

BREEE News V27

Boulder Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Working Group

<http://boulderenergy.org>

4/12/05

Louisville Residents Action Item!!!

Louisville city council is poised to sign a 20-year franchise agreement with Xcel.

Doug Grinbergs is organizing a BREEE response. saule@pobox.com

We need Louisville residents to speak out! Not a resident? Find friends who are!

Some talking points include renewables and efficiency built-in to the franchise. Many opportunities are developing if Louisville is not locked in for 20 years... a 1 to 5 year period would be much better. Other cities are not signing up for 20 years. Doug is developing more details with help from others.

Come and speak your mind at a Louisville Council meeting May 3rd at 7 PM. Or write a letter.

Make sure you contact Doug well beforehand so that we can coordinate our response!!!

Quick Picks:

Denver's Energy Future & How Austin, Texas Has Done It Right.

4/27. 6:30 PM. Denver

Speakers include Mr. Roger Duncan, Austin Energy's assistant general manager & Mr. Rick Gilliam, Western Resource Advocates' senior policy advisor.

Where: The University of Denver

Boettcher Auditorium,, Boettcher Center 2050 East Iliff Denver, CO

Roger Duncan gives a presentation on how Austin nixed a coal-fired power plant, helped the environment, saved residents money, kept the lights on and provided for a strong economy through innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.

Denver's 20 year energy contract with Xcel Energy comes up for renewal and vote in 2006 and there are lessons to be learned!!!

Rick Gilliam will talk about Denver's upcoming "franchise" agreement with Xcel Energy and what Denver citizens need to know about energy efficiency and renewable energy in the City of Denver.

Sponsors: University of Denver Natural Resources and Environmental Law Society, Envir0Citizen & Sierra Club

I (Ken) highly recommend this presentation, plan to go, and would like to carpool. regelson@mac.com

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From Boulder & Colorado:

Colorado Fuel Cell Research Center

“In his 2005 ‘State of the State’ address, Colorado Gov. Bill Owens promised to form a dedicated fuel cell research center for the state. A partnership has now been announced to make that effort a reality.”

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=24561>

Submitted by Ken.

Colorado Daily: Report on BREEE’s CWA Concurrent Session

The full text of Richard Valenty’s report on our CWA Concurrent session on municipalization is included at the end of this BREEE News.

Submitted by Ken.

Daily Camera: North Pole Melting...Studying the Polar Opposites

“The ice is melting north and south. That's the conclusion of Boulder researchers who discussed their research on the planet's opposite poles Friday at the American Association of Geographers' annual meeting in Denver.”

http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/science/article/0,1713,BDC_2432_3690749,00.html

Submitted by Ken.

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Calendar.

Winning the Oil Endgame. Denver. 4/21

Nathan Glasgow, one of the book's co-authors, will keynote the University of Denver's annual Earth Day Celebration. 'Winning the Oil Endgame' details how the United States-led by business for profit-can revitalize its economy and transition from oil within a few decades.

Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m.
Boettcher Auditorium - University of Denver

More information: Stephanie@rmi.org

BGBG: FAQs on IAQ (Indoor Air Quality). Boulder. 4/22

Boulder Green Builder's Guild. Eco-Products Showroom. 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM.
Charge.

http://www.bgbg.org/event_registration042205.php

Denver's Energy Future & The Art of the Possible. 4/27

Roger Duncan of Austin Energy, Rick Gilliam. Highly recommended. See Quick Picks above for full details.

Submitted by John Rosapepe. john.rosapepe@SIERRACLUB.ORG

Denver Green Building Conference. 4/27 - 29

Learn from inspiring innovators, market leaders and educators about mixed-use green building. Also tour the sustainable redevelopment of Belmar in Lakewood, and learn through interactive workshops with experts. Register by April 1st and save. Call John Gitchell at 970-328-6449 john@sustainableconferences.com

<http://www.denvergreenbuilding.com/>

Submitted by Ron Smaron.

