state's Renewable Energy Portfolio standards, according to Andrea Donlon, river steward for the Connecticut River Conservancy. Gardners Falls, which dates to 1904, with expansions 10 years and 21 years afterward, has operated at reduced levels for more than six years as a result of Hurricane Irene flooding and a variety of problems that included seepage and sinkholes.



It has been operating partially since this spring, according to General Manager Kim Marsili. Donlon said the Connecticut River Conservancy, the nonprofit organization formerly known as the Connecticut River Watershed Council, hopes to file comments on the current recertification process before the August deadline. Donlon recommended against recertification in 2011, noting at the time that the watershed council agreed with the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife that until other dams upstream along the Deerfield — which are not owned by the same company — "are operated in a significantly more environmentally sensitive manner, neither Gardners Falls nor any other hydro project on the Deerfield River is deserving of LIHI certification." At the time, she added, "There is currently no upstream fish passage at any of the dams on the Deerfield River system" — a situation that has not changed. "CRWC is disappointed that this has not resulted in the requirement of upstream fish passage. Movement of resident species, such as brook trout, is

also prevented by the presence of this dam. In addition, there is no passage or protection measures for migration of American eel, and this is typically required in most contemporary FERC licenses.” Donlon, who complained in 2011 about recreational access to the river at Wilcox Hollow in Shelburne, said the Connecticut River Conservancy may comment on poor conditions at recreational facilities near the Gardners Falls plant. Comments may be submitted by 5 p.m. on Aug 13 to the LIHI by e-mail at comments@lowimpacthydro.org with “Gardners Falls Comments” in the subject line, or by mail addressed to the Low Impact Hydropower Institute, 329 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 2, Lexington, MA 02420.

(When are we going to stop this nonsense?)

Nevada RPS Needs More Diversified Energy Sources

By James Taylor, Contributor, forbes.com

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval (R) pleased environmental activists this month by signing nine separate bills promoting renewable energy in the Silver State, but drew criticism for vetoing a bill raising the state’s renewable power mandate (RPM) (also known as a renewable portfolio standard, or RPS) to 40 percent. Nevertheless, environmental activists seeking to increase Nevada’s low- and zero-emissions power generation have an available option to achieve success – expand and diversify the power sources qualifying for the RPM. Global warming activists often point to northeastern states as a shining example of policymakers taking the lead reducing carbon dioxide emissions.



States like Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Maine, however, include hydropower in their RPM mix. Hydropower is an emissions-free power source that is equally beneficial, or more beneficial, for the environment than wind and solar power. Also, as on-demand power sources not dependent on daylight hours (solar), clear skies (solar), or vagaries in wind speed (wind power), hydropower is more dependable than wind and solar. Hydropower’s dependability and ability to generate much more emissions-free power than wind and solar make it more proficient at reducing carbon dioxide emissions and traditional air pollution than wind and solar power. Even in the liberal Northeast, policymakers recognize this and include hydropower in their RPM mix.

By rallying against hydropower, national environmental activist groups demonstrate they are more concerned about shilling for the wind and solar industries than promoting emissions-free power. Nevada benefits from emissions-free power from the Hoover Dam, yet entrenched environmental activist groups have successfully excluded Hoover Dam power from qualifying under Nevada’s renewable power mandate. Yet what power sources can produce fewer emissions at lower cost and lesser environmental impact than the Hoover Dam? Nuclear power similarly produces on-demand emissions-free power. If the central goal of renewable power mandates is to encourage low- and zero-emissions power rather than to prop up favored wind and solar industries, why is nuclear power excluded from Nevada’s RPM? Even the environmentalist group Environmental Progress documented in a newly published study that solar power creates 300 times more toxic waste than nuclear power. If one must choose the better environmental power source between solar, nuclear, and hydro, solar power has an uphill battle to climb. Yet Nevada’s RPM promotes solar power while excluding nuclear and most hydro power. Conservatives, and even moderates like Gov. Sandoval, object to excessive RPM standards because wind and solar power are very expensive and produce little power per unit of land disruption and environmental impact. Moreover, wind and solar power simply can’t produce 40 percent of Nevada’s power. Appropriately defining “clean” or “renewable” power according to emissions and environmental impact rather than politically favored status will go a long way toward establishing a common-ground solution that everyone can support.

