



California Energy Commission Chairman Tells Western Governors Development of Renewable Energy Certificate Tracking System Is On Schedule



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DENVER – Gov. Bill Richardson, Chairman of the Western Governors' Association (WGA), and William Keese, Chairman of the California Energy Commission, said today that renewable energy development will receive a tremendous boost once a system is in place to track and verify the generation of renewable energy by state and company.

Keese presented a *Progress Report* on the development of regional renewable energy certificate tracking system to Richardson. “I am pleased to report that the development of the tracking system is on schedule. Working groups of interested stakeholders from 11 Western states and two Canadian provinces have been working for the last three months to develop recommendations on the operating rules and institutional framework for the tracking system,” Keese told Richardson. “Recommendations will be ready for review by WGA, the Energy Commission and Western states in June. The plan is to have the system operational in 2005,” he continued.

Western governors have called for development of a single, independent institution in the West to issue, track and verify renewable energy generation and certificates. The Energy Commission has been directed by the California Legislature to develop an accounting system to verify compliance with California’s renewable portfolio standard and to verify retail product claims of “green” power suppliers. Recognizing the benefit of collaboration, in July 2003 the Energy Commission and WGA agreed to jointly develop the Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System (WREGIS) to track and register renewable energy generation and certificates regionwide.

“I appreciate the dedicated efforts of everyone who has been working on the Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System,” Richardson told Keese. “Trading of renewable energy certificates is an important factor in the development of strong renewable energy markets in the West and WREGIS is essential to support tracking and accounting of renewable energy transactions for both regulatory purposes and voluntary green markets.”

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Joining Keese and Richardson were representatives from utilities, renewable energy generators and other stakeholders in the region, including Jeff Sterba, Chairman, President and CEO of PNM; Hap Boyd, Vice President, GE Wind; Ralph Cavanaugh, Energy Program Director, Natural Resources Defense Council; Chet Farris, President, Shell Solar; Alan Edwards, Senior Vice President, Basin Electric Power Cooperative; Ken Peterson, President of Powerex, Dave Warren, representing Washington utilities, and Terry Hudgens, President & CEO, PPM Energy, Inc. “PNM fully supports the continued development of this important renewable energy tracking and accounting system,” Sterba said. “We hope that this will be a first step in the development of a regional renewable energy market that makes a significant impact on the environment.”

Keese delivered the *Progress Report* on behalf of WGA and CEC Energy Commission staff at the North American Energy Summit held April 14 to 16, 2004 in Albuquerque, N.M. More than 600 people from Canada, the United States and Mexico are attending the summit. More information about the WREGIS and the summit is available on the Web at www.westgov.org.

About the Western Governors' Association

The Western Governors’ Association is an independent, nonprofit organization representing the governors of 18 states and three U.S.-flag islands in the Pacific. Through their Association, the governors identify and address key policy and governance issues related to natural resources, the environment, human services, economic development, international relations and public management.

The Western Regional Air Partnership, which is managed by WGA and the National Tribal Environmental Council, also has supported the WREGIS because of its potential to encourage renewable energy development and reduce emissions that cause haze. Additional information is available on the Web at www.westgov.org and www.wrapair.org.

About the California Energy Commission

Based in Sacramento, the California Energy Commission is the state's primary energy policy and planning agency. The Commission was created by the Legislature in 1974 to fulfill five major responsibilities. It is tasked with forecasting future energy needs and keeping historical energy data; licensing thermal power plants 50 megawatts or larger; promoting energy efficiency through appliance and building standards; developing energy technologies and supporting renewable energy; and planning for and directing state response to energy emergencies.

When California's electricity industry was deregulated in 1996, the Energy Commission was given supplementary roles of overseeing funding programs that support public interest energy research; and providing incentives to existing, new and emerging renewable technologies.

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