Sierra Club: Ponnequin Wind Farm Tour 5/7

All -day tour. Bus with bathroom. If you have never been up-close to a modern wind farm this tour is a must – Ken.

Submitted by John Rosapepe. john.rosapepe@SIERRACLUB.ORG

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From Elsewhere:

AP: Duke Energy CEO Proposes Carbon Tax

“Duke Energy Corp. will lobby for a tax on carbon dioxide emissions that would reduce fossil fuel consumption and begin addressing the global warming problem, the company's chairman and chief executive said Thursday.”

http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/D/DUKE_ENERGY_ANDERSON?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2005-04-07-17-04-29

Submitted by Ken.

Alberta Neighborhood Solar Summer to Winter Thermal Storage

“The system will supply more than 90 percent of the space-heating requirements for ... 52 homes ... The demonstration project will collect the sun's energy through solar panels mounted on garage roofs and then transfer it to underground storage. The storage temperature increases over the summer and then, during the winter season, the thermal energy is retrieved and distributed through a central district heating system to homes in the community. “

http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/media/newsreleases/2005/200520_e.htm

Submitted by Ken.

Cinergy 2004 Annual Report...*On Global Warming*

Cinergy is an Investor Owned Utility with about 1.5 million electric customers and about 500,000 gas customers. From their 2004 annual report:

“In its 2004 Annual Report, Cinergy Corp. (NYSE:CIN) has taken the unique approach of asking key stakeholders--from U.S. senators to former EPA administrators--how common ground can be found in shaping a response to global warming. The report includes excerpts from interviews with 23 individuals representing eight of the company's major stakeholder groups giving their views on various aspects of the global warming issue.”

Interesting reading, particularly since it is in a major IOU's annual report:
http://www.cinergy.com/News/default_corporate_news.asp?news_id=502
http://www.cinergy.com/pdfs/reports/04sar/04AR01_Complete.pdf
(large download)

Submitted by Rob Hall.

2/3's of World Resources “Used Up”

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5158523-111400,00.html>

Submitted by Ken.

End of the Wild

“The extinction crisis is over. We lost.”

<http://bostonreview.net/BR29.2/meyer.html>

Submitted by Deirdre Butler.

Solar Power Raffle in San Diego

Fundraiser for non-profits. An interesting idea for marketing solar and fundraising.

<http://www.earthdayweb.org/raffle.html>

Submitted by Ken.

NYT: Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles

“[Toyota] has spent millions of dollars persuading people that hybrid electric cars like the Prius never need to be plugged in and work just like normal cars....But the idea of making hybrid cars that have the option of being plugged in is supported by a diverse group of interests, from neoconservatives who support greater fuel efficiency to utilities salivating at the chance to supplant oil with electricity...”

<http://www.calcars.org/kudos.html>

(Cal Cars.org is dedicated to Plug-in Hybrids and better cars generally).

Submitted by Michael Banks.

Poll: Support for 1000% Funding Increase to Renewables

“Responses in a random poll of 1182 American adults ... found ...[we would] increase ... conservation and development of renewable energies, with the respondents calling for an increase of 1090% or US\$24 billion. ...Federal spending on renewables in the proposed Bush budget is \$2.2 billion, which would increase to \$26.2 billion under the survey conclusions. The changes were called for both by Republicans and by Democrats “

<http://www.sparkdata.co.uk/refocus/redesign/showdoc.asp?docid=74178713&accnum=1>

Submitted by Ken.

WSJ: Unlikely Allies Fight US Oil Dependence

“High oil prices are uniting unlikely allies in a campaign to change American energy policy. A bipartisan coalition—including an increasing number of defense hawks—is backing policies to curb petroleum use, a cause generally associated with environmental activists.

Today, 26 former national-security officials from Republican and Democratic administrations will send a letter to President Bush calling for "a major new initiative to curtail U.S. consumption" by improving the fuel economy of U.S. autos and developing alternatives to fossil fuels. “

<http://webreprints.djreprints.com/1197820371279.html>

Submitted by Ken.