(Honoring a hydro project. Over 100 years and still going strong.)

Consumers Energy's Mio Dam Receives Induction in Hydro Hall of Fame Designation Announced at International Ceremony in Denver

NEWS PROVIDED BY Consumers Energy, Jun 30, 2017, prnewswire.com

MIO, Mich., June 30, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Mio Dam, which has been generating clean renewable energy for Michigan residents for more than 100 years and was the first dam to utilize an under-sluice spillway, has been named to the Hydro Hall of Fame. The Consumers Energy river hydro facility received the honor at a June 27 HydroVision International ceremony in Denver, Colo. "It's truly an honor to see Mio Dam recognized for the ingenuity of its design and the many years of value it has provided Consumers Energy customers as it begins its second century of service," said John Broschak, vice president of generation operations for Consumers Energy who accepted the designation in Denver. "We are thrilled to see the facility enter the Hydro Hall of Fame recognizing its historical significance. It's also important to note that the dam will continue to play a key role in helping Consumers Energy achieve a 15 percent renewable portfolio by 2021, recently established by comprehensive Michigan energy legislation."



The 4,900 kilowatt hydro facility on the Au Sable River began operating in 1916. The under-sluice spillway was invented and patented as a solution to the challenge of building the dam in a narrow space between the river's embankments by William Tefft, a civil and hydraulic engineer for Consumers Energy. The spillway used conduits built into the foundation under the dam's powerhouse. Typically, spillways are constructed above ground adjacent to the powerhouse. "We applaud and welcome Mio Dam into the prestigious Hydro Hall of Fame, which now includes 48 hydropower projects located in the U.S. and internationally," said Marla J. Barnes, vice president of PennWell Publishing Hydro Group, who presented the award. "For the past 22 years the Hydro Hall of Fame designation has recognized extraordinary achievement and long-lasting facilities within the hydropower industry, and the Mio hydropower facility hits all our marks." As a testament to 20th century ingenuity, Mio Dam operates today with its original turbines and generators. In 2005, Mio Dam was named a Michigan Historic Site. The 23-mile stretch between Mio Dam and Alcona Pond was designated a National Wild and Scenic River in 1984. Consumers Energy owns and operates 13 hydro generating facilities, which generate energy on five Michigan rivers. The energy provider's Croton Dam on the Muskegon River was inducted in the Hydro Hall of Fame in 2007. Mio Dam is the furthest upstream of the six Consumers Energy dams on the Au Sable River. Consumers Energy, Michigan's largest utility, is the principal subsidiary of CMS Energy (NYSE: CMS), providing natural gas and electricity to 6.7 million of the state's 10 million residents in all 68 Lower Peninsula counties.

(Lots of hydropower.)

(VIDEO) LAKE MCCONAUGHY LEVELS AND HYDROPOWER

BY Jesse Harding | June 30, 2017, kneb.com

Taking place this week was the 46th University of – Lincoln (UNL) water tour. It is co-hosted with Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID). This year's tour focused on the central Platte River and CNPPID's district. Areas toured included Gerald Gentleman Station (GGS), Nebraska Game and Park's North Platte fish hatchery, Kingsley Dam, and more.



In the video below, [Jeff Buettner](http://kneb.com/agricultural/video-lake-mcconaughey-levels-and-hydropower/), public relations coordinator with CNPPID, discusses current Lake McConaughey levels and the importance of hydropower at Kingsley Dam. <http://kneb.com/agricultural/video-lake-mcconaughey-levels-and-hydropower/>

(Is bigger better?)

