



Western renewable energy tracking system moves forward, stakeholder involvement sought



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 18, 2004

Contacts:

Jeff Burks, WGA and Utah Energy Office, (801) 538-5414

Rasa Keanini, California Energy Commission, (916) 654-5379

DENVER - Renewable energy generation in the West will be tracked and verified -- a first for the region -- under a system being developed by Western governors and the California Energy Commission. All interested parties, from consumers to utilities, are encouraged to follow and comment on proposals and recommendations developed over the next year.

Stakeholder committees were recently formed to develop recommendations on where the Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System would be housed and how it should operate. Stakeholders can track that work and offer comments via the Web at:

<http://www.westgov.org/wieb/wregis/> or by joining the Working Group Listserve at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WREGIS-WG/join>.

"Western states need a way to issue, track and verify renewable energy generation for use by state regulators and voluntary green market programs," said New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, Chairman of the Western Governors' Association. "Increasing renewable energy in the West is a priority for me as WGA's Chairman, and the role of WREGIS in that effort will be discussed at WGA's North American Energy Summit in April."

"WREGIS will become instrumental in the fulfillment of California's Renewable Portfolio Standard," said Energy Commissioner John Geesman, chair of the Commission's Renewables Committee. Geesman said "the system will ensure that renewable energy production is transparent, precise and accurate as our state strives to meet its RPS goal of producing 20 percent of its electricity supply from renewable sources by 2010."

Public workshops were held in six Western states last fall to receive comments on the draft report: Needs Assessment for a Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System. The needs assessment was revised and stakeholder committees formed following those workshops.

The WREGIS is expected to be operational in 2005. It is envisioned to create the market design and the guidelines for tracking and trading renewable energy certificates within the Western states region. Renewable energy certificates include the underlying electricity and the environmental attributes of renewable energy production. The entire Western interconnection covers 11 Western states, two Canadian provinces and northern Baja California.

--more--

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.

Increased renewable energy development will be a key topic at WGA's North American Energy Summit on April 14 – 16, 2004, in Albuquerque, N.M. The Western Regional Air Partnership, which is managed by WGA and the National Tribal Environmental Council, has also 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 1998, the Energy Commission took on the additional roles of overseeing funding programs that support public interest energy research; advancing energy science and technology through research, development and demonstration; and providing market support to existing, new and emerging renewable technologies.

#####