

Projects *continued*

To reduce such impacts, the panel said, turbines could be sited away from areas of ecological significance.

The panel cited potential impacts on marine mammals and marine turtles researched by other organizations, but it concluded that determining the scope and scale of potential effects “is difficult in the absence of information on the distribution of these species and in the absence of experience with offshore wind projects in North America.”

The panel also looked into socio-economic impacts and decided to commission Rutgers Economic Advisory Service to provide preliminary analysis of the potential economic impact on tourism.

Focusing on Cape May County, N.J., Rutgers concluded construction, maintenance and operation of a wind farm would have direct and indirect impacts on the economies of the county and its surroundings. “Given Cape May County’s broader regional reputation ... it is conceivable that some small but significant amount of tourism would be lost to the State of Delaware ... if the wind farm were installed,” the report said.

Rutgers also noted, however, that tourism could also increase by 5% to 10%, “perhaps due to support in environmental stewardship.”

The panel will hold a meeting on Dec. 20 to acquire public input. The panel’s final report with recommendations will be presented to Governor-elect Jon Corzine in March 2006.

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Policy

Pennsylvania governor outlines plan for alternative energy

by *Corina Rivera*

Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell said “the time is now” for the federal government to take action regarding alternative energy use, citing examples of success in his own state.

In a Dec. 1 speech posted on his Web site, Rendell said he has asked President Bush to take the lead in a new plan, which Rendell calls the “American Energy Harvest,” and address such issues as refilling the country’s energy supply and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The plan includes four steps for the federal government to take. For instance, the government can use its regulatory and legislative power to require greater reliance on alternative fuels by utilities and energy companies, and it can use its purchase power to stimulate private investment in alternative fuel production and fuel saving technologies.

PacifiCorp contracts for output of Utah geothermal plant

by *Wayne Barber*

PacifiCorp said Dec. 6 that it has signed a 20-year contract to buy power from a 42-MW geothermal generation unit near Cove Fort, Utah.

The geothermal facility, owned and operated by Amp Resources LLC, is expected to start operation by Dec. 31, 2007.

The Cove Fort project will be built on the site of a smaller geothermal plant that Amp Resources bought from the Utah Municipal Power Agency and the city of Provo, Utah.

“Our Blundell geothermal plant, also in Beaver County [Utah], has been an important part of our resource mix since 1986, so we have an understanding and commitment to this type of renewable electric generation,” Utah Power President Rich Walje said. Utah Power is a subsidiary of PacifiCorp.

The Cove Fort project was selected as part of PacifiCorp’s 2003 request for proposals to acquire up to 1,100 MW from renewable sources. In response to the request, PacifiCorp received more than 50 bids for some 6,000 MW of renewable resources.

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Rendell also noted the federal government needs to set goals. He said that, if the requirement in the Energy Policy Act calling for increased production of U.S.-made bio-fuels to almost a half a million barrels per day by 2012 were doubled and gave producers until 2015 to meet it, “[Ten] years from now, we will be producing one million barrels per day of bio-fuels. And that standard should include a requirement that at least 10,000 MW of solar and 100,000 MW of wind power are deployed.”

He also said the \$2.6 billion for oil and gas production incentives are no longer necessary, saying, “Our nation should acknowledge the unexpected earnings of our energy giants and, as a result, redirect our tax dollars to invest in the research infrastructure that will have the leadership, diligence and single-minded purpose that we know from history can change the path we take to the future.”

Rendell also discussed tools that are being used in Pennsylvania, including state purchasing power, access to a tax-exempt financing market and state authority to mandate alternative energy use.

He pointed out that an “energy pioneer,” John Rich, is building the country’s first waste-coal-to-diesel fuel plant in Pennsylvania and, in recognizing the plant’s significance, Rendell has agreed to have the state make a 10-year pledge to purchase some of the plant’s products.