World's largest hydroelectric power plants

01 July 2017, hydro.energy-business-review.com



Hydroelectric power is one of the major renewable energy sources that can help in reducing carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels. Compared to other renewable sources, hydropower is considered to be more reliable because of little fluctuations in the power generated by hydroelectric plants. Though it is expensive to construct hydropower plants, operational costs are usually low as they do not use any fuel like in the case of thermal or nuclear power plants. Hydroelectricity is one of the most widely-used renewable energy

sources, accounting for a significant part of world's power consumption in recent years.

Here is the list of world's largest hydroelectric power plants:

Three Gorges, China: Located in Yichang, Hubei province, China, the 22.5GW Three Gorges hydroelectric power plant is the largest hydropower station in the world. It is owned and operated by China Three Gorges Corporation through its subsidiary China Yangtze Power. Built with a cost of CNY203bn (\$29bn), the plant's construction was carried out between 1993 and 2012. It comprises 32 turbine / generator units rated 700MW each, and two 50MW power generators. While the first 700MW unit was completed in July 2003, the final one was installed in 2012. With an estimated annual power output of 85TWh, the hydropower plants supplies electricity to nine provinces and two cities in China, including Shanghai.

Itaipu, Brazil & Paraguay: The 14GW Itaipu hydroelectric power plant is the world's second largest hydropower plant, located in on the Parana River, at the border between Brazil and Paraguay. Operated by Itaipu Binacional, it was built with a cost of \$19.6bn. The construction of the facility was carried out between 1975 and 1982. It was built by a consortium of US-based IECO and Italy-based ELC Electroconsult. The hydropower plant started generation electricity in May 1984. It consists of 20 generating units with a capacity of 700MW each.

Xiluodu Dam, China: Located in China's Jinsha River Valley, between the counties of Leibo and Yongshan, in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, the 13.9GW Xiluodu Dam is the world's third largest hydropower station. The plant includes a dam, an underground power generation unit and a flood discharge structure. It features 18 Francis turbine-generators of 770MW each and an air-cooled generator with 855.6MVA output. The Xiluodu plant generates 64 billion kWh of electricity annually and offsets approximately 150 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

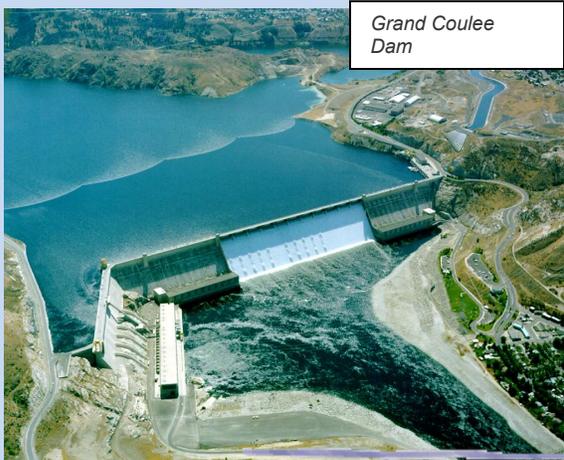
Guri, Venezuela: With an installed capacity of 10.2GW, the Guri power project is located on the Caroni River in the Bolívar State of southeastern Venezuela. The world's fourth biggest hydroelectric power station is also called as the Simón Bolívar hydroelectric power station. It is owned and operated by CVG Electrificación del Caroni. The power plant features 20 generating units with capacities ranging between 130MW and 770MW. In



August 2015, the Venezuelan Government selected Saab Seaeye's Falcon remotely operated vehicle (ROV) for vital inspection work and detailed survey of infrastructure at the Guri hydroelectric power plant and associated turbines. The selection was part of the 30-year life extension project at the power plant, which was built 100km upstream of the Caroni River in Necuima Canyon in Orinoco.