(This is the end of BREEE News)

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Colorado Daily: Report on BREEE’s CWA Concurrent Session

City utility battle ahead?

Deck: CWA panel talks potential municipalization benefits, costs and options

By RICHARD VALENTY

Colorado Daily Staff Writer

It's only 2005, but a group of panelists Thursday suggested the City of Boulder needs to get moving should it wish to municipalize Boulder's electrical supply by 2010 when its energy franchise contract with Xcel Energy expires.

The Boulder Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (BREEE) working group, U of C Federal Credit Union and the City of Boulder held a panel session concurrent with the Conference on World Affairs Thursday called "Moving from Principles to Practice." Four panelists each had varying levels of experience with municipalization, environmental law or environmental economics.

Why municipalization? Panelists and moderators suggested it could reduce utility costs in the long term by eliminating the profit motive of investor-owned utilities. Also, they said there could be environmental benefits should the city utility use higher percentages of renewable energy than a larger corporation might.

Panelist Joe Santorella, an environmental/labor attorney, said a municipal utility could do a better job than large corporations at controlling "externalities" such as air pollution because the corporation might decide pollution control devices cut profit margins.

"Do we want corporations making energy decisions based on corporate, bottom-line interests?" asked Santorella.

Panelist John Phelan of Ft. Collins Utilities also said those relying on nonrenewable sources of energy should consider that the U.S. could be at the "beginning of the end" of an era of cheap energy. He said the U.S. is well past its peak of domestic oil and natural gas production, and some estimates say the world could reach production peaks in the near future.

"The business as usual case isn't there anymore," said Phelan.

Panelist Philip Marler, assistant city manager of Woodland, Calif., is currently involved in a battle to leave investor-owned Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and join the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD). He said Boulder residents should be prepared for a struggle should they wish to follow Woodland's path.

Marler said Woodland suffered the same rolling blackouts many California cities experienced during the well-publicized energy crisis of 2000, and the nearby university town of Davis unsuccessfully tried to form a municipal utility. He said Davis didn't give up, and Woodland, Davis, West Sacramento and portions of Yolo County decided the most efficient option would be to annex into the SMUD.

By early 2005, engineering and consulting company R.W. Beck released a feasibility study concluding annexation would be a viable option, and the SMUD board concluded Wednesday night that annexation would be technically and economically feasible.

Marler said annexation could go before a vote of the people in Nov. 2006, and expects PG&E to mount a well-funded political campaign in opposition. In other words, he suggested even a six-year campaign does not guarantee success.

Marler had several suggestions for Boulder should it decide to pursue a potentially tough political campaign.

“First, you need wackos,” said Marler, and a number of panel attendees laughed and said Boulder could come up with wackos if needed. “I’m talking about dog-in-heat intensity.”

Also, Marler said Woodland/Davis municipal advocates have been able to play on dissatisfaction with PG&E. He said PG&E rates have been as high as 43 percent higher than SMUD, with averages between 10 and 20 percent higher. He suggested municipal officials could be more responsive to customer interaction than officials from large corporations.

Marler added that electric rates could literally influence where a business chooses to locate –for example, if a business must run refrigerators 24-7.

“Business is not bad, and don’t forget your business community,” said Marler. “We need those businesses to keep cops and firefighters on the street.”

Panelist Christopher Juniper of The Natural Capitalism Group said Boulder should be wary of purchase prices for necessary infrastructure, in part because PG&E and SMUD have released significantly different price estimates for the same equipment.

“There’s a lot of hocus-pocus here, and you should be aware of that as you face this decision,” said Juniper.

Moderator Alison Burchell, a BREEE member, said Boulder might choose to pursue full or partial municipalization –on its own or in league with companies such as Ft. Collins Utilities, and she said cities such as Niwot and Nederland could wish to municipalize as well.

“The interest is growing, and I think we should reach out to our sister cities,” said Burchell.