

SIEDO

SOUTHERN IDAHO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ORGANIZATION

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Southern Idaho

RENEWABLE ENERGY

The five primary sustainable energy sectors - hydro, wind, geothermal, biomass and solar - each utilize a different form of natural resources. A community's geographic location, elements and weather patterns largely dictates which green energy sector can be developed there.

It's rare that any region can boast the ability to produce commercial energy in all of these categories. But southern Idaho is one of those unique areas currently producing commercial power in four of the five categories. This region is ideally located in an area of the United States where all five renewable energy elements can be tapped and utilized for energy production.

This nine-county region recently announced that a major solar farm is planned for this area, so southern Idaho will soon produce green energy in all five sectors.

HYDROELECTRIC

The Snake River, locally known as the "mighty Snake" and "the lifeblood of southern Idaho," is credited with turning dry sagebrush desert into fertile soil for a massive and vital agriculture industry in southern Idaho.

The strong flows of the Snake have been harnessed to produce hydroelectric power, providing electricity for communities all along the Snake River.

Idaho Power owns numerous hydro projects including larger, run-of-river projects that involve numerous dams along the Snake River. It also receives power from approximately 50 smaller co-generation plants using streams, canals and irrigation water. Because of the large amount of electricity produced by hydro power, Idaho has some of the lowest utility rates in the west.



WIND ENERGY

Wind power is one of southern Idaho's leading sources of alternative energy. Atop the Snake River lies the Snake River plain that produces average wind speeds of 13 mph, making this area the states windiest and an ideal spot for wind farms.

The area's natural wind flow, consistent wind patterns and open areas has attracted the attention of numerous developers. Thanks to the close proximity of existing transmission facilities and high voltage transmission lines, developers have an easy tie-in with locations in Northern Nevada.

GE Energy Financial Services, an investor in Idaho Wind Partners' 11 wind farms, has just completed the state's largest wind power project in southern Idaho. The \$500 million, 122 turbines can generate 183 megawatts of energy, enough to power 39,700 average Idaho homes.



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The China Mountain Project, a subsidiary of RES Americas, is under development here. China Mountain, a 9,000-acre wind production facility on the Idaho/Nevada border, will harness some of the best, strongest winds in Idaho and Nevada with 200 wind turbines that can produce up to 400 MW of power and generate enough renewable energy to power more than 100,000 homes.

GEOTHERMAL

Harnessing steam power from the earth, geothermal is another major player in the area's alternative fuel market.

Geothermal hotspots are plentiful in this region, less than 100 miles from Yellowstone National Park.

The utility-scale Raft River geothermal project is located in southern Idaho at the site of a former U.S. Department of Energy geothermal installation. The site is attractive because of the proven 300 degree Fahrenheit hot water resource that has been developed and tested, and because of the significant infrastructure facilities that are currently in place. Currently producing 10MW of power, Raft River will produce an additional 40MW, potentially producing up to 100MW.

BIOMASS/BIOFUELS

Over 525,000 dairy and feedlot cattle in the area equates to ample biomass-generating material.

Dairies and local businesses are working together to develop and purchase anaerobic digesters that take cow waste and convert it into natural gas which is then converted into electricity.

The gas is used to heat dairies and as a supplemental energy source to Intermountain Gas.

Intrepid Technology and Resources, Inc. and Cargill operate anaerobic digesters at several southern Idaho dairies producing both pipeline-quality gas and electricity.

Pacific Ethanol produces 175,000 gallons of ethanol a day utilizing about 60,000 bushels of corn a day with 30 percent of production by-product sold to area dairies and feedlots as a concentrated food source. And Natural Chem Holdings has acquired a former ethanol plant to sell biogas, wholesale ethanol, biodiesel blends and other related products.

SOLAR

Solar energy production will soon be the last alternative sector to be available in southern Idaho. This region receives enough sunshine to be in the company of Arizona and New Mexico and peaking in the summer. Mid Point Energy plans to capture the sun's light via a soon-to-be-built solar farm in the nearby community of Jerome utilizing 157,000 photovoltaic panels that will produce 65-75 MW.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

The College of Southern Idaho (CSI) has been powering up the work force with education and training in renewable energy since 1981. With a recent \$4.4 million U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant, CSI will build a \$7 million, 29,600 square foot, LEED certified Applied Technology and Innovation Center. The Center will train local technicians in wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, biomass/biofuels and green energy construction. Southern Idaho's rapid growth in renewable energy projects and environmental technology translates into the need for green collar workers, estimated to grow in Idaho by 2,257 over the next 10 years.

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