Tucuruí, Brazil: Located on the lower Tocantins River in Tucuruí, Pará, Brazil, the Tucuruí Hydropower Complex has an installed capacity of 8,370MW. The plant, which was constructed with a cost of \$5.5bn, has been generating power since 1984. A concrete gravity dam 78m in height and 12,500m in length was constructed for the project. Construction of the plant was carried out in two phases. While the first phase was completed in 1984, the second phase was finished in late 2010. The second phase involved installation of 11 generating units with 370MW capacity each. The power station supplies electricity to the Belém town and the surrounding area.

Grand Coulee, US: The 6.81GW Grand Coulee hydropower project located on the Columbia River in Washington. It is owned and operated by the US Bureau of Reclamation. With an annual generating capacity of over 24TWh, the hydropower plant started its operations in 1941. It features three power plants and a concrete gravity dam 168m high and 1,592m in length. A total of 18 Francis turbines rated 125MW and three 10MW additional units were installed at the Grand Coulee hydro-power station.



Sayano-Shushenskaya, Russia: Located on the Yenisei River in Sayanogorsk, Khakassia, Russia, the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydropower plant is operated by RusHydro and has an installed capacity of 6,400MW. Construction of the power station was carried out between 1963 and 1978. Generating 23.5TWh of energy annually, the plant features 10 Francis generating units with a capacity of 640MW each. Following an accident that resulted in damage to nine to 10 turbines at the plant, it was shut down in 2009 and reopened in 2010.

(Without it, think about it!)

Hydropower helped build the Northwest
Jul 02, 2017 / mcmorris.house.gov

Dear Friend,

Hydropower helped build the Northwest, and still today, it provides Eastern Washington with a clean, renewable, reliable, and affordable energy supply to power our communities, our businesses, and our homes. In fact, hydropower alone accounts for 70 percent of our energy

in Washington state and is the largest source of renewable energy in the country. But did you know, we could actually double our hydropower production without building a single new dam? Through utilizing modern technology and unleashing American innovation we can continue to support hydropower so it can continue to support us. Not to mention, we could create upwards of 700,000 jobs in the process. One of the ways we can do that is by streamlining the way we license and relicense hydropower projects. On average it only takes 18 months to license a new natural gas facility in the U.S., but can take more than 10 years to license a new hydropower facility or renew an existing project. It's time we readdress this arbitrary and antiquated licensing process to make hydropower production easier and less costly. That's why last week I introduced the Hydropower Policy Modernization Act of



2017. This legislation modifies the definition of renewable energy to correctly include hydropower, allows the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to extend a preliminary permit for an additional 4 years with the possibility of 8 total years, and directs FERC to move forward on establishing a schedule following the filing of a licensing application. It facilitates the development of small hydropower and conduit projects, using emerging technologies that improve the capture of energy along irrigation canals, municipal water supply conduits, and other infrastructure.

On Wednesday, this bill went before the House Energy and Commerce Committee for consideration, passing by a voice vote. It will now continue its journey through the legislative process. During the committee hearing, I delivered opening remarks on the importance of this legislation to Eastern Washington and the Pacific Northwest. In case you missed it, you can see them here: [As co-chair of the Northwest Energy Caucus, I am proud to help tell the story of hydropower in our region.](#) You can find more information about this legislation, and all of the work I'm doing on hydropower by visiting <https://mcmorris.house.gov/hydropower/>.

On Wednesday, the Energy and Commerce Committee also considered the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017. As we continue to advance a bipartisan energy strategy, 35 years after Congress enacted the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and 28 years after the Yucca Mountain site was designated as the location for the first permanent nuclear waste repository—we must remember to continue our support for the responsible environmental cleanup at the Hanford nuclear site. [Still today, more than 2,000 tons of spent nuclear waste and millions of gallons of high-level waste await disposal at the Hanford site, which is why it's so necessary that we move forward with the Yucca Mountain site so we can properly dispose of the nuclear waste here in Washington, and all across the country, in a responsible manner.](#) I also offered remarks at the hearing of this legislation as well. You can see them here: <https://mcmorris.house.gov/hydropower/>

Also last week, the Trump administration announced its plan to repeal the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulation. This EPA rule is one of the most burdensome to come out of the Obama administration. It's something I've heard about frequently while in Eastern Washington. You think about the impact it's had on rural communities, on our cattlemen and farmers— it's making it more and more difficult for hardworking Americans to be successful. I'm pleased to see President Trump moving forward on repealing this rule which targets our rural communities like those here in Eastern Washington. As we continue to move forward on our aggressive agenda, I want to hear from you. Hearing from all of you makes me a better legislator, and a better representative on your behalf. You can find all of my office contact information here and I encourage you to follow along on Facebook and Twitter for real time updates on the work we are doing to grow our economy, create jobs, fix our broken health care system, and put people back at the center of this government. *Warmly, Cathy*



Environment:

(Depending on a dam to help cleanup is dumb. The crap would already be in the Bay if the dam wasn't there.)

A dam could derail the Chesapeake Bay cleanup

The Washington Post, by Darryl Fears, 7/4/17

For nearly seven years since the cleanup started, the federal government and six states in the bay's watershed have reduced municipal sewer overflows that pour nitrogen and phosphorus into rivers that feed into the bay and cut the fertilizers and other nutrients that



run off from hundreds of farms. They also counted on the Conowingo Dam to block massive amounts of sediment in the Susquehanna River from smothering bay grasses that nurture marine life. But that part of the plan has gone very wrong.

According to a report being prepared by scientists who work for the Environmental Protection Agency program that manages the bay cleanup, the reservoir behind the hydroelectric dam, which sits at the top of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, near the Pennsylvania border, has filled with sediment far sooner than the agency had predicted. Using technology that didn't exist when the original calculation was made, the scientists said they have determined that the original estimate of when the reservoir would fill was off by more than 15 years. Rather than reaching capacity in 2030 to 2035, it is already 95 percent full and could cease protecting the bay from sediment within the next three years. As Johns Hopkins University professor William P. Ball said, "It's like the dam is not even there." Scientists Robert Hirsch, Qian Zhang and Ball spelled out the danger in no uncertain terms in a study last year. The U.S. Geological Survey, they wrote, has estimated that when the Conowingo reservoir reaches capacity, sediment and phosphorus "would increase by about 250 percent and 70 percent respectively." Sediment and other nutrients have flowed naturally down the Susquehanna and other rivers since time began, Ball said, "but human development altered the landscape and caused more." Too much sediment buries grasses that protect juvenile fish, crabs and other marine animals on the bay floor, and is key to the estuary's health.

U.S. Geological Survey hydrologist Gary Shenk and his team of scientists at the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program in Annapolis are preparing a 500-page analysis of sediment storage at the dam for public release later this year when the cleanup reaches its midpoint. Shenk and Zhang recently shared its findings with The Washington Post. The revelation comes at a challenging time. President Trump's proposal to cut 31 percent of the EPA's budget would eliminate the Chesapeake Bay cleanup program and the 90 employees who coordinate it, including Shenk's team. Although EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt recently praised the bay cleanup as an example of how a federal and state collaboration should work, he stood behind the president's budget request. Supporters of the bay cleanup could take heart in Pruitt's recent bipartisan grilling by senators who deplored the cuts and said they would not stand for them. The bay cleanup has strong support among congressional leaders in the bay region. However, there's little indication that political support for the project reaches wider. Pruitt has opposed the project in the past. As Oklahoma's attorney general, he was one of more than a dozen conservative state attorneys who wrote a brief supporting a lawsuit to stop the cleanup. The suit failed last year. The revelation that the dam is filling up quickly could cause headaches in the Chesapeake Bay region. Six states — Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York, as well as the District — share the burden of the multibillion dollar cleanup, which calls on them to upgrade sewer facilities that pollute the bay with overflows of human waste and regulate runoff of animal waste and chemicals at farms. Previous reports by the USGS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have shown that sediment was gathering at the dam at a faster rate than projected, but the conclusion that the dam's sediment reservoir is already essentially full is new. Now that they can no longer count on the dam to block sediment in the Susquehanna River, officials probably will be forced to shift that burden to states. But the states say that they are already overwhelmed by the cleanup costs.

The miscalculation that the dam could continue to collect sediment for another quarter century will be of particular interest to Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R). During his 2014 campaign, Hogan made sediment overflows at the Conowingo a large part of his environmental platform. He expressed suspicion that the problem at the dam was far worse than the EPA under the Obama administration let on. Hogan and his supporters, many of whom are politicians in farming counties, said that sediment was a bigger threat to the bay's health than phosphorus and nitrogen pollution that farms and cities were being forced to limit at a significant financial cost. He said the dam should be dredged and the power company that owns it should pay for the effort.

Ball and other scientists disagreed then and now that sediment is a larger threat, saying nitrogen and phosphorus, particularly in Pennsylvania, is the overwhelming cause of Chesapeake Bay pollution.

Nitrogen and phosphorus are algae superfoods. They make the underwater plant grow out of control. As its quick life cycle ends around summer, microbes feed on it so ravenously that they suck oxygen from the water. A hypoxia event — or oxygen-depleted dead zone — follows, killing fish, crabs and anything that cannot escape. Pennsylvania contributes more nitrogen pollution to the bay than any of the other five states in the watershed. But the Keystone State's effort to mitigate pollution pales in comparison to that of the others. **To fully recover the bay's grasses and reduce massive summer dead zones that suck oxygen out of the water and kill wildlife, the EPA and state partners planned to reduce its yearly sediment load by 20 percent, to 6.4 billion pounds, by 2025.** The plan also seeks to limit nitrogen by 25 percent, to 185 million pounds, and reduce phosphorus by 24 percent to 12.5 million pounds. Pennsylvania's effort is so lacking that the nitrogen goal can't be met. The EPA recently fired off a letter to the state's Department of Environmental Protection, ordering it to produce a stronger policy to reduce pollution. The state needs to identify watersheds it has targeted for pollution cleanup, lower the amount of manure that farmers are allowed to use as field fertilizer and spend money to make sure the changes get made. **Now that the Conowingo Dam is filling up, Pennsylvania could be asked to do even more.** "Obviously any drastic changes to the overall bay model and the effects that Conowingo Dam have on sediment and other pollution would be something that DEP would have to address," Neil Shader, the Pennsylvania agency's press secretary, wrote in an email, "but it is too soon to identify what those effects would be or how DEP would adjust."



Other Stuff:

(Can't be done without subsidies. Can't compete with subsidies! Hydro is at a big disadvantage.)

Can You Name the Highest Solar-Subsidy States in the Nation? Would You Be Surprised ...?

By Andrew C. Nelson | July 2, 2017, newbostonpost.com

Uncle Sam heavily subsidizes the solar industry; should Massachusetts be doing it too? Many states, including California, have largely discounted solar subsidies, and solar is king in the Golden State. (It's hard to find the desert with all the panels covering it; even environmental advocates are concerned for the wildlife in Imperial County on the Arizona and Mexico borders.) The Bay State's solar industry is now, by some metrics, the second largest in the country, according to a national solar industry group. That means if California votes to secede from the union in 2018 (and is allowed by Congress to go) the Bay State will have more people working on solar than anywhere you don't need a passport for. China, Germany, and other nations' solar industries are a much bigger part of their economy than in America. **How Massachusetts got to be ahead to Texas, Arizona, Florida, and many other sun-friendly solar-power states has to do with several factors, and one of those is subsidies.**



The U.S. government gives solar customers a major incentive to install photovoltaic panels — in the form of an income tax cut of 30% off the total price of everything included (even if that means fixing your roof so you drill holes in it to mount panels). If you pay alternative minimum tax, no problem, you get the discount anyway, if you are smart enough to avoid income tax, no problem: lease the panels, and the solar company gets the tax cut and usually will pass that subsidy on through attractive payment plans. **Could solar power, a child-going-on-teen industry, be**

emancipated and stand on its own without any government incentives and be positioned to thrive when the next fossil fuel crisis hits? Two things are happening simultaneously in different departments of Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Energy and Environmental Affairs office. The energy department is launching revised solar subsidies, and the utilities department is looking at rolling back the amount solar producers earn in subsidies when their electricity is sent to the power grid. "When competition is introduced to energy supply, prices come down. We've already seen that with on-shore wind and we expect to see similar results when the recent solicitations for offshore wind and large hydropower come in. There is no reason why competition in solar would not produce the same results," said Robert Rio, senior vice president for Associated Industries of Massachusetts, which advocates for businesses in the state. AIM has focused on solar subsidies for a while. On the association's home page on the bottom right is a link to an Excel spread sheet that shows most of New England's electricity consumers how much of their electric bill is subsidizing clean energy. (Don't forget that the largest subsidy is federal, which is largely aid through federal income tax.) According to AIM's spreadsheet, a Boston-area Eversource residential customer using 800 kilowatt hours a month and paying a total monthly bill of \$171 is paying a little more than \$10 to solar subsidies. (More than \$41 goes to pay for programs mandated by the state, including about \$20 to energy-efficiency programs, including programs designed to help homeowner make their homes more efficient.)

With respect to solar energy subsidies, many in the region argue that \$10 a month to keep what they see as the energy source of the future thriving is a small price to pay. Elected officials, environmental experts, and even some utility stock holders have advocated for keeping robust solar incentives from the state government. A year and a half ago the legislature authorized the governor's energy department to rework Massachusetts's solar subsidies, and those reduced incentives were packaged and released earlier this month as "SMART: Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target", which is close to finalization. "SMART" will double the amount of solar power in Massachusetts at half the subsidy cost that the current 1,600 megawatts of solar power in Massachusetts that residents spent, according to state energy resource department spokesman Kevin O'Shea. Meanwhile, though, other states, including California, have mostly eliminated funding of significant state subsidies.

On July 10th and 11th, the Massachusetts energy department will hold three public hearings on SMART, which still calls for the state to subsidize solar construction. "The Commonwealth continues to be a national leader in solar energy, with over 1,600 megawatts and 70,000 projects in operation to date. Massachusetts's next solar incentive program, SMART, will double the amount of solar in the state at half the ratepayer cost compared to the existing program while ensuring the continued success of this important industry and energy resource," O'Shea wrote in an email message to New Boston Post. Meanwhile Baker's utility department is reviewing rate hike requests from the major electric utilities in Massachusetts: Those utility requests include changing how solar systems feeding the grid benefit their owners through subsidies that pay more for clean power. Public hearings are held on those rate hikes, and the Department of Public Utilities staff is reviewing the proposals, which could be implemented by the end of 2017. "As a regulated delivery company, [Eversource] is not in competition with renewable energy companies," Eversource spokesman Michael Durand said. "We do, however, continue to advocate on behalf of our customers for reduced subsidies that are more in-line with neighboring states. We feel Massachusetts has taken steps in the right direction with recent laws and regulations that will decrease subsidies paid to private developers over time and allow the commonwealth's electric utilities to further our commitment to developing and operating universal solar facilities." Some of those subsidies are benefiting local taxpayers. Elected officials in several communities near Boston joined Newton Mayor Setti Warren (a Democratic candidate for governor) in signing a letter to the DPU saying that their subsidized electric rates should be grandfathered at existing plants. (In addition to Newton, those communities are Lexington, Weston, Westwood, Wayland, Arlington, and Natick.) Business advocate Rio disagrees. "We can't pay triple and heading toward quadruple for solar — it is unsustainable. We are over a billion going toward two billion [dollars] in subsidies and there is no indication that the solar industry will be decimated if it goes to competitive bidding."



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